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Ansermet strikes me as a highly sophisticated man, whose general appearance is that of a Catulle Mendès with a dash of Alfred de Musset, the whole enlivened with a touch of the Paris of Jean Cocteau and Stravinsky. The resultant figure is that of a cosmopolitan who is more French than the French. A French Swiss naturally tends to become exaggeratedly French, just as a German Swiss tends to become exaggeratedly German, and when, in addition to being Franco-Swiss he is a cosmopolitan, then we have a chance of seeing a man who seems in himself to be the very personification of Paris.

Since the *Mercure de France* stated that one quartet by Mozart was worth all Beethoven's symphonies, Mozart has been the rage throughout England. I shall try to illustrate how the French misunderstand Mozart and how M. Ansermet distorts Schubert. If one were going to hear a French pianist play Mozart one would expect to find those reputed 'French' qualities of restraint and intelligence; but when that famous Parisian pianist, Mr. Ricardo Vines, came to London a year or two ago one was shocked to discover that M. Vines—the idol of the Paris salons—played Mozart like a musical box, without the slightest expression. He did not play with "restraint," because "restraint" implies something restrained, some passion or vital force held in subjection and controlled; and M. Vines controlled nothing but the mechanism of his fingers. He did not play with "intelligence," because intelligence presupposes the directing or guiding with a purpose of some passion or vital force, and when there is nothing to guide or direct there can be no intelligence guiding.

And searching my memory I find that the two greatest Mozart players I have ever heard are Busoni and Arthur Schnabel, both pianists of prodigious vitality. Busoni did play Mozart with restraint and intelligence. The purity and intensity of his playing came from the passionate but controlled imagination of that fine artist, and the greatness of Schnabel's Mozart playing has the same root. But the Parisian conception of Mozart as a rococo decorator with the exquisite sensibility and refined faultless taste of a Place Vendôme upholsterer—one of those ladies or gentlemen who will advise an American millionaire how to decorate and furnish a house to which the Duc d'Orleans might be invited—is perfectly ridiculous. All Mozart's best music glows with passion and vitality and, like all passionate vitality, in its own day when its novelty shocked it was thought extreme and vulgar. But the Parisians—and I wish to distinguish carefully between the France of Voltaire, Racine, Baudelaire, Berlioz and dilettante Paris of to-day—either play Mozart in the trivial musical-box style or they smear away the passionate hardness of his melodic line with the syrup of a sham sensibility. This very peculiar Parisian "sensibility" is unmistakable; it has the same quality as hair-dressers' oil of obliterating contours and giving a surface brilliance, but it can only please de-vitalised minds.

And now comes M. Ansermet and gives us a performance of Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" which was ultra-Parisian. Schubert had many remarkable qualities, but if he has one outstanding characteristic it is that of pure spontaneity. There never was a composer who was such a natural gushing fountain of melody. His music needs to be played or sung with that crystal purity of expression which can come only when the simple rapture of the heart is allied with the mastery of the great artist. It is impossible to play the tricks with Schubert that one can play, for example, with Wagner; but under M. Ansermet even the instruments of the orchestra seemed to take slightly different tones to their natural ones. One knows the peculiar character which the harmonium gives to music; well, M. Ansermet seemed to throw a film of self-consciousness over the natural, fresh and sparkling colours of Schubert's orchestral palette. And he interfered with those direct springing rhythms, which are so characteristic of Schubert, by such horrible sentimental rallentandos that if justice were done to him he should never be allowed to conduct Schubert again. It was in the middle of one of these rallentandos that I caught sight of the chamois. It was no real chamois but the chamois of a coloured picture postcard. It stood at the edge of a blue lake by the side of a large hotel at the foot of a glacier. Across the top of the postcard was printed "Winter in Switzerland." Now the chamois is not at the beck and call of even the most adroit of hotel-keepers; it is a shy beast, and the visitor to Switzerland expecting to meet the chamois is as likely to be disappointed as the music-lover who expects to find the true Schubert at the hands of such a cultivated Swiss Parisian musician as Monsieur Ansermet.

The Old Swiss Aristocracy.

After the above it is quite refreshing to gather from the *Glasgow Herald* (Jan. 14th) that we can boast of some very ancient Swiss families:—

Does any reader know who St. Rumbold was? I do not, and I venture to believe many

other writers are equally ignorant. Yet one of the most charming weddings of the past week took place at St. Rumbold's, Shaftesbury, when Miss Elizabeth Marion Williams married Baron F. A. de Watteville, of Berne, Switzerland. I console myself for my ignorance about the Saint by thinking how many people know as little concerning the old aristocracy of Switzerland, and there I score. Already a hundred years ago my grandparents were intimate with many of them, and my grandfather—a Scotsman, of course—rented a château belonging to one of the old Bernese families on the lovely Lake of Thun.

