## Tom's Yarn.

A TALE OF ENTERPRISING YOUNG CANADA.

I am a modest youth withal—don't laugh, it is a fact—

and a modest youth withal—don't laugh, it is a fact—and what a position was there! A pretty girl, advancing with arms half extended, with an expression of tender re-But surely her conduct was, to put it mildly, rather unusual, for she seemed to be a lady. She was dressed like one, and there was an indescribable air of refinement about The it is hard to express, but you know what I mean. one, and there was an indescribable air of refinement about her; it is hard to express, but you know what I mean. The air of culture and breeding which, to the initiated, and, indeed, to anybody, marks a difference between the woman, social advantages, and the woman who is not.

I was interested and, I may add, somewhat embarrassed. Dimly it was manifested to me that there was an absurd

Dimly it was manifested to me that there was an absurd mistake somewhat and the in part, restored my selfmistake somewhere. And this, in part, restored my self-she should discours for hearth that it was a false one. I she should discover for herself that it was a false one. would not undeceive her, and I prepared myself to have that fun I could whilst the delusion lasted. Fatal resolution, framed in the recklessness that is the curse of my nature—that bids me speak when wise men keep silence and urges me and urges me on to actions that my calmer and better self

We shook hands—such a delightfully soft little hand she had! And how confidingly it nestled in mine, responding coyly when I ventured to press it. Her laughing dark eyes tiful confusion, behind thick drooping lashes.

I said I was most fortunate to have hit upon that particular day to take passage down the river. Again she

I said I was most fortunate to have hit upon that patieular day to take passage down the river. Again she lifted her eyes and looked curiously at me, replying it was most fortunate. Then we both smiled. She, as I thought, uncertain in my demander.

uncertain in my demeanour.

Now, I pride myself on possessing a good average share of assurance.

Not that offensive, case-hardened, self-asser-Now, I pride myself on possessing a good average share of assurance. Not that offensive, case-hardened, self-assertiveness that is so all-prevailing nowadays, but a more remy mettle to think that possibly after all, I was misher heart as a great, shy booby. The very idea was torture gether and drew her to a seat by the hand which I still reached. gether and drew her to a seat by the hand which I still retained in mine. We sat down side by side. I lay back unsuccessfully, to assume the air of one with whom it was an ordinary occurrence to be accosted by strange and

quite an ordinary occurrence to be accosted by strange and charming damsels.

"It is almost too light to be perfectly enjoyable," I said at length. "In a short time the moon will be up, and we can admire its effect on the water—strange effect, moon can admire its effect on the water—strange effect, moon the water—great opportunity for abstract contemplation. It seems complete to enlive one's sentiment! We can put our heads together and compare impressions. take an intermediate together and compare impressions.

take an intense interest in that sort of thing, don't you!"

And I looked sharply at her to note how she would stand that.
"None of your nonsense, now, young man," was the light "Ah! decidedly a case of mistaken identity," I again "I have myself, then assured myself, then—

"I have many important communications to make to You," I declared, "but first tell me where are you going?

Quebec?

Oh, I am taking a little pleasure trip. I have just relast three or four years," and again she favoured me with a quick, sharp glance.

She leaned back in her chair, ignoring the question, and Winnipeg, selecting at random the most remote place that to me.

"Yes; born there!" I declared briskly. "Spent the ranche about fifty miles from the city, and I have charge of sorry to think of our short tite-à-tite being ended. To my surprise, she heard me with supreme concern.

"Tell me heard me with supreme concern."

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\*Tell me about it, please," she entreated, "it must be a before met apubody who has actually lived the life, as you

splendid life! I have heard so much about it all, but never hefore met anybody who has actually lived the life, as you "Oh! am curious to learn something about it." then go to sleep at daylight, ride about all day, and exercise, and terribly hungry at meals. The great drawher, is the scarcity of ladies," and I bobbed my head at tions, "As I am a pretty good extemporaneous liar, we got which she tions. We both laughed, and she proceeded with ner ques-along famously, and the air of attention with which she business going.

listened was most flattering; it stimulated me to business going.

As time passed, the darkness gathered. One by one the after deck, snugly ensconced in our retired corner. By this pleasure I experienced in bewilderment only equalled by the lightfully improper, and, at the same time, so perfectly was manner towards me in keeping with all one's notions

of what it should be that I was strangely attracted. The glances she gave me from time to time, I watched for eagerly, and when she did look I felt a vague disquiet. I have already tried to tell you how her face affected me. It was as if I had known her in some previous existence. Perhaps I had. Who can say?

Matthe won will understand if I put it like this: Can

Maybe you will understand if I put it like this: Can Maybe you will understand if I put it like this: Can any of you recall to mind a face that haunts your more softened and remorseful moods? A sweet, tender face, with loving eyes and bright, youthful, quivering red lips—the face of a young girl who loves you, despite your wrong-doing? Who will continue loving to the end, and to whom your love, such as you can spare her from more exacting calls, is given. What! you have none of you known it? Out upon you for three unregenerate wretches! There is no hope for you! Nothing to restrain you in your base career of self advancement and self-jollification which we all of us, to a greater or less extent, follow in this we all of us, to a greater or less extent, follow in this world.

