

Children, worry and talent in their luggage

THERE'S a load of talent, children and worry in the baggage of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Reck, an artist-couple who recently arrived from West Germany to settle in South Africa.

They came to give their six small children a drier, sunnier and more spacious home than Hamburg, particularly as one of the little girls suffers from asthma. This same small mite has now fallen from a wall and suffered a head injury with which she was rushed to hospital.

Mr. Reck, who arrived early in November, was unable to greet his family on their arrival four weeks ago with a job or promise of security, but he could at least take them to a house which he had succeeded in renting in Hillbrow—going cheap because it stands cringing between huge blocks of flats, waiting for demolition. Painter, sculptor, draughtsman by profession, Albert Reck immediately set about painting the house inside and out to make it a welcoming home for Maria-Louise and the little ones.

In her brief time here, small, shyly-smiling Mrs. Reck has learned more English (from scratch) than many South Africans learn Afrikaans in a life-time. Like her husband, she is also hoping to receive commissions for work to provide income for the family as she is an accomplished weaver and is keenly awaiting the arrival of three looms from Germany.

From her studies in advertising art in a south German village (the school was actually housed in a fairy-tale, old-world castle), Maria-Louise returned to Hamburg and marriage. Since then she has woven beautiful and unusual rugs and hangings for public buildings, schools and churches, while Albert has decorated such buildings, exhibited individual works and illustrated and written books.

Maria-Louise Reck dyes all the wool she uses herself. Working from designs first sketched on paper, she has to devote weeks of patient skill to execute wall hangings such as the one shown in the photograph, which took seven weeks to complete. She sees things as they are, he sees the inherent abstract forms, together they blend nature and art into new symbolic form.



Mrs. Albert Reck, who, with her husband and children, has come to settle in South Africa from Germany.