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## Autumn Woodlands.

Again the hills and woodlands are array'd  
 In gorgeous robes of every tint and shade,  
 Deep crimson hues and varied saffron dyes,  
 Whose mingled brightness fascinates the eyes.  
 A light haze nestles on the mountain's crest,  
 And rests upon the brook's scarce rippling breast,  
 While over all a still deep calm pervades,  
 A dreamy silence settles on the glades.  
 Yet, brilliant Autumn woodlands, as we rove,  
 And wander listless 'mid thy colored groves,  
 Far different thoughts arise within our minds  
 Than those awaken'd by the spring's first winds,  
 When the dark leaves that rustle 'neath our feet,  
 Burst forth, the kiss of vernal suns to meet.  
 Then, with awakening nature, all was blythe  
 And gay and happy. Saddened hearts repine  
 For the soft breeze that calls the violets forth,  
 And drives the ice-crowned storm king farther north,  
 Now, though around us rainbow tints are glowing,  
 A fairy grace to sylvan scenes bestowing,  
 Though round our pathway mellow'd sunbeams play,  
 " 'Tis but a halo hovering round decay."  
 And our hearts gladden not; a low sad sigh  
 Seems breath'd upon the soft gales wandering by;  
 And something whispers, "This is but a breath,  
 An apathy preceding nature's death.  
 Soon these gay leaves that now so gorgeous seem,  
 Will pass away as does a summer dream.  
 Soon will they lie with all their brightness fled  
 In dark brown heaps wither'd and straw'd and dead."

Oh! scar and withered leaves that round us lie!  
 Doom'd, ere the others of the race, to die!  
 How brief a space, since all so fondly green,  
 Ye imparted gladness to the summer scene;  
 And swift wing'd songsters 'mid thy shades at play  
 Trill'd forth on every breeze their joyous lay.  
 Now they have fled, thy "feather'd tenants," where,  
 Breathing rich perfume on the southern air,  
 The orange blossoms, and the date tree's flower,  
 And summer sits enthroned in all her power.

Oh! faded fallen leaves! ye call to mind  
 The blighted hopes my heart had fondly shrined,  
 The hopes that in the springtime gaily smiled,  
 And the midsummer's sultry hours beguil'd,  
 Delusive dreams, too bright perhaps to last;  
 But yet it costs a pang to know they're past.  
 Yes, they like thee in vernal beauty glow'd,  
 And a fresh gladness to my heart bestow'd;  
 But disappointment's frost came all to soon,  
 And nipp'd them ere they yet had reached their bloom.  
 I watch'd them droop, and now, all, all, I see  
 Lie at my feet, dark, autumn leaves! with thee.

M. J. S., Brantford.

(Written for *The Family Circle*.)

## MOLLIE'S TRUST.

BY ELSPETH CRAIG.

(Continued.)

### CHAPTER XIX.

The weeks that followed were anxious and sorrowful ones for the inmates of the little cottage.

Lesley was still at Buxly; Miss Janet had thought it better to keep her there, when the news came of Mollie's illness. She would have had Bertie also, but the boy begged so hard to be permitted to remain at home, that his leaving was not urged, especially as he was not at all likely to be troublesome; whereas Lesley would have been perpetually in the way. Bertie, indeed, proved himself very helpful in many ways; he was so careful and thoughtful for others. His anxiety for his aunt Mollie, showed itself in his pale, sorrowful face and his manner, which grew quieter and graver day after day. But scarce any attention was paid to the silent boy, for everyone was occupied with Mollie, who hovered between life and death for six long weeks, during which time she was watched over by Katie Howard, Mrs. Macdonald and Christie. Ruth happened at the time to be away in the States, or she would, doubtless, have installed herself as chief nurse at Mollie's bedside. As it was, the great part of the nursing lay between Sybil and Christie; Katie's time was so much occupied at home, where a pair of sturdy twin boys had lately made their appearance.

Sybil had over-ruled her husband's objections to her acting as Mollie's nurse, and had asserted her intention of caring for the sick girl; and so every day saw her at the cottage; moving softly about the sick room, or bending anxiously and tenderly over the poor fever-flushed face on the pillow listening to the pitiful murmuring of delirium; and again, going quietly to the door to answer Bertie's low-toned enquiries for his aunt.

At night Christie would take her place and Sybil would go back to her own home, tired and sick at heart, to act the part of hostess to the men Arthur persisted in bringing home with him now, almost every evening, utterly ignoring the fact of his wife being worn out with nursing all day, and pretending not to see the strain she was obliged to put upon herself to keep up at all. He grimly resolved, that if Sybil shirked her home duties during the day, she should make up for it in the evening. But at last her over-strained nerves gave way altogether, and one evening when three of Arthur's most particular friends were present, Mrs. Macdonald suddenly burst into a fit of nervous weeping just as she had seated herself at the piano to play and sing at the request of one of the guests. Of course every one in the room was struck with consternation at the unparalleled catastrophe. Arthur, though his swarthy face had flushed at first, with anger and mortification, was so conscious of its being all his own fault, that his heart softened as he led her from the room, up to her boudoir, refusing to leave her until she was quite calm and composed again; he then returned to the