

Obituary Notice

Prof. Hans Reck

PROF. HANS RECK, professor in the Institute of Geology and Palaeontology of the Friedrich-Wilhelm University, Berlin, died suddenly of heart-failure at Lourenço Marquez on August 4, at the age of fifty-one years. He was on his way from Natal to Lake Eyassi, Tanganyika Territory, to examine the locality where Dr. Kohl-Larsen discovered a human skull in 1935 (NATURE, 138, 1082; 1936).

Hans Reck was born in Würzburg on January 24, 1886. He studied geology at the Universities of Berlin, of Munich, where he graduated as Ph.D. in 1910, and of London, at University College. During his undergraduate years he visited Iceland in company with his future wife, Fräulein Ina von Grumbkow, who survives him. In 1912 he was appointed leader of the Tendaguru Expedition of the University of Berlin; in 1913, leader of the Geological Expedition to Central Africa sponsored by the Royal Prussian Academy; at the end of 1913, leader of the Olduvai Expedition of the Universities of Berlin and Munich; and during the years 1915-19 he held the post of Government geologist in German East Africa.

After the Great War, Reck had not the same opportunities for work in the foreign field. Nevertheless, he twice visited Santorin, in 1925 and 1929. He was a member of the second Olduvai Expedition, in 1931, under the leadership of Dr. L. S. B. Leakey, and in 1932 visited South Africa to collect fossil reptiles. He left Germany at the end of September 1936 to carry out researches in the Cameroons, South Africa, Tanganyika and Kenya Colony; this trip was interrupted by his untimely death.

Reck's work on the geology of East Africa is

inadequately represented by a number of scattered papers. As editor and part author of the "Wissenschaftliche Ergebnisse der Oldoway-Expedition, 1913", he had the satisfaction of seeing the palaeontological results published in full; but the difficulty of raising funds caused many delays, and his account of the geology, which was to appear at a later date, was left unfinished. Nor did he issue any technical description of the giant caldron volcanoes, every one of which he had climbed. Nevertheless, he was a great pioneer in this field, and his influence on post-War research cannot easily be estimated.

Most of Reck's published work relates to volcanoes, on which he was a leading authority. He appears as a *Mitarbeiter* in the first part of the *Zeitschrift für Vulkanologie* (1911), and as joint editor in 1923. In addition to many papers and numerous reviews contributed to the *Zeitschrift*, he published in 1923 "Die Hegan Vulkane" and "Physiographische Studien über vulkanischen Bomben". An exhaustive monograph on Santorin, completed just before he began his last journey, is in the press.

Tall, fair, and blue-eyed, Reck was a Bavarian of the finest type. His sunny disposition and upright character endeared him to all who had the privilege of his friendship. Himself incapable of an ungenerous thought or act, he was unable to understand them in others. In addition to his scientific pursuits, he found time to form a small but choice collection of Arab art, to become a gifted pianist, and to cultivate the delightful literary style which appears in "Oldoway, die Schlucht des Urmenschen", and in "Buschteufel", a volume of light-hearted stories of the campaign in East Africa and of life as a prisoner of war in Egypt.

A. TINDELL HOPWOOD.

News and Views

Mr. C. C. Paterson, O.B.E.

MR. CLIFFORD C. PATERSON, director of the Research Laboratories of the General Electric Co. Ltd., has had the honorary degree of doctor of science conferred on him by the University of Birmingham "in recognition of his many contributions and services to electrical science". Dr. Paterson, who is now fifty-seven years of age, was for sixteen years a member of the staff of the National Physical Laboratory, where he established and administered the Electrotechnics and Photometry Divisions of the Laboratory until 1918. He then accepted the task under Lord Hirst of initiating the G.E.C. Laboratories at Wembley. These have now grown so much in size and influence that they have a personnel of 500 and cover a floor area of about 170,000 sq. ft. Dr.

Paterson's activities have not been confined to the Wembley Laboratories. He was president of the Institution of Electrical Engineers in the year of the Faraday celebrations (1931). He has been president of the International Illumination Commission, the Illuminating Engineering Society, and this year of the Institute of Physics; he is also a vice-president of the Royal Institution and of the Royal Society of Arts. He has been Faraday lecturer of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, Huxley lecturer of the University of Birmingham, and is this year Guthrie lecturer of the Physical Society. Whilst Dr. Paterson's activities in engineering and science have covered a wide range, his chief personal contributions and scientific papers have been in the fields of light and lighting.