

# The romance of the St. Gotthard [continued]

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **3 (1937-1938)**

Heft 12

PDF erstellt am: **09.08.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943157>

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Switzerland still leads the world in the watchmaking industry. Official reports from Teddington (England) where international examinations of chronometers have just taken place, state that Switzerland once again has gained the first place. The well-known Omega brand has again taken pride of place with 97,3 points. The same brand also gained second place with 97,2 points. The Zenith brand figures as a third, while a product of Patek Phillippe & Co. of Geneva follows on with another Omega in its wake. The first 20 places include 9 Omegas, 4 Zeniths, 4 Patek and 3 Movado products. Since 1933 the Omega chronometer has always reached the largest number of points; in fact in 1936 it gained 97,8 points, this being the highest number of points ever reached by any contestants. We may well be proud of the fact that Swiss products always bear a reputation second to none.

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A grass drying machine has been invented by a mechanic, F. Wahli of Interlaken. It is worked by a wood gas generator, which can be fuelled with rubbish and wood. From the time the grass is put into the machine, it is continually turned until it is perfectly loose dry hay. This machine can deliver 120-150 kilograms of hay per hour. With some further improvements the inventor expects to make the machine moveable on wheels.

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#### THE ROMANCE OF THE ST. GOTTHARD (continued)

The trains, of course, were run by steam, but with the passing of years accentuating the importance of the line as an international highway, the necessity of adopting electric traction was realised. Other electric railways were being constructed in Switzerland and, costly as the adaptation must prove, it was evident that the Gotthard could not lag behind. The plans were finally decided upon in August 1913, and apart from the consideration of gain in speed, and in comfort by the elimination of smoke, the Swiss Federal Railways were anxious to render themselves as far as possible independent of coal, which Switzerland is compelled to import. Exactly a year later the outbreak of the great European war, during which Switzerland was completely surrounded by belligerents and thus cut off from the world, emphasized this point most strikingly. In addition, it more than doubled the cost of the scheme. Nevertheless, the undertaking was proceeded with, and since 1924 the whole line from Basle to Chiasso, together with the branch line from Zurich, has been operated by electricity derived from water-power, of which there is an abundance in Switzerland. The utilisation of water-power, however, necessitates costly machinery and huge schemes scarcely inferior to that of tunnelling a tremendous mountain barrier. .... (To be continued) ...

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MR. JOHN STEINER, late O/o. L. Schuler, Skeet Rd., KAPUNI.

Anyone knowing his present address, please communicate with the Secretary. Mr. Steiner's last copy of the "Helvetia" has been returned through the Dead Letter Office.

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A letter has been delivered at the Swiss Consulate in Wellington by the Post Office addressed to MR. JOST-RIBARY. This letter was posted at Rapperswil by a Family SCHONMANN.

Anyone knowing his address, please communicate with the Consulate, P.O. Box 386, Wellington, or the Secretary of the Society.

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#### A D V E R T I S E M E N T S.

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