LEOPOLD FEJÉR: IN MEMORIAM

1880–1959

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On October 15, 1959, Leopold Fejér died in Budapest, Hungary. For the past half century Fejér was a central figure of the international mathematical community and a leading personality of his native country. He had many pupils scattered all over the world and many friends and admirers in all countries where mathematics is at home. His profound influence was due not only to his deep and fundamental contributions to various chapters of Analysis, but also to the simplicity and elegance of his presentation, and last but not least, to his charming and suggestive personality. His loss is deplored by many mathematicians, a considerable number of them in this country. He visited the U. S. in 1933 in response to an invitation by the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. As a visiting lecturer of the Society he was the guest of more than 15 colleges and universities, all of them east of the Mississippi. Brown University conferred an honorary doctorate on him. During his long mathematical and academic career Fejér received many honors and distinctions. He was a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, corresponding member of the Academies of Göttingen and München and of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He was honorary member of the Calcutta Mathematical Society, honorary doctor of the University of Budapest, and received the Kossuth prize and other distinctions in Hungary. He was a vice-president of the International Congress held in Cambridge, England, in 1912, and a member of the editorial boards of the Rendiconti del Circolo Matematico di Palermo and of the Mathematische Zeitschrift.

Fejér was born in 1880 in Pécs, Hungary. After completion of the secondary school in Pécs, he participated in the Eötvös-competition of the Hungarian Mathematical Society (initiated in 1894) and won the second prize. He studied in Budapest from 1897 until he received his Ph.D. degree in 1902 with his discovery of the Cesàro summability of Fourier series, a result which became a classical piece of Analysis. He spent the academic year 1899–1900 in Berlin where he came in contact with Hermann Amandus Schwarz. In the famous seminar conducted by this eminent mathematician he met for the first time C. Carathéodory and E. Schmidt, and later E. Landau and I. Schur, acquaintances which became the source of life long sympathies,