

The GREEN CLOAK

CHAPTER I

Doctor McAllister has often told me that I take life seriously because I am young. That may or may not be the reason, but I am convinced that I know the reason why he takes it so light-heartedly. It is not because he is old, but because he has already won from life all the reward he wants. In his own department of science—applied psychology—he has achieved about as high a place as it is possible for a man to reach. In this field his reputation does not have to lower its coils to any other in the world; and if in his periods of relaxation he chooses to be frivolous, no one can afford to be more so than he. I suppose that the very idea of frivolity used in connection with Prof. Ronald McAllister's name would make most people laugh because of the grotesque unfitness of it; and the people who know him only as a gaunt, gray old bachelor, with a rugged, homely, deeply lined Scotch face and a big rough voice, would be right to laugh.

But I am more an adopted son of his than a mere assistant, and after spending the daily number of hours in his laboratory, watching him work his miracles, I see his great mind relax, and find that he is just a boy, more of a boy than ever I was in my life.

He likes the daily papers—the yellow they are, the better; and he devours a perfectly incredible number of detective stories, good and bad. His delight over a good one is almost pathetic.

So when I read the headlines in the morning papers that day, I knew perfectly well that when work was over and we met at our special little table in a corner of the brilliant dining room of The Meredith, I should be regaled with a thrilling and enthusiastic account of the Oak Ridge murder.

It was easy indeed to prefigure the whole scene. Similar ones had been enacted so many times before. I didn't altogether relish the prospect, for I hate to see people smiling and nodding behind my old chief's back, people who, intellectually or socially, or in any other way, aren't fit to tie his shoes. He doesn't mind their smiles, and the light-hearted emptiness of their lives has a mysterious sort of attraction for him.

And when I see him across our little table, his twinkling gray eyes glowing with excitement, his long ungainly arms and expressive hands working away in enthusiastic gesticulation, his big voice booming out the story of some sensational crime, I can't really wonder that a good many people nod and wink and giggle.

The thing I did wonder at sometimes was, that Wilkins, the obsequious, omnipresent, invaluable head-waiter, contrived to preserve his respectful mask of professional imperturbability.

I had a sneaking fondness for Wilkins, based upon the fact that he at least did not underrate Doctor McAllister. Tonight, for instance, it was Wilkins himself whom I saw conducting him down the long lane of tables, to the corner of the room where we always sat.

"Tell our man what to bring us, Wilkins," he said, waving away the menu which that irreproachable functionary offered him. "You know what we want to eat, better than we do."

Then he turned to me, "Well, have you read about it?"

"The Oak Ridge murder?" I asked smiling. "No, I've waited to get the account of it from you."

"You really haven't read a word of it?" he asked.

"Not a word. I know that Oak Ridge is one of our more remote and less fashionable suburbs, and that there has been a murder there within the past forty-eight hours. Beyond that, my ignorance is complete."

"Youth! Youth!" cried the doctor in mock dismay. "What is it coming to? Fancy being under thirty and waiting all day for such a story as that, rather than read an account of it in bad English. Well, you shall have the story now from the beginning—wait a bit, though, Wilkins—"

The head-waiter looked up from a low-voiced discussion of the menu with the man who had special charge of our table. "Yes, sir."

"Has Ashton come in yet?"

"Not yet, sir, but he should be here before long. He's seldom later than this, sir."

"Serve for three at this table, then," said the doctor, "and when Ashton comes in, ask him to dine with us"; then, turning to me, "There are some points which the newspapers don't cover that he'll be likely to know about."

Ashton, I may say, was a rising young assistant in the district attorney's office, and I will add that he worked at the detection and prosecution of crime, *con amore*; it was not upon his salary that he lived at The Meredith.

The doctor leaned his elbows on the table and pointed a long finger at me. "Now, in the first place, all we know of Henry Morgan begins three years ago."

"Was Henry Morgan the name of the man who was murdered?" I asked.

"Yes—yes, at least it's the name he went by during the last three years of his life, which he spent at Oak Ridge. He got off the train there one morning

By YORKE DAVIS

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with a hand bag and a check for a small steamer trunk, both well-worn and both unmarked with any initials. He went straight to the real estate office of one James McCloskey and said he wanted to rent a house.

"McCloskey took him house-hunting, and, much to that gentleman's surprise, the only place in town that took Morgan's fancy was a large, dilapidated old house in one of its remotest quarters. The old place was in a state of considerable disrepair, and it contained a lot of rattle-trap furniture which the owner had never moved away. McCloskey had confessed that he had never expected to find a tenant for it. The question of repairs didn't seem to interest Mr. Morgan much, a patch or two in the roof and new lights of glass in the broken windows comprising all he asked for.

