

PROFESSOR ALBERT HEIM.

(1849-1937.)

Prof. Dr. Albert Heim, the nester of European geologists and author of the celebrated classic 'Geologie der Schweiz', passed away at Zürich on the 31st August, 1937 at the ripe age of 88½ years.

Born at Zürich in 1849, his life's work, the geology of Switzerland, and the unravelling of the complexities of Alpine folding, from an early age was done under the auspices of the University of Zürich, as student, teacher, professor, field investigator, and interpreter of Alpine tectonics. His interest in geology began at an early age when, as a student of Prof. Escher von der Linth, he studied the Glarus 'double fold' in the High Calcareous Alps, a subject of long-standing controversy among Swiss, French and German geologists. He succeeded to the chair of geology at the Polytechnic in Zürich in 1873 at the early age of 24 and in the following year to that at the University of Zürich. Both these chairs he occupied with great distinction till 1911, producing during the interval a number of important works, including his famous 'Mechanismus der Gebirgsbildung' in 1878; the 'Handbuch der Gletscherkunde' in 1885; the 'Geology of the Alps' in 1891, besides several folios of the geological map of Switzerland. It was not, however, till 1922, 11 years after his retirement from active duties at the University, that the monumental 'Geologie der Schweiz', the 'finest national text-book that is ever likely to be written' was published. On this work of 1,700 pages Heim had spent 15 years of devoted labour, largely in preparing the 325 illustrations, the copper-plates of many of which he had himself engraved and the 55 plates of maps and profile drawings, all of which attest to his high artistic skill. His drawings and panoramas of typical sections of the Alps, besides being of high value as tectonic interpretations, are works of art. Heim also was a great modeller and the beautiful series of relief models in plaster of some key-areas of the Alps which adorn the Geology Museum at the Zürich University were executed by him personally, or under his direct supervision, after years of patient measurement and modelling. From 1894 to 1925 Albert Heim was Director of the Swiss Geological Commission. In collaboration with Carl Schmidt he published in 1894 the valuable geological map of Switzerland on the scale of 1:500,000, the second and revised edition of which he lived to publish thirty-three years later.

To the present generation of Swiss geologists Albert Heim was like a father, venerated by them alike for his great scientific achievements as for his ideal life and character. Dr. Heim was honoured by many Universities, Swiss as well as foreign, and the Royal Society of London elected him a Foreign Member. He was associated in a like capacity with many Geological,

Geographical and Natural Science Societies of Europe. Dr. Heim was elected Honorary Fellow of the National Institute of Sciences of India in 1936. He leaves behind him his son, Dr. Arnold Heim, himself a distinguished geologist, whose investigations in different parts of the world as well as whose collaboration with his father during the latter part of his life are well known.

D. N. W.