

OBITUARY

Prof. Heinrich Balss

THE German zoologist Heinrich Balss, for many years chief conservator of the Zoologische Staatssammlung, Munich, died at Planegg on September 17, aged seventy-one. He was a well-known specialist on the higher Crustacea and contributed the sections on decapods and stomatopods to Kükenthal and Krumbach's "Handbuch der Zoologie" and also to Bronn's "Klassen und Ordnungen des Tierreichs".

Balss received his early education at Mainz, where he was born on June 3, 1886. After a semester at Heidelberg (1904) he transferred to Munich, with which University and city he was associated for the rest of his life—with a break during the First World War. On obtaining his doctorate in natural science, he was appointed assistant to Prof. R. von Hertwig; he became conservator in 1918, chief conservator about 1928 and received the title of professor in 1925. In September 1937, because he was of Jewish extraction on his mother's side, he was retired on half pay though allowed the use of his room at the Staatssammlung. He was re-instated after the fall of the Hitler régime and retired voluntarily in 1951.

In his formative years Balss owed much to the inspiration of Franz Doflein, with whom he collaborated in studying material of the Hamburg Magellan and German Deep-Sea Expeditions (1912 and 1913). Doflein's rich collection from Japanese waters formed the basis of a series of papers by Balss on "Ostasiasische Decapoden I-V" (1913-14 and 1922-24). Reports by him appear in the results of numerous German expeditions, and many other countries sent him material for determination and description. He was the ideal systematist—painstaking, methodical and thorough in everything that he undertook. He did much to elucidate the classification of the large

and difficult group of spider-crabs and of the even more difficult Xanthidae—a family of nearly a thousand species. The body of work which he produced between 1910 and 1938 testifies to his industry and ability, and he has left a permanent mark on the literature of his subject.

With the publication of the "Handbuch" in 1927 Balss became known to a much wider public, and the new Bronn's "Tierreich" will greatly enhance his reputation. It is a larger and more comprehensive work and, during his enforced retirement, Balss was able to devote his full time to it. The part on the Stomatopoda appeared in 1938. He undertook the whole of the volume on Decapoda, ontogeny and physiology excepted, and the manuscript was finished about 1940. Seven parts, five by Balss, were published between 1940 and 1945; then, owing to difficult post-war conditions, only two parts appeared during the next nine years. Meanwhile, the author's health was impaired by a serious illness, and these delays were most disappointing. The systematic part (12) was published last summer during his final illness; he was able to bring it more or less up to date, especially as regards the Caridea, and it includes a very high proportion of the known genera, fossil as well as recent. It is to be hoped that the sections on zoogeography, palaeontology and phylogeny and the bibliography will be published quickly, for it is difficult to use such a vast work without the index.

A man of unassuming modesty, he found contentment in his work and in his home life. His hobbies were music and Greek literature, and he published a book on "Antike Astronomie" some years ago. Anxiety over her husband during his last illness undermined her own health and Edith Balss (née Westphal) died two days before him.

ISABELLA GORDON

NEWS and VIEWS

National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science :
Rutherford High Energy Laboratory

THE new laboratory of the National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science, now being built at Harwell, is to be called the Rutherford High Energy Laboratory to commemorate the work of the late Lord Rutherford in the development of nuclear physics. It is to occupy a site adjacent to the Atomic Energy Research Establishment and will house the Institute's first large accelerator, a research machine of which the main part is a magnet-ring 120 ft. in diameter, weighing more than 6,000 tons.

Dr. T. G. Pickavance

DR. T. G. PICKAVANCE, who has been appointed first director of the High Energy Laboratory, is at present deputy head of the General Physics Division of the U.K. Atomic Energy Authority Research Establishment at Harwell. In that capacity, Dr. Pickavance, who is forty-two, is at present in charge of the group within the Atomic Energy Authority responsible for the design and supervision of the construction of the new large accelerator for the Institute and will continue to undertake this work.

He has been working at Harwell since 1946 and has been deputy head of the General Physics Division since 1955. During 1939-46 Dr. Pickavance worked on nuclear problems as a part-time lecturer at the University of Liverpool and a member of the 'Tube Alloys' project. He read physics at the University of Liverpool and later did postgraduate work there under Sir James Chadwick.

Agriculture at Newcastle upon Tyne :

Prof. Henry Cecil Pawson, M.B.E.

PROF. H. C. PAWSON has been elected professor emeritus of the University of Durham following his recent retirement after forty years of unstinted service in the School of Agriculture at King's College, Newcastle. This most recent honour, together with his election to a personal chair in 1948, are fitting recognition of his valuable contributions to agricultural research and education. Prof. Pawson is one of the most selfless of men, and among his students he has created a great respect and affection because of his sympathy and sincerity. He is, in fact, the ideal senior tutor, a post he held in the School of Agriculture for many years. His name will