



## The Recovery of Dr. Lecaut

By C. KENNETT BURROW.

### PART I.

Dr. Anatole Lecaut, sitting alone in his consulting room, experienced a sense of flatness, almost of boredom, which troubled him. He had anticipated that when the war was over, and he was released from his terrible and exhausting field hospital work, he would return to his civilian practice, take up once more the old interests, and retire, not too late in life, to a little farm, where he proposed to cultivate placidity and certain herbs of healing. But, though no man more than he rejoiced at the coming of peace, there had come with it this sense of flatness. A younger man might have struck into new lines of research or discovered the lacking stimulus in doubtful excitements; but Lecaut was on the verge of fifty; he had sown his wild oats and become an entirely decorous citizen. And there remained, it seemed, only this emptiness, a most depressing prospect for a man still capable of endeavor and keen enjoyment.

He switched off the light in his consulting room, put on his hat, and went out, telling his housekeeper that he would not be back to dinner.

"But, monsieur," she protested, "I have prepared for you a beautiful meal; there are eggs with the wine sauce that you love, and a chicken as plump, I declare, as the baby of Marie, my daughter." The doctor paused.

"Will there be enough for two?" he asked.

"Of a certainty, yes."  
"Then I will dine at home, and bring with me M. Nivette."

The few streets through which the doctor passed on his way to the house of Nivette, the lawyer, has a deserted air, partly, no doubt, because the evening was cold and threatened snow, and partly, as Lecaut sadly reflected, there were fewer people in Dourlax than there used to be. He had a sense of personal loneliness and almost homelessness that was new to him. Before the war he had been well enough content with his bachelor life, his friends and his profession.

Nivette greeted him with enthusiasm, and in three minutes was ready to return with him.

"You have brought me comfort, friend Anatole," he said. "That I suppose, is part of your business. My wife, as you know, is away, and without her the kitchen goes to the devil. And I am hungry. This cold nips me. I feel myself growing small and old."

Nivette rattled on in his usual way, and the doctor listened when he felt inclined and thought of something else when he did not. The lawyer was a man of immense good nature, a quality, he declared, which stood in the way of his professional success. Nevertheless he had done very well, and there were few cases of litigation in Dourlax in which he did not take a part.

The dinner was excellent, and when the lawyer had disposed of the last of certain gaufrettes for which the doctor's housekeeper was famous, he said: "Now, Anatole, let us talk."

"I have been listening to you," said the doctor.

"But you, also, are capable of speech."

"At present, my friend, I am not capable of anything. I take no interest in work, and not much, as you may have observed, in my friends."

"You have not yet recovered from your exertions during the war?"

"On the contrary, I have recovered completely," Nivette looked at him.

"Is it possible that at your time of life—?" He paused.

"Well," said the doctor.

"That you have fallen in love?"

"It is not in the least possible. I am merely suffering from a reaction for which I can discover no correcting stimulus."

"The condition sounds dangerous," said Nivette.

"It is extremely unpleasant," said the doctor.

"If I may express an opinion, this condition results from living alone."

"Nonsense," said Lecaut.

"I assure you that my wife is a constant stimulus to me. Without her I should be cut in two—lost."

"That is true," said the doctor, smiling. "Madame Nivette is a wonderful woman."

"I hear your telephone bell!" cried Nivette. "Now we shall be interrupted. What a life, doctor!" Lecaut hurried away to the hall, and presently returned, looking a little perplexed.

"Anything serious?" Nivette asked. Lecaut sat down, cracked a walnut, and peeled it carefully.

"If illness turned out to be as serious as most people imagine them to be, the world would soon be depopulated. \* \* \* Do you know anything of Madame Corton, who lives in the old house in the Rue des Cailloux?"

"Madame Corton; the old house in the Rue des Cailloux," the lawyer repeated. "Yes, I can give you some information. It is my business, you understand, to know something about everybody. Madame Corton has been living in the Rue des Cailloux for three months. She is an Englishwoman who married one of our nation; she is now a widow. Her only son died in France. He fell within twenty miles of Dourlax. That is why she has chosen our city as a place of residence."

"Is that all you know?"

"I can recall no more," Nivette said, puckering his brows.