"When McCloskey asked him what family he had and when he expected them to arrive, Mr. Morgan answered that he had no family and intended to live alone. He did, in fact, live alone, without even the service of a house-keeper, for a number of months, but finally engaged a respectable old woman, who lived in straightened circum-



"Half an Hour Later Some Passers-by Saw Him Striding Up and Down His Ricketty Old Veranda."

stances not very far away, to come every day and cook his meals and keep his house in order. He let her in every morning in time to get breakfast, and she went away every night about seven o'clock, after washing up the supper dishes.

"There, you have, practically, the story of his life in Oak Ridge, up to two nights ago. Two nights ago the old woman got supper for him for the last time, and went home as usual about seven o'clock. Half an hour later some passers-by saw him striding up and down his ricketty old veranda, smoking a pipe. Yesterday morning when his housekeeper knocked at the kitchen door, there was no answer. Then she went around to the front of the house and rang the bell, also without result. She walked back a little way up the lawn and saw that one of the windows in a sort of study he had on the third floor was open.

"Well, it seems that she told various people about her fears that all was not well with her employer, but you know what a town of that description is like. There aren't any police. Most of the men in the place commute to town on the early trains, and with one thing and another, it was ten o'clock, or so, before the house was forcibly broken open.

"The investigators found nothing disturbed either on the first floor or on the second, but in the old gentleman's study, a finished-off room in the attic, with a couple of dormer windows, they found him dead in his chair. He was leaning back in a queer, unnatural attitude, and when they looked more closely, they found that he had been strangled with a catgut string from an old violin of his. An A string," he went on, with rising voice and finger that gesticulated only about six inches from my nose—"an A string that had been deliberately strangled from the fiddle and slipped in a noose around his neck, while he sat there in his chair, and drawn taut. What do you say to that, eh?"

"I don't see why they call it murder," said I. "Why isn't suicide the more likely explanation?"

"Oh, wise young judge," he mocked. "For just this reason, my boy; that the end of the string wasn't fastened to anything. He couldn't have committed suicide in that way, unless he could reach around after he was dead and untie the knot behind the back of his neck. No, it's murder, and I should be inclined to say a singularly pure example of it."

"There's no connection whatever with his past?" I inquired. "Didn't McCloskey ask for any references at the time Morgan rented the house?"

"He says he did on that first day, and Mr. Morgan assured him that

there would be no difficulty on that score; he would present his references in a day or two. As a matter of fact, he never did, but as he paid a quarter's rent in advance, and as he signed an indeterminate lease of a house which the agent never expected to get off his hands, McCloskey didn't like to press the matter. He used furniture that he found in the house, and never brought in any effects of his own, and never came with him on the first day, in his hand bag and his little trunk. He never got any letters from out of town, and apparently never sent off any. What his business was, if he had any, no one ever knew."

"You say that nothing on the first or on the second floor had been disturbed. That would dispose of the theory of robbery."

"The whole appearance of the house and its condition would contradict the theory of an ordinary robbery," the doctor said. "No one would break into that dilapidated old structure for such a purpose, unless he had knowledge of some secret and unusual sort of treasure there. But to my mind, the manner of killing disposes even of that alternative. The house is situated in a lonely spot, remote from all other habitation. If a robber had found himself in a position where he was obliged to kill, he could have risked a pistol shot, and he couldn't have garroted his victim without taking him unawares. No, I believe it to be a case of murder, pure and simple—murder committed for its own sake and not the by-product of some other result. And these cases, you know, are rather rare—"

"Here comes Mr. Ashton now, sir," said Wilkins from where he stood not far away. "I'll have dinner served at once, sir."

Both the doctor and I like Ashton, and he often dines with us, even when there is no particular excuse, such as was offered by the Oak Ridge murder, for doing so.

He is a burly, confident, quick-tempered, generous-minded young chap of about thirty, and if he keeps on as he has begun, he will some day acquire a reputation as one of the greatest prosecutors in the country.

He was not in evening dress tonight, and he dropped into his chair at our table with the air of one who has put in a trying day.

"Confound these suburban trains," he said. "I just spent the better part of an hour in one coming in from Oak Ridge."

"Ha!" cried the doctor, with an air of the most intense satisfaction. "Then you're just the man I want to see. Did you turn up anything at the afternoon session of the Inquest? The account in the evening papers leaves off at noon."

Ashton laughed. "You'll not get a word out of me about that murder, until after the fish. If you attempt to I shall call on Wilkins here for help. However," he added seriously, "I do want to talk about this case with you, for I think it not unlikely that you may be able to help us."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Curious Old Custom of Literary Giants

Lipogrammatic works, the product of the early Greek authors, are those books in which one letter of the alphabet is omitted throughout the volume. Tryphiodorus, when writing his *Odysey*, had not an "a" in his first book, nor a "b" in his second. In so doing he was but copying the Lipogrammatic *Iliad* of Nestor.

