

comparable with those Junior Technical Schools preparing their pupils for entry to a specific occupation. Their usefulness and functions are not denied. He pointed out that this decision was based on the evidence received, but that though the door has at present been closed against their becoming Technical High Schools, it has not been locked or bolted; and indeed might be said to be

slightly ajar. In reply to other points raised, he pointed out that it was recommended that the word 'Junior' should be discontinued and that the official designation should be *Technical Schools* for the two and three-year course schools and *Technical High Schools* for the others; but it was also recommended that each school should have its own local name.

## Obituary Notices

### Prof. Karl Schröter

THE nestor of Swiss botanists, Karl Schröter, emeritus professor in the Federal College of Technology, Zurich, died on February 7 in his eighty-fourth year. Up to the last he was physically and mentally active, and so recently as January 28 he delivered a public lecture to a leading scientific society in Zurich. Unfortunately, after a brief attack of pneumonia following upon influenza, his long and active life came to a sudden end.

Karl Schröter was born in 1855 in Esslingen in Germany, where his father was then chief engineer in a large engineering establishment, but later appointed professor of engineering in the Federal College of Technology, Zurich. At this institution, his son Karl, who acquired Swiss nationality, commenced his studies of natural science and came under the stimulating influence of Karl Cramer, who persuaded him to devote himself to the study of botany. Two years after graduation in 1876, he established himself as *Privat Dozent* and a few years later he was invited to give a course of advanced lectures in place of Prof. Heer, who was taken seriously ill. He proved himself to be such a successful lecturer that on the death of Prof. Heer he was appointed, at the age of twenty-eight years, to the vacant professorship, which he held for forty-two years.

Schröter had been influenced in his botanical studies by his predecessor, choosing for his doctor's thesis the examination of some fossil woods collected by Heer in the far north.

Schröter was, however, more interested in living plants, and as an assistant he took an active part in the organization of botanical excursions for the students, by which means he acquired a very wide and varied acquaintance with the Swiss flora, which characterized his later work both as a teacher and as an investigator. In 1889, he published a pocket-flora of alpine plants which was translated into both French and English. He was, however, specially interested in the relationship of plants to their surroundings, and thus was one of the founders of the modern study of ecological botany. After many years work on alpine meadows and moorlands, he published, with the assistance of other botanists, in six parts during the years 1904-8 his "Plant-life in the Alps", a very comprehensive study of alpine vegetation. At the same time, he was collaborating

with J. Früh in the production of a monumental volume on the bogs of Switzerland. He did not, however, confine himself to flowering plants, but paid attention to the plankton flora of the Swiss lakes and published several accounts of the periodicity of some of its algal forms.

In 1898, Schröter undertook a journey around the world, visiting the United States, Honolulu, Japan and Java. The result of his trip made him an enthusiastic supporter of the movement to organize international phytogeographical excursions, and in connexion with these he visited both Great Britain and the United States. Though already ageing in 1923, he organized and led a party of plant geographers through the Swiss Alps. By that time, the Swiss National Park had been established in the Lower Engadine, and Schröter, who had been keenly interested and active in its establishment and had taken part in its botanical exploration, naturally included it in the itinerary of the excursion.

Schröter's many-sided botanical labours received due recognition both in Switzerland and abroad. He was elected a foreign member of the Linnean Society of London in 1925 and delivered the Hooker Lecture of the Society in 1926. His lively and charming personality gained him many friends at home and abroad, not a few in England, which he visited on several occasions.

He married in 1884 a fellow student, Margaret Middelberg of Amsterdam, who died in 1925. Five years later he married Mrs. Teterode, by whom he is survived.

F. E. WEISS.

### Prof. J. Versluys

THE death is announced, at the age of sixty-six years, of the eminent Dutch zoologist, Prof. Jan Versluys, professor in the University of Vienna.

Versluys was a fine, tall man, with a fluent command of English, German and French, and was well known to, and highly respected by, many British zoologists who met him either abroad or in Great Britain on the occasions when he attended the meetings of the British Association. He was a pupil of his life-long friend the late Prof. Max Weber of Amsterdam.

As a young man, Versluys accompanied Max Weber as a naturalist on the memorable voyage of S.S. *Siboga* on its marine exploration of the seas of the Malay Archipelago during 1899-1900, and on