Raising the Skill Level of Working Analysts

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The number of problems faced by analysts and their complexity are constantly growing, and to solve each new problem, an analyst must know the present-day possibilities of analytical chemistry, literature data, equipment, etc. It is known that the scope of methods and means used by analysts is continuously expanding; widely used methods and devices are sophisticated; computer software is perfected; etc. All this calls for the necessity of periodically retraining practical analysts, at least, for the organization of an exchange of experience.

In the Soviet Union, work on increasing the level of professional skills of laboratory workers was carried out by many ministries and departments. Thus, the USSR Ministry for Ferrous Metallurgy periodically organized in Moscow colloquia of researchers from central plant laboratories and scientific institutes on the basis of the Central Research Institute of Ferrous Metallurgy (TsNIIChermet). Similar work was done to some or another extent by the Ministries of Agriculture, Chemical Industry, Nonferrous Metallurgy, and some others. After the disintegration of the USSR and the liquidation of the majority of branch ministries, this work actually stopped.

In recent years, a possibility of raising professional skills through courses organized by various companies, laboratory associations, and some all-Russian governmental organizations appeared. For example, Moscow Cortec Company organized courses on spectroscopy and other methods. Courses on environmental analysis and on chromatography will be organized by the Ecoanalytica Association on the basis of the Depart-

ment of Chemistry of Moscow State University. Problems of metrology and standardization attract much attention of the Analytica Association at its annual sessions not far from Moscow. Large instrument-making companies organize workshops for the users of their devices. An important role in raising the professional skill of researchers from scientific institutions and high schools is played by numerous scientific conferences, symposia, and workshops organized by the Scientific Council on Analytical Chemistry of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The largest international conferences and exhibitions, especially in the USA, involve short (from several hours to two days) courses in particular analytical directions. For example, such courses are always held at Pittsburgh Conferences on Analytical Chemistry and Applied Spectroscopy.

Coming back to Russia, remember that several years ago, the Scientific Council on Analytical Chemistry of the Russian Academy of Sciences addressed the administrations of a number of higher educational institutions with a proposal to organize courses for increasing the professional skills of practical analysts in the region on the basis of divisions of analytical chemistry. Several positive responses have been met, and the Ural Polytechnical University, Saratov State University, and some other universities have announced that such work is already being done.

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