There were several quaint, turretted old country seats on its shores, where noble Swiss families had lived for centuries. You ask "How came this in a Republic?" The Republic of Switzerland, as we know it, my friends, is a creation of the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Neuchâtel, Lausanne, Vevey, Geneva, and above all, Berne, have their old nobility, as many an ancient dwelling, surmounted by a coat-of-arms, testifies; and mighty proud are those patrician families. It was in semi-royal state that my grandparents saw a de Watteville presiding at the Swiss Diet.

One of the most charming fêtes at which they were present at Berne included representatives of all the Swiss cantons, and the caps then worn by some of the ladies were near akin to the bewitching little close-fitting caps of Miss Williams and her bridesmaids. The bridegroom may have told her of various quaint customs preceding the weddings of "kent folk" in Switzerland. Some are not observed so closely as in the days of my grandparents, but not all have fallen into disuetude.

A Swiss Motor Coach.

No Swiss cars are offered in this country and we hear little about our own motor industry. *Motor Transport* (Jan. 16th) publishes the following description of a "Saurer" and of the long trip undertaken by it:—

"The private motor coach, as a rival to the ordinary touring car, is a class of vehicle which M. Dominique Lamberjack is seeking to develop. One of the most experienced motorists on the Continent, as well as a successful agent, M. Lamberjack about a year ago purchased a Saurer 2-ton chassis, this being a model with a four-cylinder ball-bearing engine of 90 x 150 mm. bore and stroke, and carried out some modifications, including the removal of the governor and the engine brake, the fitting of a new type of mechanical brake, and a lighter throttle control. A 12-seated Weymann saloon body was built on the chassis and special provision was made for carrying baggage.

After a successful trip of about three thousand miles round France, twelve persons being carried all the time, the Saurer started on one of the most extensive tours ever made by a coach. The itinerary included France, Switzerland, Italy, and the object of the journey was to prove that a party of twelve, which in reality included three families, could travel as fast, more commodiously, and at very much less cost than the same persons making use of three cars.

The journey, which was over a distance of 1,800 miles, started from Paris. Travelling through Dijon, Dole, and Besançon, the party crossed into Switzerland. A considerable mileage was covered in Switzerland, and the Grisons canton, which until recently has been closed to all motor traffic, was passed through. Going into Italy, the lake district was toured, a run was made over the private motor roads from Como to Milan. Turin was visited, and the return to Paris was made through the D'Aost valley, the Petit St. Bernard pass, Chambéry, the Col du Chat, Belley, and Dijon.

An opportunity was given the writer of following this tour, sometimes as a passenger on the coach, and sometimes on a high-grade private car. The idea that a coach is necessarily slow was soon dispelled, for the Saurer had a speed of 60 m.p.h., and in the journey across France it very frequently averaged 45 m.p.h. over long distances. Even with a fast touring car it was often necessary to drive hard in order to keep pace with the coach.

The idea is so prevalent that a big vehicle is necessarily slow that rather special methods had to be adopted to secure a right of way. After a single blast on the horn small car owners and motor cyclists invariably glanced round, then accelerated and held to the crown of the road, fully convinced that the coach could not overtake them. Although possessing higher speed, it was difficult under these conditions to get by. The coach was therefore fitted with two very powerful electric horns, having different tones. These were not used until the last moment, and the driver of the car ahead, believing that he had two fast cars just behind him, would invariably pull over and would be left in the rear before he had completely recovered from his astonishment.

With the exception of this reluctance on the part of other drivers to accord a right of way, no

difficulty was experienced on the main roads of France and Italy. On some of the Alpine passes M. Lamberjack proved that, despite his four tons weight he could run down hill as fast as any modern private car equipped with four wheel brakes. There were several friendly matches between the coach and a private car, not always to the advantage of the latter vehicle.

One of the best features of the Saurer was the wonderful degree of comfort afforded. With giant pneumatic tyres and deeply upholstered individual seats for the twelve passengers, there was undoubtedly greater comfort than in the most luxurious private car. At 50 m.p.h. the coach was most remarkably steady, the body was absolutely free from rattles or drumming of any kind, and so comfortable was the springing that the passengers had much less impression of speed than when travelling on a normal private car.