"Then I can give you further information. She has a daughter."

"Amazing! A daughter, and I not to know!"

"Madame Corton telephones to me that her daughter is unwell, and she requires my attendance in the Rue des Cailloux at once."

"Then, my friend, why do you not hurry there?"

"One cannot leave a guest at a moment's notice. Moreover, I am puzzled. Why should Madame Corton send for me when there are no fewer than three doctors in the Rue des Cailloux and one just round the corner in the Rue de la Harpe?"

"She has, of course, heard of your great reputation," Dr. Lecaut shook his head.

"Your explanation," he said is generous, but foolish. My reputation, I am convinced, has nothing to do with it. If you are in no hurry to return to your wifeless house, wait for me here."

"With all the pleasure in the world," said Nivette. "The room is warm, the wine good. What more can a man want?"

The doctor walked to the Rue des Cailloux. He could not explain to himself why this unexpected call aroused in him an interest which amounted almost to excitement. Possibly the quality of the voice which he had heard over the telephone had appealed to him, possibly the counteraction had set in. At any rate, he found himself on the doorstep of the house in the Rue des Cailloux in an astonishingly short time.

He was admitted by Madame Corton herself. At first sight, in the dim light of the hall, she seemed too young and girlish-looking to have had a son old enough to die in the great cause. But when, a moment later, Lecaut sat with her in a room where the light was stronger, he perceived her to be a woman whose youth survived, indeed, but it had been subdued by sorrow. Her brown eyes met his with an engaging candor, and her voice—yes, it was her voice that had suddenly roused him. What did it recall?

"I rang you up at this late hour, Dr. Lecaut," she said, "because my daughter would see no one but you."

"I am honored, madame."

"To be quite frank, I have not the least idea why she has need of a doctor."

"It is my business to discover that," Madame Corton held the doctor's eyes in a steady scrutiny that would have embarrassed him if it had been, as it were, less confiding. Her eyes, like her voice, seemed to call to some elusive memory.

"Pauline is very young," she said. "At eighteen one may suffer from maladies which even science does not understand. It is possible that I have not her full confidence. Perhaps, Dr. Lecaut, she will be more frank with you \* \* \* Come, you shall see her."

Lecaut followed Madame Corton with the strange feeling that, though this was doubtless a professional visit, its appeal to him was entirely unprofessional. He was not, in fact, interested in Madame Corton's daughter, though he was already profoundly interested in Madame Corton herself. To have her as a patient (for the slightest indispositions, of course) would have pleased him immensely. He was so intent on this theme of Madame Corton that when she opened a door, entered the room beyond and said, "Pauline, Dr. Lecaut is here," it was with difficulty that he wrenched his mind back to the fact of the

## CANADA'S PROBLEMS REVIEWED BY OFFICIALS OF BANK OF MONTREAL

The addresses of the President and General Manager of the Bank of Montreal, at the annual meeting of shareholders of that institution, were the authoritative pronouncements of men of international standing in matters of finance, and as such they will undoubtedly be followed with much interest both in this country and abroad. Every year the addresses at this annual meeting are looked forward to with keen anticipation by merchants and manufacturers because of the comprehensive analysis that they provide of financial conditions in Canada, and because they afford guidance in the general business policy to be followed during the coming year.

### Must Deal With Railway Situation

In the view of Sir Vincent Meredith, the way to sustained improvement in trade is not yet clear, but that improvement will be hastened when labor realizes that war inflated wages cannot continue, and that more efficiency and greater production are absolutely necessary in order to bring prices down to a level that will stimulate consumption and thus provide increased employment. His warning as to the evil effects of heavy taxation in stifling industry and enterprise is one that will be cordially endorsed by all thinking men, and one which those who direct our public affairs surely will not dare to ignore. And Sir Vincent merits public thanks for the courageous way in which he dealt with the railway problem; in particular for his uncompromising declaration that no marked im-

provement can be expected in the present burdensome conditions so long as the roads continued under public—which, as he said, means political—ownership and operation. Both Great Britain and the United States have realized the financial chaos inseparable from such ownership and operation, and have adopted the only remedy.

