

for research in botany at King's College, London; E. A. Ogryzlo (McGill University), for research in physical chemistry at Sheffield; W. R. Frisken (Queen's University, Kingston), for research in nuclear physics at Birmingham; D. W. Cameron (University of Queensland), for research in organic chemistry at Manchester; D. H. Green (University of Tasmania), for research in geology at Cambridge; R. M. Freeman (University of New Zealand), for research in physics at Cambridge; Miss A. J. Alexander (Rhodes University), for research in zoology at Cambridge; M. E. Mitchell (National University of Ireland), for research in ecological botany at the University of Rennes; G. B. Venkata Subramanian (University of Delhi), for research in organic chemistry at Cambridge; M. M. Islam (University of Dacca), for research in physics at Birmingham.

The National Chemical Laboratory

THE Lord President of the Council has approved changes in the functions of the Chemical Research Laboratory at Teddington, Middlesex, proposed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and the name of the Laboratory has been changed to the National Chemical Laboratory. The Laboratory will concentrate its effort on a few objectives, covering only a limited part of the whole field of chemical research, so as to be able to make a real impact on selected problems of national importance such as the following: (a) Problems which are appropriate neither to industrial research laboratories nor to universities, because of the necessity for special facilities, experienced staff and continuity of effort. These include the determination of the fundamental physico-chemical properties of chemical compounds which are required, for example, by chemical engineers for the design of full-scale industrial plant. The related study of the development of techniques of purification of materials such as metals and chemicals, with the view of supplying standard samples of pure substances for reference purposes, is also in this category. (b) Problems, the solutions of which are of national economic value and have wide general applications to many industries, for example, fundamental and applied studies of the corrosion of metals, which has been estimated to cost Great Britain about £600 million a year. (c) Problems, the solutions of which are urgently required in connexion with the nation's atomic energy programme; these are mainly concerned with the extraction of elements of atomic energy interest from low-grade ores. The change in the name to the National Chemical Laboratory has been decided upon to emphasize that its main purpose will be to undertake selected fundamental and applied chemical researches of national importance, which could not otherwise be worked on by any existing organization.

Windscale Pile No. 1

THE Atomic Energy Authority has decided that it would not be economic to repair Windscale Pile No. 1. The maximum technical information which can be derived from examination of the reactor core is being obtained, and useful materials and equipment will be recovered. Some of the buildings will be adapted to other uses and the remainder sealed off. The operatives hitherto employed on this reactor are now engaged on other activities at Windscale which are expanding.

Moral Implications of Atomic Energy

IN his Burge Memorial Lecture delivered on April 15 at Church House, Westminster, which has now been published ("Ethical and Political Problems of the Atomic Age". Pp. 22. London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1958. 2s. net), C. F. von Weizsäcker discussed some ethical and political problems of the atomic age, as a scientist, as a citizen of the Western world and as a Christian. Beginning with the observation that the most conspicuous political event of 1957 was the appearance of the first Soviet Earth satellite, he points out that this technical achievement became a political event because of its psychological effect, and that such developments pose the problem of the adult man, no longer protected like a child, who can survive only if he creates for himself the conditions of life. Dr. von Weizsäcker himself believes that the spiritual foundations of the technical world are dependent upon Christianity. Pointing out that Western freedom is guaranteed only by the certainty that mortal blow will be answered with mortal blow, he maintains that this is a very precarious guarantee. After examining the measures proposed for avoiding the present dangers, he concludes that, in principle, it would be sensible to strive for the total abolition of war by all prudent means and that such attempts have a good chance of success. It is, however, the policy of the Soviet Union to undermine the strength of the West by exploiting the prevalent and understandable antipathy to nuclear weapons. The belief that such weapons will effectively protect our peace and freedom is itself a well thought-out ideology containing strong elements of truth, but its effect is to cripple our wills. Dr. von Weizsäcker does not think that the Church as an institution is in a position to suggest the renunciation of the hydrogen bomb on a basis of political responsibility; those who have already experienced something of this crisis would render their fellow-men a service by dissociating themselves from all participation in matters connected with such weapons. The value of passive resistance and of more conventional political methods requires much fuller examination.

Preservation of Rural England

THE twenty-seventh annual report of the Sheffield and Peak District Branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, presented at the annual meeting on May 31, stresses the failure of Parliament to respond to the urgent plea that the Land Fund, understood to be designed for National Parks, should be put to that purpose. In consequence, the National Parks Act is ineffectual, and the same lack of vision, the report urges, is shown in the siting of nuclear power stations in the very areas the National Parks Act was framed to protect. The Branch fully supports the stand being made against the proposal to site such a station on Trawsfydd Lake. Tribute is paid to the competent control constantly exercised by the Park Planning Board in the Peak District National Park, and the Board and the Branch are supporting the petitioners against the proposed Chew Valley reservoir, which would take all the remaining farmland and spoil the fine approaches up the Chew Valley to the moors of the National Park. With the National Parks Commission and the National Trust, the Council and its local branches have indicated their opposition to the proposed motor road in the Manifold Valley. Adverse comment is