

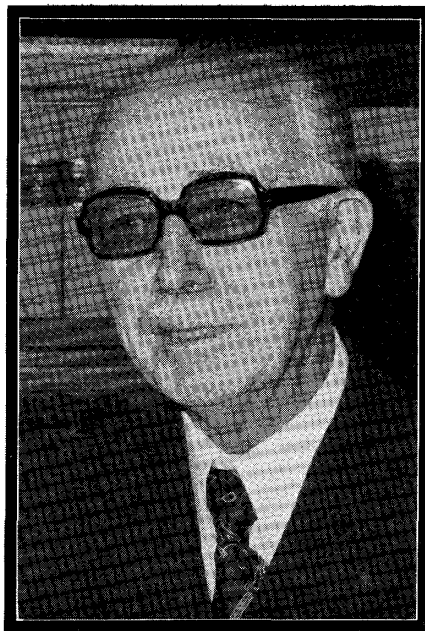
Professor P. CHOUARD (1903-1983)

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Professor P. CHOUARD (1903–1983)

Professor P. CHOUARD died in Paris on the 11th December 1983. After graduating in Physics and Natural Sciences, P. CHOUARD completed his doctorate thesis in 1930 and was appointed professor first at the National College of Horticulture, then at the Faculties of Science at the Universities of Bordeaux, Rennes and finally Paris in 1953. In 1954 he organised the first International Congress of Botany and founded the French Plant Physiology Society. At the same time, he was asked by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (C.N.R.S.) to set up the large phytotron at Gif-sur-Yvette which he directed until his retirement in 1975.

One of his main scientific interests was the bulbous plants, and these formed the subject of his thesis, in which he compared the formation, multiplication and renewal of bulbs. He thus became a specialist of the Scilleae and proposed a new classification for these plants.

At the Versailles College of Horticulture, P. CHOUARD's investigations mainly concerned the determination of flowering in several hundreds of plant species and the comparison of the various plant responses to changes in the environment. He then established links with Dutch horticulturists and had numerous meetings with BLAAUW and WELLENSIEK. From the 1950s onwards, P. CHOUARD became more and more convinced that an understanding of plant behaviour and the physiological basis of productivity, could only be gained by controlling environmental factors. The direction of the C.N.R.S. was at that time planning to construct a large phytotron in France, following the American example at Pasadena, and Professor P. CHOUARD was asked to set up and run this phytotron.

His own personal work, and that of his collaborators, mainly concentrated on the determination of flowering. As a result of his own remarkable and wide-

ranging knowledge of plant species, gained after long experience in the field, he made an extremely original choice of experimental species. A wide variety of plants were long cultivated in the air-conditioned rooms of the phytotron: *Anagallis arvensis*, *Chenopodium polyspermum*, *Scrofularia arguta*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Geum urbanum* etc. ...

One of the P. CHOUARD's hypotheses for flower formation was that a meristem that retains its juvenile status while developing, may directly become floral whereas the formation of the leaf or, in other words, the vegetative state, results from an *inhibition* of the initiation of flowering. Likewise, for vernalization, P. CHOUARD demonstrated the importance of *devernalization*: meristems which have all the potentialities for the formation of the floral bud, remain or return to the vegetative state if they do not rapidly express their vernalized status.

The encyclopaedic knowledge of P. CHOUARD attracted large numbers of students who have made their own contribution to our understanding of plant physiology and have now joined other research institutes throughout France.

P. CHOUARD was a member of the French Agricultural Society for more than 30 years and he followed the work of this organisation right up to a few months before his death when illness forced him to leave the scientific community.

Professor CHOUARD's death caused strong bereavement in the world of French Plant Physiology.

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