

Igor Yevgenyevich Tamm was born in Vladivostok on July 8, 1895, as the son of Evgenij Tamm, an engineer, and Olga Davydova. He graduated from Moscow State University in 1918, specializing in physics, and immediately commenced an academic career in institutes of higher learning. He was progressively assistant, instructor, lecturer, and professor in charge of chairs, and he has taught in the Crimean and Moscow State Universities, in Polytechnical and Engineering-Physical Institutes, and in the J.M. Sverdlov Communist University. Tamm was awarded the degree of Doctor of Physico-Mathematical Sciences, and he has attained the academic rank of Professor. Since 1934, he has been in charge of the theoretical division of the P.N. Lebedev Institute of Physics of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences.

A decisive influence on his scientific activity was exercised by Prof. L. Mandelstam, under whose guidance he worked a number of years and with whom he was closely associated since 1920, when they met for the first time, and up to the death of Prof. Mandelstam in 1944.

Tamm is an outstanding theoretical physicist, and his early researches were devoted to crystallo-optics and the quantum theory of diffused light in solid bodies. He turned his attention to the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics and he evolved a method for interpreting the interaction of nuclear particles. Together with I.M. Frank, he developed the theoretical interpretation of the radiation of electrons moving through matter faster than the speed of light (the Cerenkov effect), and the theory of showers in cosmic rays. He has also contributed towards methods for the control of thermonuclear reactions. Resulting from his original researches, Tamm has written two important books, *Relativistic Interaction of Elementary Particles* (1935) and *On the Magnetic Moment of the Neutron* (1938).

I. Tamm was elected Corresponding Member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences in 1933, and in 1953 he became an Academician. He shared the 1946 State Prize with Vavilov, Cerenkov, and Frank, and is a Hero of Socialist Labour. He is also a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Swedish Physical Society.