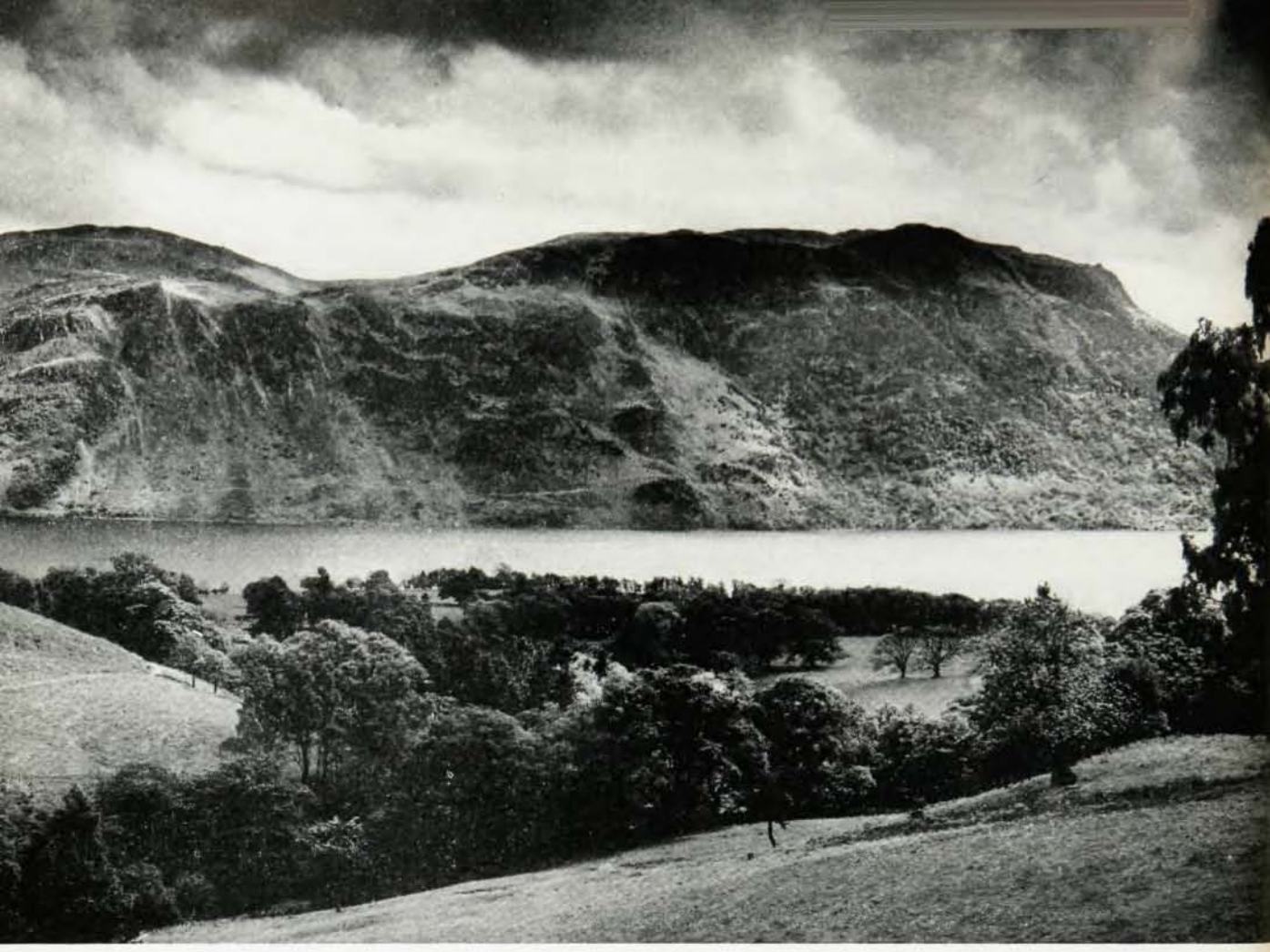

The Lake District in Northwest England. *Photo from British Information Service*

Notes from Abroad

British Plutonium

The threatened intrusion of a large plutonium production plant into the comfortable landscape along the Northwestern English Coast having alarmed the countryside, the British Government has attempted to quiet fears by the educational means of sponsoring a more elaborate atomic energy exhibition than has before been seen in England. The exhibition, held at the coastal town of Whitehaven, was designed to convince local residents that the area would not be made dangerously radioactive by the plant's operation. Possibly more difficult to answer were complaints that the site chosen for the plutonium plant is in the heart of one of the country's most colorful regions and will inevitably detract from its beauty. The answer given by government planners, according to the British news agency, Reuters, was that there is no reason why there should not be something complementary between the most popular parts of the English lake district for tourists and the more industrial part of West Cumberland.

