

IN MEMORIAM LÁSZLÓ ERDEY

It is my sad duty to report the sudden death of Dr. László Erdey, professor of analytical chemistry at the Technical University of Budapest, Hungary, and well known to the readers of this journal.

Dr. Erdey was born in 1910. He majored in physics and even his Ph. D. Thesis was in that field. However, he soon turned to chemistry and in particular to analytical chemistry. During the depression, he served for years as an assistant-without-pay at the Pázmány-University of Budapest and after that, he was for more than a decade an associate of the Municipal Chemical Institute. He liked to tell stories about the wide variety of problems encountered there and attributed his experience in almost every type of analysis to his activities at this Institute.

In 1949, he was appointed head of the Institute of General and Analytical Chemistry of the Technical University. In teaching analytical chemistry, he emphasized the physico-chemical principles of the analytical techniques and their interrelationship. At the Institute, it was also his duty to organize and supervise the teaching of chemistry to non-chemistry students. He particularly enjoyed this because, as he often said, it forced him to constantly organize his thoughts and kept him up-to-date in the general aspects of chemistry. He was an excellent pedagogue, and his textbooks on qualitative, volumetric, and gravimetric analyses have been translated into many languages.

In addition to being an excellent teacher, Dr. Erdey was also a researcher, in the true sense of the word, always with hundreds of new ideas to fertilize the work of a score of collaborators. Under his leadership the Institute evolved to one of the leading analytical centers in Europe. He participated actively in many international scientific organizations, and was in continuous touch with prominent analytical chemists in the whole world. For the readers of this journal, he is probably best known for his work in thermal analysis; however, this represented only one of the many fields in which he was active and his contributions to other analytical methods are equally noteworthy.

Dr. Erdey's interest was not restricted to chemistry. He loved literature, art, and music, and the fact that his sudden death occurred when going to an evening opera-performance after a long discussion with members of his Institute on the problems encountered in their work probably best characterizes his life.

With Dr. Erdey's death, analytical chemistry has lost one of its last polyhistorists; the writer of this eulogy — and many others — have lost a true friend.

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