

MAN OF THE WEEK

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Brother Victorin

UNLIKE the world's great politicians, its leading men of science go about their business of making the world a safer and happier place in which to live, in discreet retirement, seldom courting the limelight, more often than not shunning it. Yet in the long run, when the history of the human advancement is written, it is the name of the scientist that holds the permanent spotlight centuries after that of the politician or statesman has been forgotten.

The statesmen are forgotten. The world will never forget the real benefactors, the men whose scientific research added to the beauty, the happiness, the comfort and the fullness of human life.

And when no one outside of a vaudeville memory-prodigy act can remember the noisiest politicians of 1938, Montreal will remember the name of Brother Marie Victorin, outstanding botanist and virtual creator of the city's wonderful new Botanical Gardens.

Comparatively few people associate his name with the beautiful centre of botanical science in the East End today. There are political names that occupy the foreground for the moment. But when the smoke of contemporary contests and political excitement have blown away, those names will be forgotten. The one that will remain will be that of Marie Victorin.

World Famed

He is a professor at the University of Montreal. He is one of the world's outstanding botanists. He has given to science the most complete and thorough study of Canadian flora to be found anywhere.

He has worked for a couple of decades incessantly toward the creation of a Botanical Garden in Montreal, where university students could study the subject in a practical way, with the actual plants and flowers growing before them, instead of from pages of a textbook.



Since the work of creating the Botanical Garden has been in progress, he has been responsible for the scientific end of it, supervising, directing and advising as to the

laying out and culture of plant life in the garden.

True, it took the help of politicians to get the funds with which to build the gardens, and there are

indications that political strife will be waged around them for a good many years to come, as to who shall pay the bills and who shall control the final outcome. But the guiding genius behind it all has been and will remain, the unassuming, unpretentious scientific genius, Brother Marie Victorin.

Of honors he has plenty. If he chose to wear them as military men and statesmen do, he could not find space for them all on his chest.

Many Honors

His work "Laurentian Sketches" won for him the Intellectual Action Laureate in 1920 (French Narration Section); in 1922 he gained the degree of Doctor of Science of the University of Montreal. His work on phytometric researches on the Bartonina Virginica L. won him another French Intellectual Action Laureate (scientific and technical section). In 1923 his work on The Filicines of Quebec won him the David prize.

In 1927 he represented French Canada at the British Association for the Advancement of Science convention in Capetown and Johannesburg, South Africa.

In 1929 he was invited to lecture at Harvard University. In 1930 he represented Canada at the International Commission on Botanical Nomenclature, Cambridge, England.

In 1931 his collection of Contributions of the Botanical Laboratory of the University of Montreal won the David prize. In 1932 he carried off the Candoger prize, given by the Botanical Society of France. In 1933 he was delegated by the Canadian government to the fifth Pacific Science Convention. He was also that year the guest of honor of the British Association in Leicester, England.

In 1934 he was delegated by the Royal Society of Canada to represent it at the British Association meeting. In 1935 he received His Majesty's jubilee decoration and in the same year he received from the Academy of Science of Paris the Coincy prize, for his works on flowers.