Ezra Jacob Kraus
1885–1960

When Dr. E. J. Kraus, visiting professor of horticulture, Oregon State College, died February 28, 1960, in Corvallis, Ore., he left behind hundreds of beautiful hybrid chrysanthemums and day-lilies and just as many friends among horticulturists and botanists throughout the country. Next to the late Liberty Hyde Bailey, he was one of the most beloved personalities among plant scientists and experimental horticulturists. He combined, to a high degree, scientific training with its useful application, especially in horticulture. His extensive knowledge of plants, his kindliness and frank honesty and sincerity, attracted to him friends and investigators from many fields of botany, horticulture, and agronomy. He was an inspiration to both graduate and undergraduate students up to the last and helped many financially. Because of his appealing personality, his love of plants, his vast knowledge and non-technical approach to many problems, he had a wide audience among horticulturists. He was popular and at home equally well in scientific circles and garden club meetings. Many students of plant life came under his guidance and obtained their final degrees while Dr. Kraus was a staff member in the Departments of Botany at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Chicago.

Despite his protracted physical disability, that might have justified a complete retirement many years ago, Kraus continued to be self-effacing and always ready to assist others. Few people in technical horticulture were more sought after for friendly advice, criticism and suggestions than Dr. Kraus. And he was never too busy, too absorbed in his own work to place his knowledge and judgment at the disposal of all who felt the need for his help.

Dr. Kraus's primary activity as a teacher and investigator in botany, was in plant morphology, though he became widely known for his and Kraybill's popular physiological research, "Vegetation and Reproduction with Special Reference to the Tomato". This publication won for him wide recognition and acclaim. While the carbohydrate-nitrogen relationship concept, as a basis of plant development, proposed in this publication, is now largely discounted by plant physiologists, as a result of this work and emphasis, attention was focused on the importance and value of fundamental laboratory research with plants. This publication marked the beginning of a scientific approach to many plant cultural problems and marked the establishment of research laboratories in connection with agricultural experiment station activities throughout the country.

During his early horticultural career Kraus was interested in problems of fruit pollination and settings which led to studies of structure and growth of fruits. Morphology apparently remained the primary field of interest throughout his life. In later years, he displayed an active attention to growth regulators, their effects on plants, and their application in agriculture. In fact, he was one of the pioneers in the study of growth regulators, their morphological and histological effects on plants and their potential practical value. This helped greatly to develop 2,4-dichlorophenoxy acetic acid (2,4-D) and subsequently numerous other synthetic chemicals as effective and valuable weed killers and their extensive utilization in crop production. It led to a rapid commercial expansion in the manufacture of special chemicals for weed control throughout the country.

Kraus was born March 19, 1885, in Ingham County, Mich., the son of Christian and Katherine (Baumgrass) Kraus. As with so many other early students of plant life, he obtained the B.S. degree at Michigan State Agricultural College (now Michigan State University) in 1907. After several years of

outstanding service on the faculty of horticulture at the Oregon State College, he obtained, while on sabbatical leave, the Ph.D. degree in Botany from the University of Chicago in 1917. Upon returning to Oregon he was appointed Dean of the Division of Basic Arts and Sciences, but two years later accepted a position as Professor of Applied Botany at the University of Wisconsin, 1919 to 1927. From 1927 until his "retirement" in 1949, he was professor and later chairman of the botany department of the University of Chicago, where he was honored by being officially named Distinguished Service Professor in 1943. Along with his academic work, Kraus held, for many years, (primarily in a consultative capacity) also an appointment as a plant physiologist in the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. After leaving the University of Chicago in 1949, Dr. Kraus accepted a visiting professorship in horticulture at the Oregon State College in Corvallis where he spent the last ten years breeding and introducing chrysanthemums and other ornamental plants on a large scale, much of the work being done at his own expense.

Dr. Kraus was a member of and gained recognition in many professional societies: American Society of Hort. Science (President 1927); American Society of Plant Physiologists (President 1928); American Association for the Advancement of Science (Vice president and chairman, Sec. G, 1930); American Society of Naturalists (Vice president 1931); Ecological Society of America, and Entomological Society of Washington.

Among other recognitions, he was made an honorary vice president of the American Forestry Association (1947) and was for 12 years on the National Research Council Board of Fellowships. In recognition of his work and service, doctor of science degrees were conferred on him by the Oregon State College in 1938 and by the Michigan State University in 1949. Numerous, indeed, are the national and regional horticultural organizations that have honored Dr. Kraus with medals, awards, and citations of all kinds.

Because of his stern character, humanitarian convictions, and profound honesty, Kraus abstained from all so-called community activities. His attitude toward fellow men was, for lack of a better definition, that of a practicing Christian, of which there seem to be very few remaining specimens. Instead of participating in conventional or popular activities or trumped-up mass emotions, he went his own way, enjoying the beauty of nature, works of art, and human kindness. During the 47 years the writer has known him, he has not come across a more kindly and more unselfish man than Dr. Kraus.—A. E. MURMEEK

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION: The Division of Biological and Medical Sciences of the National Science Foundation announces that the next closing date for receipt of basic research proposals in the Life Sciences is September 15, 1960. Proposals received prior to that date will be reviewed at the fall meetings of the Foundation's advisory panels and disposition will be made approximately four months after the closing date. Proposals received after the September 15, 1960, closing date will be reviewed after the spring closing date of January 15, 1961.

Address inquiries to the National Science Foundation, Washington 25, D. C.

CANADIAN SOCIETY: The Canadian Society of Plant Physiologists met in the University of Toronto June 2 and 3, 1960. The proceedings included six sessions of contributed papers and the G. H. Duff Memorial Symposium on Developmental Physiology under the Chairmanship of Dr. G. Krotkov. Participants in the symposium were Dr. E. T. Bünning, University of Tübingen; Dr. F. C. Steward, Cornell University, and Dr. G. Setterfield, National Research Council of Canada. The Society has established a category of corresponding members available to plant physiologists outside Canada. Address inquiries to Dr. Dorothy F. Forward, Secretary-Treasurer, Department of Botany, University of Toronto, Toronto 5, Canada.—DOROTHY F. FORWARD, *Secretary-Treasurer*.