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unexpected, for example the use of twin Re 4/4 locos on a few trains, and the appearance in one service of a *Gotthard Panorama Express* coach. Anyway the money I saved by not needing a Swiss Pass or similar I put towards a nice hotel. DB was OK and their Länderkarten are excellent value. As for SNCF... It was my original plan to spend a day in Colmar, BUT the French section of the main station is a building site, which I can accept, until I found no trace of a booking office, or timetables, or staff - there was but one ticket machine. The trains were therefore a well-kept secret. So I did not go to Colmar!

The jewel in Basel's crown is surely the fantastic tram network with trams gliding along at all hours, seemingly to everywhere - a stark contrast to the local buses in the People's Republic of North Staffordshire. And they were free to me so I could roam the city at will. You certainly do not need a car to explore Basel and its environs. The questions I ask myself as I return from foreign parts are:

1) *Would I go again?* 2) *Would I recommend it to friends and family?* The answers: **Yes and yes!!!** ☺



BVB tram at the Spalentor.

Line 16 tram climbing Jakobsberg.



Bridge at Bad Säckingen, towards Switzerland.

Re 4/4 x 2 at Basel SBB.



Where's Heidi?

Where would you find this warning sign?

Answer on Page 46.



BOOK REVIEW

"Ein Plan für die Bahn" - Perspectives for a better mobility

Publisher: NZZ Libro, ISBN 978-3-03810-336-3. 144 pages. Author: Paul Schneeberger.

"Ein Plan für die Bahn" is a new book published in Switzerland, unfortunately only in German. In it the author Paul Schneeberger suggests coordination between railways and area planning. For some 17 years the author was a member of the Neue Zürcher Zeitung's (NZZ) editorial team where he specialised in public transport. In the book he describes public transport as an essential part of the development of cities and towns and of the areas between these 'hot spots'. Every year Switzerland spends hundreds of millions of francs on its railway infrastructure. Could these sums of money be used more efficiently? More trains for the same sum? In this book Schneeberger presents a suggested memorandum of understanding for when future projects for the adaptation of train connections, or perhaps the construction of new lines between the centres, come up for consideration. He describes also possibilities and ways of how to plan and discuss, before decisions are made on what should be done. One of the main challenges would be to organise open 'round table meetings' between political entities; engineering and consulting institutions; transport operators; architects; urban planners - and, of course, the people in the cities and regions that will be affected. Today, this is seen to be very difficult to achieve. At the launch of the book in July a group of professionals discussed these difficulties and they recognized that 'Federalism', the need to equitably balance financing and developments in the distinct language and cultural areas, and a very important part of politics in Switzerland, may be an impediment in the development of such procedures, especially when decisions have to be made as fast as possible. The Swiss population is increasing rapidly, and it is forecast that in the not too distant future there will be some 10m people in

the country, and the national infrastructure should be prepared for this. The author, and his former colleagues at the NZZ, hope that this book will become a manual for responsible decisions on the future of the nation's mobility, utilising the best aspects of all of the mobility modes.

Mario Gavazzi

Peter's Railway

We have reviewed this series of railway books for children previously and noted that they would make ideal Christmas or birthday presents for the younger members of the family. With over 250,000 copies sold of the 19 books in the series Christopher Vine, their author, has now brought out an A4 size 'Activity Book' full of railway themed games, puzzles, etc., which is good value at £4.99. More details of this series can be found at www.petersrailway.com and the books can be found in the children's section of all good bookshops and are also on sale at many heritage railway sites.

Editor 

Where's Heidi?

Answer - At the passenger entrance to Brienz Station.



And Finally... ...Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2019.



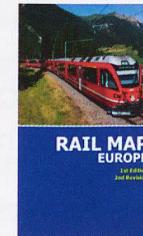
During December 2017 our Swiss correspondent Mario Gavazzi travelled on the Treib-Seelisberg-Bahn (www.seelisberg.com) funicular and was pleased to see the sympathetic seasonal display and good wishes for 2018 that welcomed passengers to its operation. This was the work of TSB Chief Christoph Nämpflin and his team at this locally managed line that provides an essential link to the community high above the Vierwaldstättersee. At Mario's suggestion we 'transfer' these wishes to all our readers and members. Good luck for this Christmas and the New Year! 

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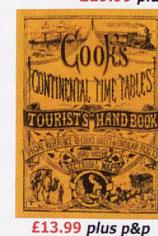
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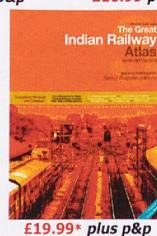
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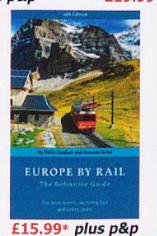
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