

In France They Love Him — And They Also Detest Him!

By Rosette Hargrove
NEA Staff Correspondent

Paris — Edouard Leclerc is at 30 the most beloved and at the same time most hated grocer in France.

Leclerc initiated a minor revolution in this family of small shopkeepers eight years ago by eliminating the middle-man in the food business.

Recently he opened his first store in the Paris region in an old working class suburb. Housewives fought to get near the counters. The small grocers are fighting too — but against him. Born in a bourgeois family this father is major in the French Army, he was the seventh of nine children. The family tradition was that the boys were either soldiers or priests. He chose the church.

But as an 18-year-old seminary student, Edouard began reading Karl Marx and immersed himself in the study of sociology. At 22 he left the seminary and was married after doing his military service.

He worked on the docks and saved some money. Then he and his wife, Helene, put into action his plan for lowering the cost of living by opening their own store. The shop was in the dining room of their three-room apartment in a run-down house near the railway depot at Landerneau.

With \$10 to his name, he placed his first order direct with a manufacturer for \$800 worth of groceries. The manufacturer granted him a month's credit when he learned he was the son of Major Leclerc. He placed a second and much larger order. He also bought candy, oil, and dry groceries. The town's housewives flocked to his store. His secret? He was selling his goods 20 per cent cheaper than his competitors.

Leclerc's crusade to lower the cost of living got off to a good start. A year later he opened another shop in Grenoble, said to be the "dearest" town in France.

The other shopkeepers appealed to the town authorities, saying Leclerc was an unfair competitor. He also was accused of defrauding the tax collector. Compromises went over his books but could find no irregularities.

The fact was that Edouard Leclerc was guilty of an unheard-of, and inadmissible, concept of business — that of abandoning part of his profits to his customers. Leclerc, as a matter of fact, is a wholesaler who is also a retailer. He has one golden rule — never to take more than nine per cent profit on any one item.

After three years, Leclerc says, "my annual turnover had reached 70 million francs (about \$135,000). Today it is over 300 million francs. And whenever I have started a store prices have gone down all around. If this is war, I am on the winning side."

There are 800,000 small shopkeepers in France to whom the name of Leclerc is like the red rag to a bull. Yet when he opened his first Paris branch he said:

"I do not aim to lead a great chain of stores. I am on the small shopkeepers' side. My original store in Landerneau is quite enough for me. What I want, as I always have, is to see the cost of living go down."

Leclerc thinks that this would be automatic if 40 grocers in Paris and 1,000 in the rest of France would apply his method. But for this they must have sufficiently large stores," he added, "covering a minimum of 600 square feet, plus a capital of 15 million francs to pay cash for goods and serve as a reserve."

Leclerc, who now has 10 shops scattered throughout the country, recently gave some hints to little shopkeepers over the national radio.



GROCCER LECLERC (left) explains how his store operates to a customer at the recent opening of his Paris outlet.

He told them to group their purchases with those of other grocers around them. Every grocer should specialize in one product. The reason why so many small businesses fold up is that they want to stock too many items. (This does not apply to village stores.)

Don't fall for the slick salesman talk that you will do more business if you have neon lights and plate glass windows. These cost money and eat up profits.

Beware of the "help yourself" system. This is the best way to lose money unless you have sufficient staff to supervise customers.

Laughter Is Good For Health

Do you laugh much? The answer may depend on your age. The older we grow, the less we laugh. Children laugh much more than adults.

If you're a sedentary job, laughter is one of the finest exercises for you. It exercises scores of different muscles in the body which in turn have a massaging effect upon the body's organs.

Watch that laugh of yours if you find yourself rocking in your seat at a humorous story sometime. It may betray your character to an acute observer. Who says so? A serious-minded psychologist who boasts that he rarely laughs himself, although he's been studying the laughter of men, women and children for some years.

The best kind of laugh is the hearty "Ha-ha-ha!" he asserts. The person who laughs like this has a frank and open disposition and is not likely to deceive you.

The "He-he-he" laugh is not so good, according to the expert. It's a sure sign of a moody and gloomy man, he says.

What about "Ho-ho-ho-ho"? They are usually strong and generous. The worst kind of laugh is the "Hu-hu-hu," says the psychologist. It reveals that the person is selfish, mean and may have criminal tendencies.

Some people may find any attempt to assess a person's character by his laughter laughable, but whatever you think, it's a fact that there have been men and women who frankly confessed that they were unable to laugh.

An Essex man used to say sadly that he had gone through his long life trying to cultivate a hearty laugh. He offered \$200 to anyone who could make him laugh. Many tried. No one succeeded.

"It's no laughing matter trying to learn how to laugh," quipped an American university student who took a course aimed at developing his sense of humor. He said he was so grimly determined to benefit from it that he did not laugh once throughout the seven weeks' course and even forgot to smile when he failed in his exam.