There was, and there is still, a subtle chain which links There was, and there is still, a subtle chain which links my soul to that girl's soul. A connection which will last as long as our two lives last, and which will, I hope, continue in the afterlife. For, in spite of all, I love her, false as she is. And she loves me, too; but I anticipate.

As I said, we were become quite sociable, and chatted away like friends of long standing.

When the deck was quite deserted, save by ourselves, I drew my seat closer to hers, and threw my arm carelessly over the back of her chair, rattling on all the while about my imaginary adventures in the western wilds.

my imaginary adventures in the western wilds.

my imaginary adventures in the western whos.

Softened and all as my feeling towards her was, I could not but wonder at the mysteries about her. Who could she be, and why had she spoken to me? Her manner and her speech were undoubtedly those of a lady. But again, whatever made her address me! No lady would do a thing like that without a reason. She was possessed of an in-satiable curiosity regarding my western life, and mercilessly urged me on whenever my overtaxed invention halted. I had several times tried to turn the conversation, so as to draw her out, and, if possible, gratify my curiosity regarding her. But she, in the calmest way and, seemingly, ignor-

ning ner. Dut sne, in the calmest way and, seemingly, ignorant of my design, invariably foiled me.

Now, I determined on a desperate move, which would, at all events, drop the curtain on this farce and place matters on a plain basis.

"One thing is very striking to a stranger out there," I said. "When a man becomes comfortably settled, with a balance of money on hand and every prospect of future prosperity, he naturally thinks of getting married. He puts on his best clothes, curls his long hair in a picturesque style over his shoulders, crowns it with the regulation ranchman's broad-brimmed, soft, white felt hat, and rides into Winnipeg. At the Immigrant Sheds he is shown the latest batch of new arrivals from the Old Country. He inspects the females of the party critically, and selects the one most pleasing in his sight, shows the title of his lands and all that to the Government Immigration Officer, is duly approved of, and marries the lady at once."
"But surely he asks her if she will have him first!" she

demanded.

"Oh, yes! But that is a mere matter of form. They have all come out for the purpose of getting a husband."
"Oh!" in a tone of shocked surprise, "is there no

courtship?" "Courtship! No, indeed. We rush things out there "Courtship! No, indeed. We rush things out there at high pressure. Life is too short for any preliminary love-making. The harvest is waiting, or the cattle is ready to be sold, or something demands immediate attention on the ranche. We have no time for bashfu! hesitation."

"For example, here am I, a young man from the West, and you are fresh from the Old Country. Unfortunately, my time is limited. There are heaps of delightful tactics I should like to go through. but the exigencies of western

my time is limited. There are neaps or delignful factics I should like to go through, but the exigencies of western pioneer life will not permit of it. I see you, and fall madly in love—the one deep, all-absorbing passion of a heart capable of abnormal tenderness. In short, the love of one heretofore precluded from all such delights by a wild colitary life remote from feminine influence. There is no of one heretofore precluded from all such delights by a wild solitary life, remote from feminine influence. There is no time to spare—must return to the ranche in a few days at the latest. So I dare not postpone the avowal. And besides—horrible idea!—another man might appear, and, before one could wink, he would, perhaps, snatch you up under my very nose. Just realize the position, please! Knowing, as I do, the state of life in the West, I do not hesitate. I say to you, Miss—, well never mind the name; 'tis of little consequence, and I hope to have it changed for better or for worse soon. I have a magnificent capital of brains and business enterprise. My estate near Red Dog station is probably the most swampy and unincapital of brains and business enterprise. My estate near Red Dog station is probably the most swampy and uninhabitable tract in the most swampy and uninhabitable county in Manitoba. It only lacks one thing—and that is a mistress. You are the girl to suit me! Will you be mine? Will you confer upon me the inestimable traceure. a mistress. You are the girl to suit me! Will you be mine? Will you confer upon me the inestimable treasure of your love? Your answer—I am all impatience!"

"I decline," she said smiling. "Brains and business enterprise are not exactly practical assets. And a tract of uninhabitable swamp is certainly not inviting."

I drew a deep, long breath, and braced myself; for the crisis was at hand. Then, trying to speak lightly, though my heart was thumping against my ribs and raising a horrible row, I said, laughing:

"Now, I come to the second and, sometimes, more con-

rible row, I said, laughing:

"Now, I come to the second and, sometimes, more convincing argument." And slipping my arm from the back of her chair, I passed it around her, drew her to me until her head lay confidingly on my shoulder. She looked up at me and smiled softly. Oh, the bliss of it all! The moon

shone down on her upturned face, her eyes peered coyly at snone down on her upturned tace, her eyes peered coyly at me through half closed lashes, pouting red lips, slightly parted, revealed two rows of small, pearly teeth behind. Bewitching and irresistibly tempting!

