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L. H. Micheli to join us in the capacity of an Honorary Vice-President.

You know already how much we have admired and approved of the scheme of the Unione Ticinese to collect in the Colony several thousand Pounds Sterling in favour of the Dimier Fund for an "Asile des vieillards". In order to worthily contribute to this Fund we handed the sum of £100 to the Fonds de Secours which was at the time about one third of our financial resources. The conception of this scheme was as bold as it was magnanimous, and the fact that all the required conditions have now been fulfilled with a total collection of well over £3,000 is worthy of the highest praise.

(5) I would like to remind members that, although part of our Library was incorporated with that of the S.M.S., we still have many interesting books which are available on loan to members. But in the absence of an actual reading room belonging to ourselves, we have not thought it worth while to subscribe to any papers and reviews, as we used to do some years ago. In this connection I would not, however, omit to express our grateful thanks to the following Associations for various publications and printed matter sent to us:

Secretariat des Suisses à l'Etranger  
Groups of the N.S.H.  
Schweiz. Mustermesse, Basel.  
Zoffingue.  
Information Office, Lugano  
North American Schweizerbund  
Chambre de Commerce Suisse en France.  
Swiss Bank Corporation  
Chemins de fer Fédéraux  
Office central universitaire Suisse.  
Office suisse de l'expansion commerciale  
Pro Juventute  
Davoser Revue  
Der Völkerbund  
Société suisse d'utilité publique  
Swiss Mercantile Society  
Swiss Y.M.C.A.  
Swiss Legation in London  
London and Swiss Universities.

(6) From the foregoing you will perceive that we have just cause to be satisfied with the work achieved during 1930. There is only this one puzzling exception of the infrequent attendance of members at the monthly meetings. I would urge all the members to reconsider this matter of more frequent attendances seriously. I can say with full conviction that, in staying away, they are certainly the greater losers than we, the Council, who, while taking the trouble to arrange these Causeries, also obtain great enjoyment and benefit from them.

We may look forward to the future of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique with calm assurance. We need have no regrets about the past: our aim has lost none of its purity and our patriotic endeavour none of its conviction during the lean and meagre years.

Therefore, let us stick to our guns: let us try to do better this year what we have done well last year, and let us proudly stand by our motto *HELVETICA DIGNITATE AC SECURITATE*.

#### SWISS INSTITUTE ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.

This Society, under the able conductorship of Mr. Paul Dick, gave a most enjoyable concert, on Thursday evening, February 19th at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

The orchestra opened the programme with a vigorous march, "Lausanne qui rit" by E. Dal Monte, followed by Kéler Béla's "Lustspiel Ouverture"; both renderings were received with much applause.

Mr. George Owen then sang "Dan Cupid hath a Garden" (from Merry England) by Edward German, with a rich and very pleasant voice, which induced the audience to clamour for an "encore" which was acceded to. The Ballet—music from Gounod's "Faust" was indeed a fine performance, the tempi half through the first part were rather too slow for my liking and sounded somehow stiff, but the players soon warmed up and the second part with finale were rendered in a masterly manner and received an applause which was well merited. Both conductor and orchestra have given a striking proof of their earnest and sincere work.

Miss Olivia Hilder, who we hear, has sung at various Continental Opera Houses, gave an exquisite rendering of the Aria "Caro Nome" from Verdi's opera "Rigoletto". Miss O. Hilder is the possessor of a rich and imposing voice and a spare column would be necessary to do justice to this extraordinary vivid singer's presentation of this so popular Aria. The artiste graciously consented to an "encore" which was again enthusiastically received.

After the interval, the orchestra played the Overture of "The Calif of Baghdad" by Boieldieu. This seems to be a favourite with amateur orchestra's, and well do I remember it, having taken part in its performance during three consecutive years, a long time ago, when mem-

ber of a school orchestra in my native town. This performance by the Swiss Institute Orchestral Society has awakened in me a host of happy memories for which I am grateful to them, and let me say, that they played it to perfection.

An alteration on the programme was made, and Mr. George Owen, sang, instead of the Aria from "Cavalleria Rusticana", Schubert's all-ways charming "Serenade". I for one would have preferred to hear it sung in German, in its English version it somehow loses some of its charms, but Mr. Owen sang it with much feeling; needless to say that the artist was recalled again and treated us with a fine rendering of a song called "Stars Above" which "brought the house down."

Again the conductor tapped the desk with his baton, this time to give the signal to Schubert's Symphony in B minor, with the following movements: "Allegro Moderato", "Andante con Moto"; this was no doubt the "pièce de résistance" of the orchestra, and the understanding between the conductor and his players was a remarkable feature. There is evidently some really good material amongst the performers, and thanks to their prevailing efficiency they produced a great effect. The conductor and his players moved remarkably well in the same mental orbit, and it was a fine and brilliant performance for which they are highly to be congratulated.

By the rendering of Miss O. Hilder's songs: "Prelude" by Landon Ronald, "Twilight" by John Wightman, "A Birthday" by Frederic Cowen, the artiste proved that she is not only at home in the "Bel canto" but that she is as well, an accomplished "Liedersinger". Every song represented a degree of experience to her which she was able to pass on. Miss Dorothy Treseder was an able collaborator at the piano, and the beautiful flowers, which were presented to the two ladies were richly deserved. The Swiss Institute Orchestral Society has no doubt scored with the engagements of their soloists.