### Retail Forces Out of Line.

Sir Frederick Williams-Taylor undoubtedly placed his finger on one of the weak spots in our present trade conditions when he said that while on the one hand the purchasing power of the products of our natural resources was at the lowest level reached for several years past, in other directions we still had high prices, and retail prices were conspicuously out of line. It is on the purchasing power of the products of our natural resources that we must place our main dependence for a revival in trade and it is obvious that there can be no sustained improvement until the price of other commodities are commensurate with that purchasing power.

Summed up, the most obvious needs of Canada at the present time, in the opinion of these two eminent financiers, are drastic economy in the conduct of public affairs, a solution of the railway problem on the basis of private as against political ownership and operation, a vigorous immigration policy for the peopling of our waste spaces by diverting to Canada the stream of immigrants that formerly flowed elsewhere, and deflation in the cost of labor.

daughter's existence. A moment later he found himself alone with his patient.

A girl had risen from a chair by the fire. She advanced a couple of paces with outstretched hand and then paused. Lecaut approached, bowed over the hand and begged Mlle. Corton to be seated. She obeyed, and as she sat looking up at him, he examined her face with a curiosity inspired solely by the desire to discover whether she resembled her mother. Pauline was unmistakably pretty and dainty and fresh, but Madame Corton was more than all this.

"Why do you look at me like that?" the girl cried. "Do you suspect—?"

"I suspect nothing," said Lecaut. "And yet you look at me as though you suspect, oh, all sorts of things!"

Pauline held her hands over her eyes for a moment and then, pointing to a chair, commanded the doctor, with engaging imperiousness, to take it.

"Dr. Lecaut, I believe you to be a good and a kind man," she said.

"The belief is flattering, but the question is, am I a good doctor?"

"That doesn't matter in the least," she said.

"But I am here merely as a doctor."

"Again you are mistaken \* \* \* There is nothing whatever the matter with me!" Lecaut showed no sign of surprise; his gaze remained coolly sympathetic. He leaned forward and stretched his hand toward the fire.

"Madame Corton, your mother, was puzzled as to the nature of your illness."

"Then she does suspect!"

"I know nothing of what Madame Corton may think," said Lecaut. "But, mademoiselle, if there is nothing whatever the matter with you, why am I here at this moment?"

"Can I trust you, Dr. Lecaut?"

"My professional honor has never been called in question."

"But I have told you that I need no professional help. This is a matter of profoundest confidence. Will you be my friend?"

The doctor was silent for a time. Probably the only reason why he was not immediately carried away by the girl's appeal was that he had already been carried away by her mother's.

"You hesitate!" Pauline cried.

"I will promise to be your friend," he said, "but it is possible that your idea of what a friend may demand from a friend may not agree with mine. You might, for example, demand something of me which would not commend itself to Madame Corton."

"Ah, the little mother! Why do men always fall down and worship her?" Lecaut was a little startled; he leaned back in his chair and pressed his finger-tips together.

"I am not aware," he said, "of having assumed that attitude."

"But you have. I'm sure of it. \* \* \* Dr. Lecaut, I will trust you. It is my heart, not my body, that is sick. When one loves, what is the remedy?"

"Satisfaction or oblivion," said the doctor.

"And if one does not know whether one's love is returned?"

"In that case it would be necessary to find out."

"But if one does not know where the loved one is, or even whether he is alive? \* \* \* Dr. Lecaut, I heard him speak your name with affection and admiration."

"The name is not uncommon," he said.

"But I feel sure that it was you. I was sure when I saw your name on the door in the Rue Lamartine, the day after my arrival in Dourlax. And I was still more certain when I saw you leave your house one morning. But I was afraid to speak to you then."

"So you concocted this little plan, this plot, to bring me to you?" Lecaut said, smiling. "So far it is all quite plain, but we have arrived at nothing. What is the name of this fortunate gentleman?"

"Henri Marmet." The girl fancied that the doctor's shoulders lifted before he again leaned toward the fire. She watched him anxiously, her lips parted, her fingers at her bosom.

"Yes, I know Henri Marmet," the doctor said very quietly. "He is the son of one of my dearest friends, now dead."

"But Henri—where is he now?"

"I have not the faintest idea," Pauline's breath caught in a little sob, and Lecaut, drawing his chair nearer, took one of her hands. "It is possible," he added, "that I may be able to discover where he is."

