

NIKOLAI VLADIMIROVICH KASHIN

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NIKOLAI Vladimirovich Kashin, one of the oldest professors of physics in the country, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Honored Scientific Worker, who was in charge of the Faculty of Physics at the Moscow Mining Institute, died on January 10th in his 87th year. Kashin began his pedagogical activity as a teacher of physics in the Second Men's Gymnasium (Secondary School) and then continued

in the Real (Technical Secondary) School after graduation in 1897 from the physical-mathematical faculty of the Moscow University. From the first years of his teaching activity, Kashin was an innovator in the teaching of physics, cleverly devising lecture demonstrations and at the same time raising its scientific level. Soon Kashin became one of the then few pioneers in the organization of laboratory work for students, just then introduced in Russia and abroad. Kashin remained to the end of his days an adherent of active methods of teaching physics on the basis of a solid theoretical level. By a serious approach to the teaching of physics, he was able to interest many of his students, some of

whom became later well known professors and engineers, who gathered to congratulate him on his 85th birthday in 1957.

The active pedagogic activity has led Kashin in a natural way to the writing of textbooks. He thus wrote the following secondary-school textbooks, which were published in several editions each: "Principles of Mathematical Analysis," "Physics, First Step," (based on a laboratory course) parts 1 and 2; "Textbooks of Physics," parts 1 and 2 (together with V. N. Startsev); and "Laboratory Course in Physics" for industrial technical schools.

Kashin's scope of activities expanded in 1911 with the founding in Moscow of the Shelaputin Pedagogical Institute, a university-level two-year school for persons who completed other higher institutions of learning but desired to prepare for secondary-school teaching. Kashin was invited by the Institute to organize the physics-methodology faculty and to head its activities. It was there that his great organizing ability was demonstrated, together with his ability to choose valuable associates. Although the number of students in the Institute was small (for example, only 65 on October 1, 1913), and although the Institute was closed by 1918, Kashin's students included a relatively large number of persons who made a considerable contribution to the development of methods of physics teaching. A culmination of this activity were Kashin's first manual on procedures for physics teaching, which went through several editions, his principal philosophic views, and his advanced methodical ideas; many parts of this book still remain of value. This book of his should serve as a manual for all physics teachers.

With the reorganization of the Shelaputin Institute into the Academy of Communist Education (AKV), Kashin went to work there. Then, from 1925 through 1930, he was in charge of the chair of physics methodology of the Second Moscow State University, from which the V. I. Lenin Moscow State Pedagogical Institute was separated in 1930. The physics equipment of the Laboratory for Physics Methods, created by Kashin, was transferred to the latter institution and is carefully preserved there.

In 1930 Kashin assumed his duties at the Physics Faculty of the Moscow Mining Institute, which he headed until his death. The results of more than thirty years spent in higher institutions of learning were the courses of physics he organ-

ized for pedagogical institutes, for teachers institutes, and finally, a course that could serve both for pedagogical and technical higher institutions of learning. Almost until his fatal sickness, Kashin remained a member of the Academy of Communist Education Expert Commission on Pedagogical Sciences, where his voice was always raised in favor of tightening the requirements for the scientific quality of dissertations.

Simultaneously with the work at the Pedagogical Institute, Kashin guided the preparation of physics teachers through courses given in the school districts, and voluntarily participated, at the invitation of local organizations, in popular education through summer courses, intended to raise teachers' qualifications. He traveled to these courses with his laboratory assistant and with his demonstration equipment.

In addition to his work in state institutions, Kashin was active in various scientific societies. As early as in 1899 he became a member of the Physics Division of the Pedagogical Society of the Moscow University, then headed by Prof. Nikolaï Alekseevich Umov. Kashin was particularly active in the Society of Physics Teachers, organized in 1912, which was later named after Prof. Umov. In this society, Kashin was chairman of the laboratory commission, the task of which was to make it possible for teachers to increase their skill in demonstration and in the organization of laboratory work. Being at that time in charge of the chair at the Shelaputin Institute, Kashin made his methodological laboratory accessible to the members of the society for this purpose.

Demanding of himself when it came to work, Kashin was also demanding of his associates and was able to train them into disciplined workers who discharged their obligations with full responsibility. However, although demanding of his associates, Kashin departed himself with true Soviet humanism both to his associates and to everyone who dealt with him.

All those who worked with Kashin, who were taught by him directly or through his books, or even those who only heard of him, will always retain the memory of his bright personality, of exceeding love of labor, and of great and varied ability.

Translated by J. G. Adashko