As the last number on the programme figured a selection out of Lehar's ever young "Merry Widow" and although the Lady is now already of a matured age, she still makes our hearts beat quicker, and long after I left the Conway Hall, those familiar tunes "Dann geh ich zu Maxim" and the "Vilja Waltzer" were haunting me. Altogether a most creditable performance and a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

The Swiss Colony is very lucky indeed to include in their many activities a band of such ardent music lovers, and they ought to be supported by everyone who loves good music. I would have liked to see a notice posted outside the Hall, "standing room only" the Society would have richly deserved such an audience. Although the attendance was fairly good there were still a good many seats vacant. Amongst the audience one could see Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, the Presidents of the City Swiss Club, Swiss Mercantile Society, Nouvelle Société Helvétique and many well-known personalities in the Colony.

To the orchestra and its sympathetic conductor I wish to say "well done", it was an unforgettable evening and those who have wended their way to Red Lion Square have no reason to regret it. St.

#### CITY SWISS CLUB.

Le City Swiss Club a continué son programme officiel d'hiver par une seconde soirée dansante fort bien réussie qui, comme la première, a eu lieu au May Fair Hotel, samedi dernier 21 février, et a réuni une centaine de participants entre membres, les dames et amis.

On a décrit plus d'une fois ici même le charme particulier de la salle du May Fair, si justement désignée "Garden suite scene", de ce nouveau succès. Et point n'est besoin de redire la perfection du dîner très soigné, ni la compétence des excellents musiciens de l'Orchestre Colombo: tout cela est chose entendue. Ce qui toutfois ne peut être dit trop souvent, ce qui, cette fois aussi, a surtout frappé votre rapporteur, ce qui enfin était l'essence merveilleuse de cette phalange de compatriotes parsemée d'amis anglais, c'était cette parfaite harmonie, cet air de famille, cette gaieté de coeur du premier au dernier moment, témoignages incontestables et éloquentes du plaisir de chacun.

N'est-il pas superflu d'ajouter qu'après maintes valse délicieuses, des fox-trots lents ou vigoureux, une polka, deux "Paul-Jones" et quelques "spot dances", l'heure de se séparer vint bien trop vite? Minuit! La complaisance de l'inépuisable et sympathique Président, M. Ch. Chapuis, et des musiciens accorda encore ce quart d'heure supplémentaire tant désiré et la soirée se termina joyeusement par le traditionnel "Auld lang syne". J.Z.

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#### SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

In connection with the scholastic programme the following lectures were given by the students during the last two weeks:—

Mr. H. Scharpf, Zurich: "The Modern Lady." Mr. H. Schlegel, Buchs: "Methods of Instruction." Mr. A. Gander, Schiers: "May we criticize Customs in a Foreign Country?" Mr. M. Oberli, Lenzburg: "Horse-Racing." Mr. H. Merz, Basle: "English Characteristics." Mr. H. Frey, Zurich: "Holland." Mr. H. Kubly, Zurich: "Scottish Humour." Mr. L. Thomasin, St. Gall: "Criticism of Foreign Customs." Mr. H. Bosshard, Zurich: "Artificial and Real Silk." Mr. E. Favre, Geneva: "Actual State of Europe."

The debating classes dealt with the following subject:—

"Are you in Favour of a United States of Europe?" Proposer: Mr. E. Staub. Opposer: Mr. M. Bourquin.

"Is Lying ever Justifiable?" Proposer: Mr. P. Oswald. Opposer: Miss C. Lux.

On Saturday, February 21st the students, under the leadership of Mr. J. W. Klein, B.A., visited St. Albans. The beautiful Cathedral (one of the oldest and largest in England) awakened great interest. The High Altar Screen is probably the finest of its kind in England, the only rival being in Winchester Cathedral. Later on a visit was paid to St. Michael's Church, where Lord Bacon is buried.

#### SOME OLD FRESCO PAINTINGS.

Many old churches in Switzerland have such very interesting fresco-paintings. Some of the finest are to be found in Saanen, a beautiful big village and one of the chief places situated on the line of the Montreux Oberland railway.

This well-known village has an old church which can be traced back as far as 1228. In the year 1444 or 1447 it was enlarged. The massive tower and choir were built at that time and are still very well preserved. The frescoes which were uncovered some time ago, must have their origin most probably towards the end of the 15th century. About 1602 or 1604, the time when reformation had taken root in this part of the country, the paintings had been covered and remained forgotten for centuries until a few years ago they reappeared at some places where the whitewash was off. They have been uncovered entirely and restored to their former beauty.

On account of their completion and remarkable preservation they can be looked upon as one of the most valuable historical discoveries in the line of fresco-painting of the middle ages in Switzerland.

The three walls of the choir are divided into 40 panels on which scenes of the Old and New Testament and of the Mauritius legend are represented. On the arch of the choir are paintings of Christ's disciples and other saints.

In another part of the church remains of old frescoes could be traced, but unfortunately time and weather have wrought such destruction as to make restoration quite impossible. Berne.

MISS E. DACHSELT.

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