"He is not—dead?"

"No. I should have heard of his death. I know that he was wounded twice."

"That was before I met him in Rouen. We saw each other only half a dozen times."

"That, however, was enough," said Lecaut, releasing her hand.

"To overwhelm me, yes—but for him? I thought, I still think \* \* \* will you help me, Dr. Lecaut?"

"Without your mother's consent?"

"Not a word to her yet! How could I confess to her that I had given my heart so suddenly, so absolutely, to one who was almost a stranger?"

"Yet you confess to me," said Lecaut.

"Ah, but you are a man, and his friend!"

(To be concluded.)

### Words.

Words are colored beads  
I string upon a chain.  
Some are gold with sunshine,  
Some are bright with rain.

Words are splendid pictures  
Hanging on the wall.  
Some are big with mountains,  
Some are hushed and small.

Words are waxen candles  
Shining on a tree,  
For the dark to see itself  
And wish a wish for me.

Words are whisper-thoughts  
I think of in the night,  
That walk about with gladness  
Soon as it is light.

Words are gay balloons  
Bright against the snow.  
I loose their strings and watch them  
Sailing high and low.

Words, words, words—  
How I love you, words!  
I'm the nest from which you fly,  
You're my singing birds.

—Louise Ayres Garnett.

Canada's forests are estimated to contain eight hundred billion feet of commercial timber and one billion cords of pulpwood.

Never clean varnished paint or enamel with soap, or with soda and water. This makes the varnish dull, and it may even cause it to peel away from the wood. A better plan is to use a solution prepared with tea leaves. Collect the leaves and put them in a basin. Pour hot water over them and allow them to soak for ten minutes. Use the liquid cold for washing over the varnished surface. Finally dry and polish with a soft cloth.

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### Old Foes in New Places.

The rat is a great danger to the airship and the aeroplane; the mechanism is so delicate that one rat on board can do serious mischief. If it bites through woodwork, or tears the fabric of the wings, it may cause the vessel to collapse.

There is a remarkable story of a large aeroplane that during the war was flying over mountainous country on the Western front. Pilot and observer were much disturbed at discovering traces of a rat on board, but they had no means of capturing it. They thought of landing, but they knew that their hidden foe might bring them disaster before they could reach the earth. Suddenly a bright idea came to the pilot, and he began to mount higher and higher in the already rarefied air. Still higher he went until he had almost reached an altitude higher than any that man has attained. Both men found breathing extremely difficult: their ears felt as if bursting, their breath came in tearing gasps; but they were waiting for something they knew must happen. They knew that their enemy must succumb before they succumbed themselves. Presently, with a feeble scamper, a large rat emerged from some secret nook of the aeroplane and fell panting and dying on the floor. It was the work of a moment to fling it overboard.

### Tunnel-Digging Machine Also Lines Walls.

Digging a tunnel, removing the earth, and lining the walls with concrete blocks as the tunnelling advances, are all accomplished by a single machine. Four revolving arms at the front of a cutting head, mounted in a steel drum, carry the cutters which remove the earth. It is deposited by buckets, on a conveyor belt, which carries it to cars, brought up from the rear. Behind the cutting head are the gearing of the cut. Back of this is the lining constructor, which lays concrete blocks designed so that when they are pushed into place they expand and fit in spiral courses, giving a forward motion to the machine, which keeps the cutting head in contact with the tunnel heading.

### How Tom Sawyer Did It.

You remember how Mark Twain's popular hero, the resourceful Tom Sawyer, got all the boys in his neighborhood to compete for the privilege of doing his distasteful job—white-washing a fence—by telling them what fun it was? He made the disagreeable task his aunt had assigned to him seem so enjoyable, that they gave up to him their marbles, their tops, and other toys for the pleasure of being allowed to take a hand in doing it. Each of the boys took a turn at white-washing until the fence was finished to Tom's satisfaction.

Many employers have the happy faculty of so enthusing their employees that they easily turn hard work into play. It is a great business asset.

Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands is an expert linguist. She is an expert horsewoman, draws cleverly, is a fairly accomplished musician, and has an intimate acquaintance with all of the details of practical housework.

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