

# THE CANADIAN CASSETTE.

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## SELECT TALES.

"To hold the mirror up to Nature."

WRITTEN FOR THE CASSETTE.

### CONSTANCY.

A TALE OF TRUTH—TAKEN FROM THE  
SKETCH-BOOK OF A TRAVELLER.

At York, I fell in with adventures which will never be effaced from my memory. Among them there is one illustrative of the virtue of constancy and its happy results, which I esteem worthy of a place in my sketch book; and which, should I ever exchange vows with one who has greater charms than the ever varying scenes of nature, (whose loveliness I have already contemplated in three quarters of the globe,) I shall always recur to when my faith is assailed by a new charmer, or by any obstacle short of death.

Among the guests who, like myself, had made our hotel a temporary *home*, there was a lady in whom I took an unusual interest. Was I in love? No; for I find my heart still whole. Yet, I admired, without hardly knowing why. She was beautiful; but I had met with more brilliant beauty in a thousand instances; her beauty was losing its richness—the buoyancy and the bloom of youth had fled—nay, more—she was melancholy. Mine, then, was the love of compassion. My feelings were all alive to her unknown misfortunes; and that restless curiosity which has led me over Europe, part of Africa and America, in quest of objects for its gratification, now urged me, with all its eloquence, to pry into the history of a solitary female stranger.

This lady had a lovely child, who seemed the only object to whom her social feelings were open; while her reserved, solitary and retiring deportment, barred the world from any approaches towards her. This child bore so strong a resemblance to one whose image was indelibly stamped on my memory, that I felt the more anxious to know her history on that ac-

count. At length I learned that it was the only child of my early friend Glenn, with whom I had travelled throughout his native country, Scotland. This made me more the lovely stranger's intimate. She was the widow of my noble Caladonian friend, of whom I had gained no intelligence since we parted at Glasgow, on my embarkation for the Continent.

From relating to her my adventures with Glenn, which were replete with those lively incidents that a pedestrian excursion through Scotland is capable of affording, I pursued the sequel of my travels in France; and on mentioning the name of one with whom I had held an intimate connexion in that country, it seemed to revive recollections which threw her off the guard, and betrayed, for a moment, the deepest emotion. What could this conflict mean? The lady did not seem disposed to a voluntary explanation; and I had touched too delicate a chord to think of reviving its vibrations.

We were both on our way to that wonder of waters, the Falls of Niagara; and I determined to be the lady's companion amid those sublime and beautiful scenes, where the deepest cares are momentarily dissipated by a sense of the presence of Deity, and where the poet, the painter, and the naturalist may find ample materials for their themes. The day arrived for our departure, and we repaired to the quay to embark on board the *Queenston* for Niagara.

Among the crowd assembled on the quay, I observed a gentleman who seemed to regard my companion with much scrutiny, and at length with evident emotion. At this instant the lady's eyes met his—she shrieked, and swooned on my arm. The gentleman flew to her assistance; and ere the dim roseate—which had survived years of silent grief—again assumed its vein on her enchanting countenance, I discovered in the cause of her alarm, an old

acquaintance, whose person was so changed during the seven years since we parted at Lyons, that I did not at first recognise him. Yes, it was no other than Hobson, the mention of whose name, a few days previous, had so agitated the lady. At this instant the ship-bell rung, and the captain of the steamer piped "All aboard!" We embarked in our confusion and were soon gliding across perhaps the most beautiful body of water in the world. While one blessed the memory of Robert Fulton for what he had contributed towards our pleasant conveyance, and another expatiated on the beauty of the surrounding scenery—each of us revolved, in silence, the eventful remembrance of by-gone days and the series of events which had led to this unexpected meeting.

On recovering my presence of mind, I endeavoured to assume a degree of formality, and remove our party from the sphere of that curiosity which our singular encounter had excited; and then, after exchanging a few courtesies, I left my friends to a private interview.

When I contracted an acquaintance with Hobson in France; he was a votary to the pleasures of fashionable society. Residing with a wealthy connexion, who frequently entertained the gay circles of Lyons, and being naturally of a cheerful temperament, there seemed no barrier to the gratification of his native bent. But shortly before my departure from that city, there was a sudden and very marked change in his feelings, the cause of which he did not then explain to me, though he expressed a determination of returning soon to England.

At dinner we met again, when the countenances of my friends beamed with a lustre of heartfelt satisfaction to which they had evidently long been strangers. When the repast was over, I repaired to the deck with Hobson, to hear the history of what now appeared so strange to me.