

'Certainly my name isn't Kean,' Charlie returned, growing bolder, 'and what my great-grandfather did when he was alive is no concern of mine. But,' as a bright idea struck him, 'I reckon you are my great-grandfather, or, at least, his ghost, and surely you would not kill the only surviving male member of the good old stock.'

One or two guffaws outside the door followed this piece of cool conceit, and Charlie looked round inquiringly.

'Kean and Green, they are very similar,' the ghost was saying to himself, 'If Green were Kean I should shoot him dead,' and he pointed the revolver at Charlie, who promptly ducked under the bed, 'but as Kean seems to be Green, he must be allowed to spout, or in another word, live.' Charles stood up.

'You have had a jolly narrow escape,' and to the happy man the phraseology and voice sounded strangely familiar. 'Let it be a lesson to you to —' but here the ghost gave vent to a very unghostly yawn, and seeing that Charlie was on the verge of discovery, he hastened matters by pointing to the door, and shouting, 'Look!'

Charlie turned his head in the direction indicated, only to be met with wild shouts of glee and laughter at his discomfiture from a crowd of men at the door. Looking back across the bed the bewildered man saw that the ghost had disappeared, and dare-devil Freddy Vane stood grinning broadly in its place.

For a moment Charlie felt like sinking to the floor, and sobbing his heart out for very shame, but a voice seemed to whisper, 'Be a man, and take it standing.' Charlie walked round the room without saying a word, and did the very best possible thing he could. He held out his hand to Vane, and shook it firmly. He then crossed to the door, and shook the hand of each one in turn. Then he spoke.

'I see now your object in this—what shall I call it—escapade,' he said slowly, with a determined ring

in his thin voice. 'It was not so much to frighten me as to show by its very transparent absurdity how simple and childish I am. How easily I can be taken in and deceived. You sought to bring home to me in a manner which I believe in my case was absolutely necessary, the deficits and weak points in the formation of my character. In short, you wanted to make a man of me. Gentlemen, I thank you. You tried a bold cure, and you have succeeded. Your object is attained. Good-night!'

'Three cheers for Charlie Green!' shouted Sir Roger in an outburst of joy, and the cheers rang forth from half-a-dozen lusty throats, quite regardless of the sleepers in the house.

Charlie merely bowed his acknowledgments, and from that day no reference was ever made by a member of that Christmas party to 'Charlie Green's Ghost.'

—*Catholic Weekly.*

THE TOY AND THE PROPHET

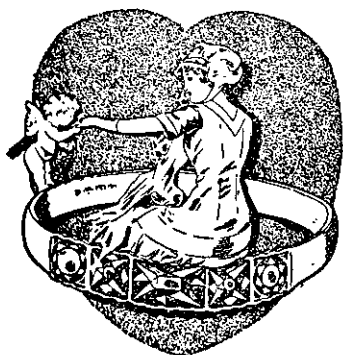
(Concluded from last week.)

'He picked her out of the mud this morning, while we were comin' up to the grounds,' said Grayson. 'He's always been that gentle with ones he likes. She's fed him often, an' always talks to him and pets him. Don't seem,' he added, reminiscently, 'as if Rajah was ever like some elephants—havin' tantrums and ugly spells. He's touchy to strangers though.'

'Well, I never!' gasped the keeper. 'Bless me, if I don't remember now a-seein' the girl feedin' him before, but I didn't know they was like that together.'

The child had scampered away. Grayson held out his hand, as he, too, turned to go.

'I'll get a bite to eat, I think, now,' he said gruffly. 'Maybe I won't see you again, Grenville. You're busy to-night, an' I'll be leavin' early in the mornin'. I shall try to make that little town north of

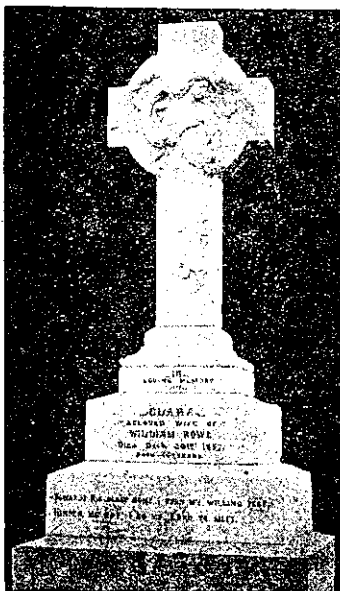


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