Athenaeus writes of an ode by Pindar in which the latter purposely omitted the letter "s," thereby leading us to surmise that this little hoax was one of the literary fashions of the day. A Persian poet once read to the celebrated Jaml one of his own compositions with the letter Alf consistently omitted throughout. Jaml, who did not care for the sonnet, sarcastically made the following recommendation: "You can do a better thing yet, take away all the letters from every word you have written."

Although the Greeks originated this ingenious literary device, its use was by no means exclusive with them. Lope de Vega, the celebrated Spanish dramatic poet of the sixteenth century, Gregorio Leti, and at a much later day Lord North of the court of James I all employed this literary device and produced Lipogrammatic books.—Market for Exchange.

Train Speed Cuts Static

Static decreases and radio-station strength increases with and in proportion to acceleration in the train's speed, experiments with a receiver have shown, according to Popular Mechanics Magazine. A steel bridge with no superstructure helped to increase the volume of the reception, while one with a superstructure decreased it.

Build House for Comfort

Rambling rooms may be romantic to look upon, but the romance caused by inconvenience and lack of comfort soon fades. Not only should a house be big enough and not too big, but its rooms need to be related to each other so as to save steps and lessen labor.

FARM POULTRY

GOOD WEIGHT FOR SIZE OF CHICKEN

"Heft" your chickens often. Every fowl should be a good weight for the size. Birds that are "going light" will not show loss of weight for some time after they begin losing. Trust the hand rather than the eye for weight.

Poultry culers expect light-colored shanks and beaks in yellow-legged hens and pullets after a season of laying, but light-colored shanks and beaks in pullets that have not commenced to lay, indicate lack of vitality.

A bright-eyed, alert female that flies down from the roost at the first break of light; that scratches and sings till the last bird is on the roost, does not need handling to show she has vigor. It is the inconspicuous female that is apt to become a carrier of disease. The kind of hen that will not see an open door; the fowl that squawks when she is cornered. These half-sick hens go around as in a fog.

The healthy, productive hen is curious and friendly. She shows an intelligent interest in her surroundings; she looks thrifty. Human qualities in chickens have a commercial value just as good disposition in horses and cattle is of value commercially. One can't tell the condition of a fowl without handling. Fowls that can be handled without upsetting them nervously are the kind to keep.

Fattening Turkeys Is Simple Kind of Work

Fattening turkeys for the Thanksgiving market, or for the home table, is the simplest kind of work. Although people confine chickens in coops and pens and stuff them with feed, the successful turkey raiser usually lets his flock run free in the fields and gives them all they want to eat twice a day of good yellow corn. During the first part of October one feed per day of yellow corn is usually sufficient, but during the last three weeks before killing time they should have all they will eat, morning and night. The exercise they take makes them hungry, and they consume large quantities of the corn and, being healthy, they turn it into flesh and fat with but little loss. Moreover, they pick up considerable feed on the range and in that way make up a ration that makes them full fleshed and fat at killing time.

If it is necessary to separate those to be fattened from the rest of the flock, they can be put in a large yard, but as the usual thing they will not fatten so well as when allowed free range, but will get nervous and spend most of their time trying to get out. Under these conditions they require more careful feeding also.

How to Determine Body Conformation of Fowls

To determine the body conformation, grasp the bird in both hands, holding the head toward the body. Span the back with both hands, pointing the fingers toward the keel bone. Shuffle the bird around between the hands in order to get its shape and handling qualities. Care should be taken not to pinch or hurt the bird in any way. A heavy producer will show a long keel bone. The body and abdomen should show capacity. The pelvic bone and abdomen should be free of fat at the close of a heavy laying season.

Capacity Is Essential in Good Laying Hens

Capacity is essential in the laying hen. If a hen is to lay an egg a day, or even one every other day, she must have room for digestive organs that will handle considerable food. The evidence of capacity in a hen's body is shown by the spread of the pelvic bones and the distance between the pelvic bones and the end of the breast bone. In a nonlaying hen these bones are close together. The handling of a few hens will readily show this difference. Length and breadth of body are also essential in securing capacity.

Lime for Chicks

An adequate supply of lime in the ration is important for growing chicks. Experiment station results have revealed the fact that the lack of this element leads to a drain upon the reserve supply of the bones and stunts growth. Even in the case of matured hens, a lack of lime will lower egg production. For mature fowls, oyster shell or other inorganic compounds are sufficient, but not for growing chicks. Lime must be added in the form of vegetable foods.