The German general, von Moltke, who died in 1891, hated to hear people laugh. All his life he found it almost impossible to laugh at anything or anybody. He was reputed to have laughed only twice after his twenty-first birthday.

In Ceylon a small outcast tribe exists whose members never laugh. Ask the reason why and they reply: "What is there to laugh at?"

A Briton who spent years analyzing laughter came to the surprising conclusion that it is "directly or indirectly related to the behaviour of the instinct of love." He contended that only men and women in love know how to laugh well and get real physical benefit from laughter.

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AUNT JOANNA BAILLIE'S GINGERBREAD
December 25, 1842, Kirklands
1 lb. treacle (black)
1/2 lb. butter
1/2 lb. soft sugar (brown)
Melt all in pan over fire and let it cook and add
1 lb. flour
2 oz. ground ginger
1/2 oz. caraway seeds
4 eggs, well beaten
1 desiccated baking soda
1/2 lb. citron

To be baked in a moderately hot oven.

"I would like to share with readers of the Monitor a recipe I obtained from my grandmother. It is an easy-to-make and easier-to-eat, simple but yet settle cake — good when topped with powdered sugar and served with ice cream — superb when filled and topped with sweetened whipped cream and fruit, canned or fresh. I wish Mrs. Robert Orr, Palisade, N.J."

HOT MILK SPONGE CAKE
4 eggs
2 cups sugar
Salt (pinch)
1 cup boiling milk
2 cups flour
1 1/2 teaspoons double-acting baking powder
1 teaspoon vanilla

Beat eggs and sugar together for 20 minutes by hand or about 10 minutes at moderate speed



MOTHER TAUGHT ME MANNERS — Daintily folding one paw across her chest much as human diners keep one hand on their laps while eating, this little bear shows his snout into his dinner pail. He's sampling a meal of bread at the Chessington, England, zoo.

TABLE TALKS

by Jane Andrews

Thank you for the gifts of prized recipes that you send in during the year. Your motive in sending them is to share the things you like with other readers, and this surely is true giving, writes Eleanor Richey Johnston in the Christian Science Monitor.

Sometimes a reader's sharing goes further, as in the case of Mrs. Elizabeth Bowden, Cowbridge, Glamorgan, Wales, who writes, "My hobby is collecting historical kitchen secrets." She sent in one about George III of England.

"The third King George's discrimination in cookery was nicer than in politics. I give you here, with his favorite cakes," she writes, then quotes, "Excellent small cakes which are much esteemed at Court, the King himself having eaten of them (1760 A.D.)."

"Take three pounds of very fine flour, one pound and a half of butter, and as much currants and as much sugar, seven eggs, and four yolks, and knead it well together into a paste, adding one nutmeg grated and a little rose water; so make them up about the bigness of your hand and bake them upon a plate tin. When baked, scrape on some sugar." I generally use one quarter of the quantities mentioned and only half the eggs given, using self-rising flour," said Mrs. Bowden.

MARROW BALLS
1 well-rounded tablespoon creamed marrow
1 beaten egg
Salt
Dash of nutmeg
Dried, rolled and sifted bread crumbs
Mix first 4 ingredients, then add enough bread crumbs to form into a soft ball about the size of a nutmeg. Drop into boiling soup stock. Balls will at first sink to bottom of kettle, but will rise later. Remove and serve with soup. This amount makes 8 balls. Multiply it, if you wish.

SUPP STOCK
2 1/2 pounds shank of beef
6 cloves
8 peppercorns
1 piece mace or sprinkling of nutmeg
1 bunch celery cut in small pieces
1 carrot
1/2 teaspoon celery seed
1 clove
1 sprig thyme
Several sprigs parsley

Place shank of beef in large soup kettle, cover with cold water several inches higher than meat; let stand 1 hour. Then add all other ingredients except salt. Simmer 3-4 hours. Add salt 1/2 hour before soup is done. Strain through a colander; set aside to cool. Place in refrigerator until fat forms on top; remove fat. Reheat and strain again through large sieve.

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End Of Historic Mountain Climbing

So at last to Camp IV again, out of the cruel white desert of snow. The tension and suppressed emotion that now filled this camp emanated from the tip of the mountain.

On top at last the summit of Everest was reached. The party down the hill. He was raising his arm and waving as he walked. It was thumbs up. I watched them approach, dimly, with never a sign of success or failure. Down they tramped mechanically, and up we went, trembling with expectation.

Soon I could not see a thing for the steam so I pulled the goggles up from my eyes; as just as I recovered from the sudden dazzle of the snow I caught sight of George Lowe, leading the party down the hill. He was raising his arm and waving as he walked. It was thumbs up. I watched them approach, dimly, with never a sign of success or failure. Down they tramped mechanically, and up we went, trembling with expectation.

