

Eightieth anniversary of the birth of M. A. Leontovich

The Editorial Board

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March 7, 1980 was the eightieth anniversary of the birth of the distinguished Soviet theoretical physicist Academician M. A. Leontovich (1903–1981). There are few people whose positive scientific and personal impact on society can compare with his. The first few decades of Mikhail Aleksandrovich's brilliant career were largely associated with the Moscow University and the Physics Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The last 30 years of his life were spent at the Institute of Atomic Energy where he created a School devoted to the theory of high-temperature plasmas, which has received worldwide recognition.

M. A. Leontovich was a theoretician with an unusually wide range of scientific interests. In this issue, we publish three papers illuminating his contribution to such widely differing branches of physics as electrodynamics, physical optics, acoustics, and statistical physics. Having read these papers, readers of *Uspekhi* will undoubtedly appreciate the significance and preci-

sion of the following characterization of the scientific creativity of Mikhail Aleksandrovich, given by S. I. Vavilov as far back as 1946: "M. A. Leontovich represents the classical mould of theoretical physics. At the same time, he has been responsible for some fundamental research in quantum physics¹⁾ The characteristic feature of the work of L. A. Leontovich is its depth and rigor."

The Editorial Board hopes that this publication will introduce the new generation of physicists to the scientific legacy of A. M. Leontovich, and will preserve the memory of this remarkable man and scientist.

¹⁾In this connection see B. B. Kadomtsev, V. I. Kogan, B. M. Smirnov, and V. D. Shafranov, "Fiftieth anniversary of the publication of On the Theory of the Schroedinger equation by L. I. Mandel'shtam and M. A. Leontovich," *Usp. Fiz. Nauk* 124, 547 (1978) [*Sov. Phys. Uspekhi* 21, 272 (1978)].