In that moment of triumph, how I scorned myself for my late ignoble timidity. Truly, none but the brave deserve the fair! I winked pensively out over the waters and congratulated myself then, and who would not! I even bent my head and imprinted a tender, chaste greeting.

bent my head and imprinted a tender, chaste greeting. Our lips met, and our eyes smiled encouragement.

But a cruel interruption came. Whilst my soul conferred with her soul, whilst our natures sympathized one with the other, rejoicing each in having at length found a

with the other, rejoicing each in having at length found a responsive affection such as both had ever yearned for vaguely, a dark shadow was suddenly cast over us, and a hand laid heavily on my shoulder.

"Well, young man, what may you be doing?"

I started, the voice seemed not unfriendly, but the grip, tightening on my shoulder, was certainly hostile. Quickly I withdrew my arm from about the young lady's waist, then I wrenched myself free from the grasp and stared up at the speaker. Was I to rest quietly and suffer such a rude and, by me at least, undeserved interruption? Surely rude and, by me at least, undeserved interruption? Surely not! The moonlight was at his back, so I could only see the outline of the figure, which was that of a man much older than myself. We eyed each other a moment. I looked at my fair friend, she was smiling; apparently to her this was all was very diverting. Again I regarded the new comer.

"Where the deuce did you come from, may I ask?" I retorted calmly. Nothing like keeping cool and ignoring all questions in a case like this. Evidently my remark told, all questions in a case like this. Evidently my remark told, for he seemed rather disconcerted. I turned to my charming friend, and was about to speak again, when she burst out laughing. I gazed open-mouthed at her, angry and puzzled. "Oh, dear!" she sighed, when, at length, she got the better of her merriment, "was ever anything so ridiculous! Just fancy, papa, Tom has been flirting with me in the most outrageous manner for the last three hours. He was illustrating to me the way they make love out in the North-West when you came up. Oh, he has said such absurd things! She rose, took my father's arm, for the old centleman was none other, and marched off. And as I gentleman was none other, and marched off. And as I followed sheepishly after them I heard her relate in detail the things I had said. and, horror! those I had done. I realized that I was bound to become the laughing stock of all my friends for the next three months. It was my sister Katie all the time! She had been away at school in Enghatte all the time: She had been away at school in England the last four years, and was returning when I encountered her. She came over by steamer to New York and my father met her at Montreal. She recognized me at once, and seeing by my manner that I did not know her, basely led me on as I have described. She has, of course, told led me on as I have described. She has, of course, told everybody about it, and made my life generally miserable ever since. Now I dare not refuse her anything—dare not even treat her with the scant ceremony that I, in common with other brothers, believe so productive of good in one's intercourse with one's sister. She at once crushes me by hinting at the difference in my demeanour since I discovered she was not some other fellow's sister. But these family matters are uninteresting."

And Tom sighed, refilled his glass, and gazed at us with a most woebegone expression, though a droll twinkle in the corner of his eye told that he appreciated the joke quite as much as anybody.

## THE END. Keats and Shelley.

Keats and Shelley stand side by side as the two great Keats and Shelley stand side by side as the two great ideal artists of their generation; but they never appreciated each other. There is no excuse for seeking the reason in anything so dishonourable as jealousy; for neither could by possibility have thought the other was over-rated by the world. And, if we admit Mr. Rossetti's explanation that world. And, if we admit Mr. Rossetti's explanation that Keats was rendered captious and irritable by disease, this will not account for the slighting and unsympathetic way in which Shelley spoke of all his works except "Hyperion." He evidently regarded Keats as a man of genius, who was in great danger of wasting himself; and, even in "Adonais," he inclined to number him with the inheritors of unfulfilled renown; and the enumeration shows that this is not to be taken simply of the gifted souls, whose names must be left to wait for justice from posterity. The fact is, each of them felt the faults of the other; and the reason that Shelley, with this feeling, spoke more warmly of Keats than Keats spoke of him, is not wholly that he was more generous, but also that he was less critical.

Of all great poets, Keats was the most literary; and it was natural that he should be exacting. To him poetry was an end in itself; its mission was simply to fill and satisfy the spirits with images of objective loveliness. philosophy, so far as he had one, was a judicious quietism— a seeking of the beautiful where it was to be found, in the ordered stability of nature, and in the rich moments of life which come to those who are ready for them. It is certain which come to those who are ready for them. It is certain that he came nearer than Shelley to the temper of most great poets, of Homer and Sophocles, of Pindar and Shakespeare, of Chaucer and Goethe. Perhaps he was right in recoiling from Shelley's subjective fervour, from right in recoiling from Sheriey's subjective fervour, from his feverish pursuit of an impalpable progress, as Shelley was right in warning him against his tendency to bury every subject he undertook under a profusion of flowers. It may be questioned whether Shelley's power was not higher; but Keats was justified in feeling that his own aims in poetry were surer.