

MARIE-VICTORIN À CUBA

CORRESPONDANCE
AVEC LE FRÈRE LÉON

ANDRÉ BOUCHARD



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Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal

Marie-Victorin (1885-1944) is Quebec's best-known scientist. His fame is due in large part to his involvement with the Montreal Botanical Garden, which he founded in 1931, as well as for his famous *Flore laurentienne* (1935). Beginning in 1938, he traveled seven times to Cuba, where he met Brother Leon, a French emigrant in Cuba and author of *Flora de Cuba*, with whom he published *Botanical Routes in Cuba* in three volumes. These works stood as the benchmark for the botanical history of the West Indies for decades.

Marie-Victorin and Brother Leon maintained constant correspondence between 1907 and 1944, which enables us to understand their respective paths in life. This correspondence, often laced with humour, allows us to discover Marie-Victorin's mindset during the Cuban era: sickly, hating the Canadian winter, taking refuge in a Havana hotel, and wishing for a change of pace two or three months per year, away from his Montreal Botanical Garden and the many responsibilities back home. We can get a sense of the enthusiasm of the two botanists, and their mutual understanding of scientific matters taking shape.

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218 pages • \$29,95