One of the men, climbing a cliff, was heard to say, "I'm sorry, but we'd better go back. Sooner or later that boy will get stuck up there, and the way I feel I just couldn't face having to bring him down."

The boy did get stuck, on a tiny ledge seventy-five feet up. Blanchford phoned the ambulance control room, guided the crew to the cliff top, and, despite protests, dumped a canvas harness attached to a 250 foot rope and swung down. As he sighted the boy, clinging to a sheer slab of rock by toes and fingers, the rope dislodged a large piece of rock above Blanchford's head.

It fell between his face and the cliff, hit his stomach, knocked him unconscious and sent him swinging and spinning across the cliff-face.

When he regained his senses he swung himself towards the boy, grabbed him by the waist, pulled him off the ledge, and lowered him foot by foot to the cliff bottom. Then he collapsed, bruised and bleeding, into a rock pool.

After rescuing a boy scout who had fallen into a cliff gully, he went down a second time to retrieve the lad's wallet containing

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But in Europe it was not so. The North Atlantic, beyond the tropic's edge, could blow gales at any season, and there were no seasonal winds, obligingly

changing directions twice a year, to help mariners on their way.

On their way to what? What lay in the West, beyond all that bitter sea? In the East were silks, spices, jewels, gold. The Old World's turned east. The long spice and rich silk roads led there, and the European emporiums for both centered on the Mediterranean. India, Persia, Arabia "The Bled," were the sources of riches and of trade. Wealth was there then in sailing out into the Atlantic, bound for nowhere? European seamen had no incentive to make bold transoceanic voyages. So the Atlantic was not crossed by ships for centuries and, in the end, its opening was a chance by accident of the quest for a sea route to the East. Scholars had long theorized that to sail west would bring ships east. It was the East they sought — "Wild Ocean" by Alan Villiers.

These men were no criminals. They were God's messengers of the Good News of the Gospel. In the name of Jesus Christ they had cast the demon out of a young lady who was a sinner, waverer, or as we would say today, a fortune teller. The men who made money from the girl's work were angry and instigated an uprising against Paul and Silas. They should have rejoiced that another had been freed from the clutches of Satan but their greed for money blinded their eyes to the glories of the Gospel. Missionaries still meet with this type of violent opposition. In our own land the opposition is more subtle. But the forces that make money on the weaknesses and sins of others are well organized and can fight back with vigor when disturbed. If one exorcises from one of the more desperate gangs, his life may be in jeopardy for a time, at least. The prayer and praise of Paul and Silas were heard by the prisoners. How unusual it was! Then God intervened with an earthquake. The prisoners were loosed. The convicted jailer asked that most important question: "What must I do to be saved?" The answer, which is our memory selections, was a simple one. We are saved, not by what we in our strength do, but by trusting in Jesus Christ and what He has done for us. We are saved by grace through faith.

The jailer was a new man. After he was baptized he washed the blood of the stripes that had been laid upon them. How tenderly he must have done it! Then he fed them. It was a happy home. Jesus Christ had come into their lives. And it came about through the faithful witnessing of two of God's children, while enduring suffering for Jesus' sake.

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Van Ambulance On Stolen Gas

It was a bad evening in Guernsey. Blanchford, the scoutmaster, he kept his ambulance going on stolen or smuggled gas, charcoal or horses. Once he and his assistant, Charles Frost, eyes resolved to raid a locked German gasoline-drum store 100 yards from a German billet. The penalties if they were caught would be a long prison sentence and maybe a concentration camp.

They drove up with their half under cloudy three-quarter moon and unscrewed the rusty hinges from the door. They grunted and heaved to roll one of the heavy drums up a ramp of two planks into the van. Then they heard a car approaching rapidly.

"It's the 'greenies' (Germans) all right," Froome whispered. "They look like officers."

The vehicle came down the middle of the road. Blanchford knew that its masked headlights would pick out the lower half of the van and the drum. He closed his eyes in despair. Then he heard Froome whispering:

"They're turning off. They're going to the house over there."

Climbing noisily from the car, the Germans vanished into the house. The night was silent again. The two men heaved the drum into the van and rolled out a second. It was halfway up the ramp when one plunk snapped the drum like a rifle-shot.

The drum thumped to the ground. Both froze as an upstairs window in the German billet opened and a light shined down. No search party emerged.

Desperately, the two men jammed a piece of the broken plank under the intact one, heaved the drum into the van, shut the store doors, rescrewed the hinges and drove off at full throttle. The ambulance would have gas for some time to come.

Once when a gang of thugs blocked the path of the ambulance, Blanchford accelerated and forced a way through. A man leapt on the running board and tried to grab the wheel. Blanchford swerved and flung him off. The ambulance forwent, on picked up the patient and took another route back to the hospital.

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