

Lecture which he had been invited to give to the Royal Society in December 1964. Apart from his academic activities, Woods sat on many committees and advisory bodies dealing with microbiology and its application; he also carried out considerable editorial work for scientific journals. His many friends and colleagues will always remember his friendliness and enthusiasm for his subject; a long line of successful students will remember his kindly encouragement, advice and guiding hand. He led a full life in pursuit of his subject, and his death leaves a big gap in the ranks of both microbiologists and biochemists.

E. F. GALE

#### Prof. L. W. Pollak

PROF. L. W. POLLAK, most widely known for his work in developing the photoelectric nucleus-counter, died in Dublin on November 24, 1964. He was born in Prague on September 23, 1888, and after a distinguished school and college career there was appointed to the staff of the German University in 1911. During the First World War he directed the meteorological service of the German Eleventh Army in the South Tyrol, and afterwards returned to the University, becoming professor of meteorology in 1927 and then director of the Observatories of Prague and Donnersberg.

Pollak's outlook was too liberal to please the Nazi régime, but his students made sure he learned of it when his name went on the list of disapproved persons. He was thus able to escape, and, after some months in London, found congenial employment in the newly formed Irish Meteorological Service, taking up duty at Foynes in December 1939. There he worked alongside Dr. M. Doport, refugee from Spain, who died in September 1964. Pollak assisted in the teaching of the cadet forecasters, infecting them with his real enthusiasm for meteorology. He next

proceeded to establish the Service's Climatological Division and to initiate its regular publications. In 1947, however, he welcomed the opportunity to regain his standing of professor, as head of the School of Cosmic Physics in the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies. He quickly built the premises in Merrion Square into an important observatory. The number of students was small, but research continued in many sections of geophysics, while colleagues extended the scope of the School with sections for astronomy and cosmic rays. In 1955 it was the venue for the first International Symposium on Atmospheric Condensation Nuclei.

Pollak retired when seventy-five, but not to laze. He was much in demand as consultant and spent most of his last year assisting projects in the United States. It was, however, at his home that death came suddenly.

Pollak's lectures were prepared with meticulous care, and yet achieved the appearance of spontaneity, and included homely and topical references. Nearly two hundred papers bear his name, many dealing with the photoelectric nucleus counter, developed during his first years in Ireland. It had been the pioneer work on punched-card techniques in climatology which had established Pollak's name earlier, and he was also largely responsible for the dissemination of Fubrich's auto-correlation method of investigating periodicities. The only text-book bearing his name is *Methods of Climatology*, published in 1950, written in collaboration with V. Conrad, of Harvard University (formerly at Vienna). Many modern instruments incorporate Pollak's improvements: actinometers, balloon theodolites, kata-thermometers, dosimeters, tonometers: all received his attention, and several were the subjects of patents.

His first wife, Johanna, was a gifted linguist. She died in 1958. In 1962 he married Nessa Falconer, who survives him.

F. E. DIXON

## NEWS and VIEWS

### Council for Scientific Policy

THE following have been appointed members of the Council for Scientific Policy: Sir Harrie Massey, Quain professor of physics, University College, London (chairman); Dr. J. B. Adams, director of the Culham Research Laboratory, Atomic Energy Authority; Prof. D. H. R. Barton, professor of organic chemistry, Imperial College of Science and Technology; Prof. P. M. S. Blackett, professor of physics, Imperial College of Science and Technology (also member of the Advisory Council on Technology); Prof. F. S. Dainton, professor of physical chemistry, University of Leeds; Sir Charles Dodds, Courtauld professor of biochemistry, University of London; Prof. K. C. Dunham, professor of geology, University of Durham; Prof. B. H. Flowers, Langworthy professor of physics, University of Manchester; Sir Willis Jackson, professor of electrical engineering, Imperial College of Science and Technology; Dr. F. E. Jones, managing director, Mullards, Ltd.; Dr. J. C. Kendrew, deputy-chairman, Medical Research Council, Laboratory for Molecular Biology, Cambridge; Lord Rothschild, chairman, Shell Research; Sir Gordon Sutherland, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge; Prof. M. M. Swann, professor of zoology and dean of the Faculty of Science in the University of Edinburgh. The Council for Scientific Policy will replace the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy and will advise the Secretary of State in the exercise of his responsibility for the formulation and execution of Government scientific policy. Among the issues which are expected to come before the Council will be the balance of scientific effort in the various fields for which the Secretary of State is responsible.

### Operational Research in the University of Birmingham : Dr. S. Vajda

DR. STEVEN VAJDA has been appointed to the newly established chair of operational research in the Department of Engineering Production, University of Birmingham, as from January 22. Dr. Vajda, who was born in Budapest, and who graduated as a Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Vienna, has been head of the Mathematics Group in the Admiralty Research Laboratory at Teddington since 1952. He had previously been a lecturer in the Technical University of Berlin and held various actuarial appointments on the Continent and in Britain before joining the Civil Establishment of the Admiralty in 1944; he was later assistant director of physical research and assistant director of operational research in the Royal Naval Scientific Service. He has been a member of council of the Royal Statistical Society, chairman of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research Sub-committee on Automatic Data Processing and chairman of the Programme Committee of the International Symposium on Mathematical Programming. His books on mathematical programming and the theory of games have been translated into French, German, Japanese and Russian.

### The Rockefeller Institute : Prof. C. Pfaffmann

DR. C. PFAFFMANN has been appointed vice-president and professor of the Rockefeller Institute, where he will be responsible for the development of a broad programme of graduate teaching and research in the behavioural sciences, with emphasis on the relations of the natural and social sciences. Dr. Pfaffmann graduated from Brown