

A toast to CERN

Retiring CERN Council Delegate Alexis C. Pappas of the University of Oslo was in sparkling form for his adieu speech:

From times immemorial existed the valley of Nuclear Stability. But in the beginning darkness was upon the face of the deep. And nuclei were rushing madly over the slopes of the valley.

Then it was said:

'Let the radioactive nuclei be divided into neutron-rich and neutron-poor. Let the neutron-rich gather on one side of the valley and the neutron-poor on the opposite side.'

Then a command:

'Provide a dividing line between the neutron-rich and the neutron-poor.' Thus all stable nuclei turned up along the bottom of the valley of nuclear stability.

And it was good.

Many years later the scientists were commanded:

'Build equipment, develop methods and investigate the valley of nuclear stability.'

And it was done.

And scientists were rushing up the valley of nuclear stability investigating all stable nuclei. When this was done, they started to climb the slopes of the valley, but they did not reach high up.

Then it was said:

'Build accelerators and develop new techniques, this in order to attain the top of the slopes.'

And it was done.

Scientists climbed higher and higher without falling down. But



Alexis C. Pappas — 'let the neutron-rich gather on one side of the valley and the neutron-poor on the other side'.

(Photo Hans Chr. Erlandsen)

some heard the voice: 'Look at the heavens.'

They so did, and found cosmic rays.

Others were anxious to look for the entrance to the valley.

They asked:

'Where is the entrance?' Then some farsighted men with open minds heard a whispering voice: 'Since time immemorial the site of Meyrin in the land of the Swiss has been empty and dark.' And, by listening very carefully they were able to hear: 'But unknown to mankind the keys to the secrets of nature are buried deep underground, not accessible to man.'

And these farsighted men said:

'We will create a centre for nuclear research. This shall become a tem-

ple of science, not only for Europe, but for the world as a whole.'

And they continued:

'Let us build CERN.' And scientists and engineers from all over Europe followed the call. The roads to Geneva became crowded. And these settlers started to gather at the Site of Meyrin. They built accelerators: the SC and the PS. They built ISOLDE and reached some of the peaks above the valley. They also collided in the ISR.

And all was well.

But suddenly a new command was heard:

'Go deep underground!' And it came to pass that the SPS was built. And the scientists, like bees in a hive, continued to serve their queen accelerator.