The only difficulties attending the trip were encountered in the Grisons canton, where stringent speed regulations exist. On several occasions during the journey the passage of the coach was telephoned to some station ahead, and on our arrival there an official came out to notify the driver that he had considerably exceeded the low local speed limit and must not repeat the offence.

Undoubtedly the Swiss railroads are opposed to motor coaches, and although the roads in the Grisons canton are now open to mechanical vehicles, a regulation has been passed forbidding more than eight persons being carried in any one vehicle. This, of course, entirely rules out the operation of all motor-coaches in that district as a profitable proposition.

At one point officials refused to allow the Saurer to proceed with twelve persons. The party argued that they were touring privately, that their vehicle was not a public coach, and that it was registered in France as a private car. All this was unavailing, and after much time had been lost four persons were obliged to leave the coach and to travel by train to the Italian frontier station at Chiavenna.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

| BONDS. | Jan. 16 | | | Jan. 24 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Fr. | Sfr. | Fr. | |
| Confederation 3% 1903 | 82.50 | | 83.25 | |
| 5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln. | 101.15 | | 102.32 | |
| Federal Railways 3 1/2% A-K | 86.62 | | 86.65 | |
| " " 1924 IV Elect. Ln. | 102.25 | | 102.25 | |
| SHARES. | | | | |
| | Nom | Jan. 16 | Jan. 24 | Fr. |
| Swiss Bank Corporation | 500 | 809 | 829 | |
| Crédit Suisse | 500 | 900 | 900 | |
| Union de Banques Suisses | 500 | 725 | 737 | |
| Société pour l'Industrie Chimique | 1000 | 2866 | 2942 | |
| Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz | 1000 | 4925 | 4975 | |
| Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe | 1000 | 3210 | 3275 | |
| S.A. Brown Boveri | 350 | 539 | 611 | |
| C. F. Bally | 1000 | 1390 | 1412 | |
| Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co. | 200 | 933 | 980 | |
| Entreprises Suizer S.A. | 1000 | 1215 | 1227 | |
| Comp. de Navig. sur le Lac Léman | 500 | 555 | 550 | |
| Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco | 100 | 220 | 245 | |
| Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon | 500 | 748 | 749 | |



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During the journey through Switzerland the Saurer climbed the Julier Pass at 7,550ft., the most difficult climb of the entire trip. There was never any difficulty in negotiating the bends, and the engine at all times was equal to its task; the steepest gradients were also descended with a good margin of safety. Returning to France, the Petit St. Bernard was crossed at 7,300ft.

For the entire journey, petrol consumption worked out at the rate of 13 m.p.g., giving a cost per head very much lower than that of a light two-seated car. Two punctures marked the journey. One occurred at the front and occasioned no difficulty, but when a rear tyre had to be changed it was found not only difficult to get the jack under the axle, by reason of the body overhang, but practically impossible to raise the vehicle single-handed. Outside assistance was sought. The coach carried two spare wheels.

Measuring a Glacier's Speed.

From the *Evening Telegraph and Post, Dundee* (Jan. 10th):—

"Modern science has made many changes in methods of investigating the wonders of the earth. To-day it is possible to record the speed of glaciers in ways undreamed of when glaciology first began, just a century ago.

By an aeroplane flight of about an hour's duration, a scientist can reconnoitre a glacial area that would take a week to cover on foot. And by wonderful instruments he can measure glacial depths and record glacial movements.

The new era in the measurement of glacial depths began in 1926, when the principle of "echo-sounding," which has yielded such remarkable results in marine hydrography, was applied by two investigators in different regions of the Swiss Alps.

On the Hintereisferner, under the direction of H. Mothes, numerous charges of explosives were set off and the echoes sent back from the bed of the glacier were recorded by means of seismographs.

Dr. Mercanton, who conducted experiments on the Lower Grindelwald and neighbouring glaciers in the Swiss Alps, used a geophone to detect the echoes of similar detonations. In both cases a number of plausible measurements were secured.

Dr. Mercanton was less successful in attempting to apply the Langevin system of sounding by so-called "ultra-sounds," in which the acoustic signals consist of very rapid vibrations (about 40,000 per second), but experiments with this process are likely to be continued.

In the near future acoustic methods may furnish detailed information regarding the depths of glaciers in all parts of the world, including the Greenland and Antarctic ice caps.

Under the auspices of the International Glacier Commission and similar national organisations in various countries measurements of the advance and retreat of glaciers have been made regularly for some years.

In Switzerland, reports on fluctuations of this character are published annually for 100 glaciers. Though the movements of the glacier front amount to only a few inches a day, they are measured by means of the "cryocinometer," the dial of which is actuated by a wire attached to the ice of the glacier.

