Notes and News

Announcements and other items of crystallographic interest will be published under this heading at the discretion of the Editorial Board. The notes (in duplicate) should be sent to the General Secretary of the International Union of Crystallography (D. W. Smits, Mathematisch Instituut, University of Groningen, Reitdiepskade 4, Groningen, The Netherlands).

Conference on Computing Methods and the Phase Problem in X-ray Crystal Analysis. Glasgow University, August 9–12, 1960

This conference preceded by a few days the I.U.Cr. Congress in Cambridge. By its success, it demonstrated the merit of having associated with the large international meeting, a small satellite meeting, independently organized and devoted to a specialized topic with ample time (and space) for discussion. About one hundred and ten people participated, representing fifteen nations, if, in deference to the host, Scotland is counted separately.

The meeting divided naturally into the two halves, with a borderland on how to equitably divide the labor of a crystal structure analysis by making the computer (plus programmer, of course) solve the phase problem while the crystallographer takes the responsibility for the experimental measurements and writing the paper. The first sessions, devoted to computer programs, started with the baby computers and worked up to the daddies, (ZEBRA, Bull Gamma 3B-AET, IBM 650, Pegasus and Ferranti Mark I, DEUCE, EDSAC II, Mercury, IBM 704, IBM 704+X-RAC, SWACK, IBM 709, MUSE). Since the modern crystallographer tends to be a bit bored with a computer that costs less than a million dollars, the interest increased as these sessions proceeded, to culminate in a stimulating glimpse into the future ... 'Life with MUSE in 1962'. There was also some interesting discussion on how to get different answers from the same set of experimental observations.

The second part of the program was directed to phase determination by statistical methods, Sayre's equation, multiple-solution direct methods, heavy atom, isomorphous replacement, minimum functions, Monte Carlo methods, and anomalous dispersion, with the computer, of course, always at hand to deal with the hard labor.

On the social side, there was a cocktail party and a trip around Loch Lomond with a convivial dinner and speeches. In the course of the excursion, the battleship Vanguard was seen residing in its grave yard. No doubt one day we will see an equally expensive computer in a similar humiliating situation.

The organizers of the Conference, Professors Ray Pepinsky and J. Monteath Robertson and the programmer, Dr J. B. Speakman, are to be congratulated on a most agreeable, informative and stimulating meeting. The proceeding of the Conference will be published in book form by Pergamon Press.

Laue Commemoration Ceremony

On 15 October 1960 friends and colleagues from West Germany, East Germany and abroad, met in Berlin at an academic memorial ceremony for Max von Laue, at the invitation of Prof. A. Butenandt, President of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft.

After a short introduction by the President, a memorial lecture on 'Max von Laue: the Man and the Scientist' was given by Prof. Walther Meissner, Munich, who had known von Laue for over fifty years. In it he gave a vivid picture of von Laue's scientific achievements, not only as the initiator of the classical experiment in 1912, but also bringing into sharp focus his work in many fields of theoretical physics, which is often eclipsed by his X-ray diffraction work—theory of relativity, thermodynamics, theory of radiation, and phenomenological theory of superconductivity. Much, also, was said of von Laue the man and his fearless fight for human rights and freedom; it was, indeed, as 'champion of freedom' that an American University described him on awarding him an Honorary Degree. This aspect was the *leitmotiv* of Meissner's address.

Prof. R. Brill, successor to von Laue, paid high tribute to von Laue's work for the Fritz-Haber Institut during his nine years' Directorship. During this relatively short time, he brought it again to the fore as one of the leading Research Institutes in Germany. No more fitting tribute could have been paid to von Laue than this gathering of scientists from both East and West.