The British version of the Hanford plant, which is to be known as the Windscale Works, is now under construction at a site near the village of Sellafield in the Cumbrian Hills overlooking the Irish Sea. Off the shores of the West Cumberland coast, Reuters states, three ships have been used to lay a subterranean pipeline which will carry radioactive wastes into the Atlantic. The pipeline, made of lead, is similar to those used to carry gasoline across the English Channel after the Normandy invasion.

Of the piles planned at the Sellafield site one is nearly completed and work is progressing on a second. A recent announcement made by the British Ministry of Supply has stated that the laying of foundations for a third and reportedly larger pile has been halted "after a review of the program and in the light of possible developments in the near future."

The Windscale Works have been planned as part of a proposed Lake District National Park, and have been designed to fit as happily as possible into the surrounding coastal scenery. The plant is the result of developmental research which culminated in successful plutonium production on an experimental level carried out during the

past months at the atomic research center at Harwell on the Berkshire Downs.

The Ministry of Supply has also announced that the one hundred and sixty million volt cyclotron at Harwell has been operated successfully in its first trial. This accelerator, the largest in Britain or in Europe, has been under construction for the past three years.

European Technological Pool

Under an agreement reached by representatives of the eighteen Western European nations receiving Marshall Plan aid and voiced through the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, these countries will in the future pool much of their scientific and technical knowledge with the aim of mutually increasing productivity. The agreement was contained in two pronouncements issued by the council of the OEEC; the first calling for documents from each government on all scientific, technological, and economic aspects of industrial production; the second requesting member states to submit suggestions for cooperative research and development projects beyond the individual capacity of any single nation.

New Dutch Cyclotron

C. J. Gorter of the University of Leiden has, in a recent communication, mentioned briefly the dedication last November 10 of the new synchro-cyclotron at the State-supported laboratory for nuclear research in Amsterdam. The instrument, which has been operated successfully during the past several months, is owned and was constructed by the Philips Works. Its beam of about twenty-eight Mev deuterons makes it the most powerful instrument of its type in Western Europe.

Research in India

The program of national reconstruction of the Indian Government, as outlined in the August issue of the Indian journal Current Science, includes plans for the establishment of eleven national laboratories, each of which will be concerned with all aspects of research in its respective field and will be prepared to translate laboratory results into industrial practice. Several of the laboratories are now under construction and a few are actively functioning; the rest still remain in the planning stages.

The National Physical Laboratory, now nearing completion at Delhi, will correspond somewhat in function to the National Bureau of Standards in this country. Plans provide for eight divisions, dealing with weights and measures, applied mechanics and materials, heat and power, optics, electricity, electronics and sound, hydraulics, and analytical chemistry. A division of industrial physics has also been proposed with the object of testing on a semi-commercial scale the results of research.

The other national laboratories now under construction or in operation include the National Chemical Laboratory at Poona; the Fuel Research Institute at Digwadih, in the Jharia coal fields; the Glass and Ceramic Research Institute in Calcutta; the Drug Research Institute at Lucknow; the Food Technological Research Institute at Mysore; and the Building Research Institute at Roorkee. Plans are under way for a national metallurgical laboratory to be established at Jamshedpur; a leather research institute in Madras; an electrochemical research institute; and a road research institute, to be located in Delhi.

New Swiss Journal

Verlag Birkhäuser Basel has announced the publication, beginning January 15, 1950, of the new periodical Zeitschrift für angewandte Mathematik und Physik (ZAMP). It is planned that the journal contain one survey article on pure or applied mathematics or physics in each issue, together with selected original papers, brief reports, book reviews, and miscellaneous items of general interest. Papers will be accepted in either German, French, Italian, or English.

The journal will be edited by R. Sänger, professor of physics at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, and the editorial board includes J. Ackeret, E. Baumann, P. Niggli, P. Scherrer, E. Stiefel, F. Stüssi, and H. Ziegler, all of the Institute of Technology.

Crystallography

The executive committee of the International Union of Crystallography has accepted an invitation from the Swedish National Committee to hold the Second International Congress on Crystallography and the Second General Assembly of the Union in Stockholm from June 27 to July 3, 1951. These dates have been chosen in consultation with the Swedish National Committee and with the national committees of all the countries which adhere to the Union. Hope is expressed by the committee that this early notice will make it possible for those interested in crystallography and its related fields to arrange to attend. Further information can be obtained from the general secretary of the Union, R. C. Evans, Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge, England.

Semiconductors

A conference on the properties of semiconducting materials will take place at the University of Reading, England, from July 10th to 15th inclusive, 1950. The conference, which is assisted by Unesco, will be under the auspices of the International Union of Physics, in cooperation with the Royal Society, and will be organized by N. F. Mott and R. W. Ditchburn. Leading research workers from Czechoslovakia, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, the U.S.A., and Great Britain have accepted invitations to contribute papers. Their subjects include the conductive properties of nonmetallic solids, photoconduction, barrier layer rectifiers, crystal triodes, etc., and the relevant theoretical issues. The proceedings of the conference will be published in book form. A general prospectus can be obtained from the secretary, H. K. Henisch, Department of Physics, The University, Reading, England.