Vitamines and Minerals

Heavy laying fowls require from three to four pounds of oyster shell per head per year. Even though the hens have enough protein and other food to produce a large number of eggs, they will cut their production down to meet the amount of minerals which they have for shells. A balanced ration does not mean merely supplying protein to balance the carbohydrates and fats. It also means supplying minerals and vitamins.

The DAIRY

CROSSING BREEDS IS NOT FAVORED

The results of painstaking care exercised by breeders for centuries are being wiped out in some sections where some dairy farmers are crossing breeds in a mistaken effort to secure a higher quality of milk and more of it, says E. J. Perry, dairy specialist at the College of Agriculture in New Brunswick.

"The development of each dairy breed," explains Mr. Perry, "is the result of a process of selection covering hundreds of years. Thousands of men have spent the best years of their lives in breeding up pure strains of cattle. Through persistent selection certain characters have become fixed. By crossing different breeds we interfere with the transmission of the factors which account for the distinct characters of each breed.

"In crossing breeds there is not an exact blending of the characters as is often supposed. Instead, an entirely new combination usually results. The offspring of the cross may be fairly desirable, but for breeding purposes they are always uncertain. For instance, in crossing a Guernsey with a Holstein the offspring inherit the quality of the Holstein and quantity of the Guernsey fully as often as they inherit the quantity of the Holstein and quality of the Guernsey.

"The dairyman will do best to choose the breed that best suits his tastes and meets the market requirements. Select good individuals of a certain breed, and use a registered sire of superior merit both as to type and as to production. Then the building up of a good-looking herd having high average production is reasonably certain."

Prevent Ropy Milk by Proper Care of Cow

During the summer milk often becomes abnormal in the respect that it becomes quite stringy and ropy. This ropiness is not always the result of a gargety condition of the udder as is usually thought to be the case, but is sometimes the direct result of the action of an organism, *B. viscosum*, writes G. M. Trout in the Dairy Farmer.

This organism grows best in hot weather and is found growing especially in stagnant pools and marshes. Cows wading in such places get the organism on the udder from which they find their way into the teat canal and into the milk pail during milking.

Scalding of the milk pails tends to keep down the spread of the trouble, but is not entirely satisfactory in eliminating the condition from the daily milk supply. The cows must be kept from such marshes or else the stagnant pools must be drained. Ropy milk caused by *B. viscosum* is not injurious to health in any way, but because of its stringy, slimy appearance is far from being desirable.

More Poor Cows Should Be Fattened and Killed

It is a common practice among dairymen to fatten a cow for the beef barrel each year. More of our poor cows should be fattened and sold for beef. After a cow has passed the middle of her lactation period or has been bred it is natural for her to drop in milk production and gain in weight. Feeds which will fatten an animal far should be wide in the ratio of protein to carbohydrates and fat, or in other words you should feed a ration low in protein, as protein feeds stimulate milk production at the expense of body weight. Good cows will, however, continue to give some milk even though they are receiving a fattening ration. To fatten a milking cow quickly allow her to eat from eight to twelve pounds daily of a ration containing three parts hominy or corn meal, one part bran, one part oats and one part of linseed oilmeal.

Dairy Squibs

Keep salt in the pasture salt box every day.

The dairy cow must have what protein she needs or she cannot produce milk economically.

The consumer of dairy products appreciates quality and is willing to pay for products that are clean and wholesome.

To make milk a more potent source of vitamin D in a practical way, cows should be given access to fresh, green pasture as long as possible during the pasture season.

Calf pails should be kept as clean as the milk pails. Dirty pails cause scours and make unthrifty calves.

Dairy cows should have all of the salt they want. The quantity consumed will vary with the kind of feed and the size of the animal.

You may tame a lion by beating him, and it is equally possible to beat the resistance out of a cow; but, if you beat a cow, you won't get much more milk from her than you would from a lion.



The Doctor

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Strange Individual

An East Grand boulevard resident received a shock recently when a motorist, who proved to be from out of town, knocked at the door and said he had accidentally collided with a parked car in front of the house. In answer to the motorist's request to make it right the resident said: "I can see that the car isn't hurt much, but if it were, I wouldn't charge you a thing. You're the fifth man to hit that car but the first one to stop and own up to it."—Detroit News.

Got His Money Back

In plowing near Fairlee, Md., a farmer turned up a pocketbook which he had lost two years ago while at work in the same spot. The wallet was practically decayed and a \$5 bill it contained had fallen into seven pieces. The money was forwarded to Washington to be redeemed for the benefit of the owner.

Actively Engaged

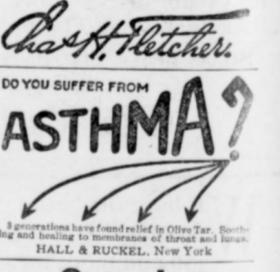
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