It is a hundred years ago last summer since the scientific investigation of glaciers began. Professor Hugi, a Swiss, built a shelter on an overhanging ledge of granite on the rocky strip of debris in the middle of the Unteraar glacier in the Bernese Alps.

He spent several nights in the hut, and visited it during succeeding summers.

The hut, he found, crept slowly downwards with the general movement of the ice beneath it. In 1830 it had travelled several hundred feet, and by 1836, 2200 feet.

In 1839 Louis Agassiz came accidentally upon the hut while exploring the same glacier, and found it 4400 feet from its original location.

In 1840 Agassiz and his companions built a similar shelter nearby. The slow drift of the glacier destroyed the hut, but at various times relics of it were found.

Five years ago a thorough survey of the region was made by Dr. P. L. Mercanton and several pieces of the original rock were identified and under one of them was discovered some of the straw which served Agassiz and his companions as bedding.

The total distance travelled by the shelter up to that time was found to be a little less than three miles."

Tipping.

An interesting correspondence on this subject is published in the *Times* (Jan. 12th). We are told what becomes of the 10% or 15% added to our hotel bills in Switzerland. It has always struck us that the percentage system—which was invented in Germany—simply appropriates as a fixed charge what was originally meant to be a voluntary recognition for personal service. The hotel proprietors are thereby saved the necessity of paying the whole of their staff a decent living wage.

"As one who has spent only too many years in hotels in various countries of Europe, I desire to contribute a few facts to the tipping controversy. Most of your previous correspondents have seemed to me to fail to distinguish between the traveller who stays one or two nights and the person who stays weeks or months. For the former class I am convinced that the percentage charge for "service" is the greatest boon which has been conferred upon travellers since the coming of the electric light. The fact that one can leave the hotel without having to find either the servants whom it is customary to tip, or the necessary change, while feeling that everyone is satisfied, robs travelling of one at least, and that the greatest, of its minor annoyances. Servants whom I have consulted have told me that they prefer the system, because they are sure of getting their tips without having to hang about for them, and no longer suffer either from the non-tipper or from not being on the spot at the exact moment when they are wanted.

The "passing" traveller has little opportunity of getting to know the servants by sight, and still less of making personal friends with them. He sees the hall porter, who is barely conscious of his existence, and the head waiter, who knows nothing about the wine. He may or may not set eyes on the chambermaid. But he knows that they, and still others whom he may not see, expect to be tipped and he is perfectly willing to tip them. By the percentage system he can tip them for their routine services without trouble to himself. In the last 18 hotels in which I have stopped in France the percentage system was in force in all but one, and I left that with the knowledge that I had over-tipped all round.

In Switzerland, where the art of hotel-keeping is well understood, there exists a tariff, drawn up by the servants' trade union, which lays down the proportion of the percentage tips which each servant is to receive from the management. The figures are interesting, and I have never seen them published. The 10 per cent. added to the bill is divided among three departments—the floor, the restaurant and the hall—in the proportions of 37 per cent., 30 per cent., and 33 per cent. respectively. Of the 37 per cent., the chambermaid gets 15 per cent. (out of which she tips the under-chambermaid), the breakfast waiter 11 per cent., and the boots 11 per cent. Of the 30 per cent. allotted to the restaurant, the head waiter gets the lot and out of it is expected to tip the table waiter, if any. Of the 33 per cent. taken by the hall, the day and night porters (and this is noteworthy) each gets the same amount—namely, 8 per cent.—the lift boy 4 per cent., the three boys who hang about the hall, whether by day or night, each 3 per cent., the telephone girl 3 per cent., and the man who meets the trains 1 per cent. The elaborate calculations (easy enough with a decimal coinage) which this distribution involves falls upon the 'Bureau,' and the results are entered in a book, which is open to the servants' inspection. I have never heard any complaint—except from the 'Bureau.' But the union is strong, good servants are scarce, and, after all, the consumer pays.

I have stayed for months, and even for years, in the same hotel under this system. But (and this brings me to the "sojourning" class of traveller) my feeling is that it should be abandoned after a fortnight, or as soon as one has made personal friends with the staff. Even among good servants some are better than others, and it is right that special zeal should be rewarded. The individual tipping need cost no more; one merely adjusts the proportions oneself.

English hotel-keepers, as a whole, have been slow to adopt the percentage system. They prefer individual "good-will" tipping, not only because it saves them trouble, but because "it encourages servants to give satisfaction." They also cherish what appears to me the complete fallacy of thinking that a traveller's tips should be in proportion to his means, instead of in proportion to services rendered. I have stayed in an hotel where millionaires gave the head waiter £5 the first time they saw him; the waiting in that hotel was the worst that I have ever known. On the other hand, I recall no case in which the percentage system has seemed to me to impair the efficiency of the staff."

