

In memoriam of Professor Pierre Chouard

Professor Chouard, foreign member of the Editorial Board of Biologia Plantarum died on 11th December 1983 at the age of 80. He was former Director of Phytotron (CNRS) in Gif, professor of Plant Physiology at the Sorbonne, professor at the National School of Horticulture, Editor-in-Chief of Revue Horticole, and a Member of the Academy of Agriculture. The mere enumeration of his scientific activities reveals a wide range of interest. He was a man whose botanical conscience stretched from active protection of wildlife — he substantially helped to found a natural reserve at Néouville in the Central Pyrenées — to practical recommendations to horticulturists in his capacity as editor of Revue Horticole. He often combined the knowledge of general botanist, the ecologist, the plant physiologist and the horticulturist in tackling scientific problems. In late forties and early fifties he was the first to recognize the diversity of control mechanisms regulating the transition of herbaceous plants to reproductive development, including such factors as plant size, and age and organ correlations. Only observation of tens of contrasting wild species and cultivars of ornamental plants enabled such generalization to be made. Prof. Chouard was also called the father of French phytotron. For him phytotron was more than a problem of technical concept and its materialization. He considered experimentation with plants under controlled conditions not only at the technical level but also as a tool to formulate new ecophysiological problems of plant growth and development. He combined both aspects in phytotronics. It became a new branch of botany. Prof. Chouard devoted much personal effort to promote the exchange of views and ideas to find out how phytotronics could serve plant physiology and agriculture. He organized at least four International meetings on phytotronics and in 1972 started to issue the Phytotronic Newsletter.

Professor Chouard visited Czechoslovakia and was interested in progress made in physiology of plant development in our country and in the construction of single-purpose growth chambers which he himself called micro-phytotron. He was in permanent contact with the editorial board of Biologia Plantarum. All Czechoslovak plant physiologists who knew him will remember him as a rare and fascinating personality. His death was a very sad loss to Botany and Agriculture.

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