

Indians! You are in fear of them all the time. And if they should make an attack here?"

"They will hardly dare now. Indeed one Indian tribe is practically wiped out. And the fortifications are to be strengthened. We manage to keep quite friendly, though we do not trust too far."

"But it is horrible to live in perpetual fear," and she shuddered.

"You must not look on that side of it. It is a hard country for women, I shall have to admit."

"But I have not come to stay, thank the saints. A year maybe at the longest. My husband is to go back when he has—what you call it—established his claim—concession. We like sunny France the best. Only one wants a fortune to enjoy it."

"That is true, too. But here one can do without. At least a man can"—laughing a little as he surveyed the dainty figure.

"A year," repeated the child. "How long is a year?"

Mère Dubray had been standing in the doorway, waiting to take the cup when my lady had finished. Now she said in an unemotional tone—

"It is a summer and a winter. It was last May when Jean Arlac brought you here."

The child nodded thoughtfully and there came a far-away expression in her eyes.

"Jean Arlac went up to the fur country," she said to the guest.

"Does he return when the furs come in?"