John Knittel.

From the *Daily Mail* (Jan. 10th):—

"Sidi-bou-Said, the ideal Arab village on the hill behind Carthage, may one day become a tiny Riviera in North Africa, writes a correspondent, who tells me he had tea there with Mr.

Robert Hichens and his fellow-author, Mr. John Knittel, in the Arab villa lent them by Baron d'Erlanger.

They write in simple rooms off a tiled court. For exercise Mr. Hichens is walking, playing tennis, and searching for a pony to ride.

Mr. Knittel is the Swiss born in India who writes in English—his "Into the Abyss," just out, is a rather Zolaesque study of the Swiss peasant—has had a play done in London, won the Swiss golf championship, played in the British one at Hoylake last year, and keeps a flock of sheep on the verge of the desert. He is tri-lingual, did his own translation into German of his new book—it has been welcomed in Switzerland—and has ambitions one day to dig for antiquities on the shores of the Red Sea."

Mr. Knittel is fond of taking his friends by surprise. The other evening he dropped in at the City Swiss Club and we had a very enjoyable game of bridge. He was partnered with the vice-President, who is a wonderful exponent of the "book" whilst the novelist is naturally unconventional; however, they both accepted their doom with rare stoicism. We should like to return the visit and would willingly look after his flock of sheep whilst being dummy!

UNION HELVETIA CLUB.*

The task of the Club Committee has always been a difficult one owing to the fact that the Club is over capitalised, as when it was built the cost by far exceeded the original estimate and large amounts had to be invested by Lucerne, in addition to the share subscription, in the hope that the Club would eventually become a paying concern.

Unfortunately this hope did not materialise at the beginning. In the opening years the Club's balance sheets showed losses which grew until they reached the sum of £2,500. Then, as the Territorial Administration was unable to carry on, they asked Lucerne to take charge of the Club.

In order to remedy the critical state of affairs the G.D. appointed the Club Committee and their own steward in the person of Mr. R. Hasler. They further introduced the 6d. contribution for Society Members and took up Club Members. For a short time this improved the position somewhat, but after a while agitation was raised against the 6d. contribution and also against the Steward, with the result that the 6d. contribution was abolished and the Steward, losing interest in the Club business, caused the undertaking further losses. Eventually he resigned and Mr. Jacques Hasler was appointed in his place by special request of the Territorial Administration supported by the London Branch.

This did not improve matters but rather made them go from bad to worse. It must not, however, be imagined that the Club Committee remained inactive during these adverse periods. It worked its hardest to keep the Club on its feet and managed to do so by affiliating with other Swiss Associations by introducing new Functions with original displays and 'stunts.' Many of these 'stunts' and other productions meant weeks of hard work as they were specially written and produced for the Club.

Although the efforts of the Club Committee helped to make the Club popular in the Swiss Colony and other quarters in London, they were not sufficient to counterbalance the failings of the two above mentioned stewards.

Eventually the 6d. contribution was re-introduced and with the appointment of Mr. Wyss as Steward of the Club business greatly improved and continued to do so through the war period, with the result that the Committee was able to wipe out the £2,500 loss on the balance sheet and also pay back the £400 loan from the Sick Fund to the Territorial Administration. In addition to these payments, and those of interest on capital and shares, substantial amounts were remitted to Lucerne to reduce the Club debt, the total amount so paid being £4,445, and if we add the loss of 2,500, and the £400 Sick Fund loan, plus 350 Debenture Shares bought back in 1925, we get a total amount paid of £7,695, besides the above mentioned interest on capital and shares.

This result has only been achieved by hard work on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Wyss, with the collaboration of the Club Committee. Even if we admit that the war period, which was a prosperous one for undertakings such as ours, helped us it did not make our task much easier, as with the many restrictions we had to face, such as young Swiss being unable to come to England, etc., it was no simple matter to keep things going.

In any case, our good luck during the war turned to our disadvantage when the Society Members heard that we were paying off our debt to Lucerne, and they agitated for the abolition of the 6d. contribution. This they succeeded in bringing about despite the energetic protests of the Club Committee, who knew that the Club would need the 6d. contribution more than ever after the war when trade was bound to decline. But in spite of this, and although Mr. Fred Isler clearly explained the financial position of the Club at a Monthly Meet-

*Re-printed by kind permission from the "Union Helvetia Revue" of Jan. 19th, 1928.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

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