

OBITUARY—JAMES H. SHEPARD.

By B. A. Dunbar.

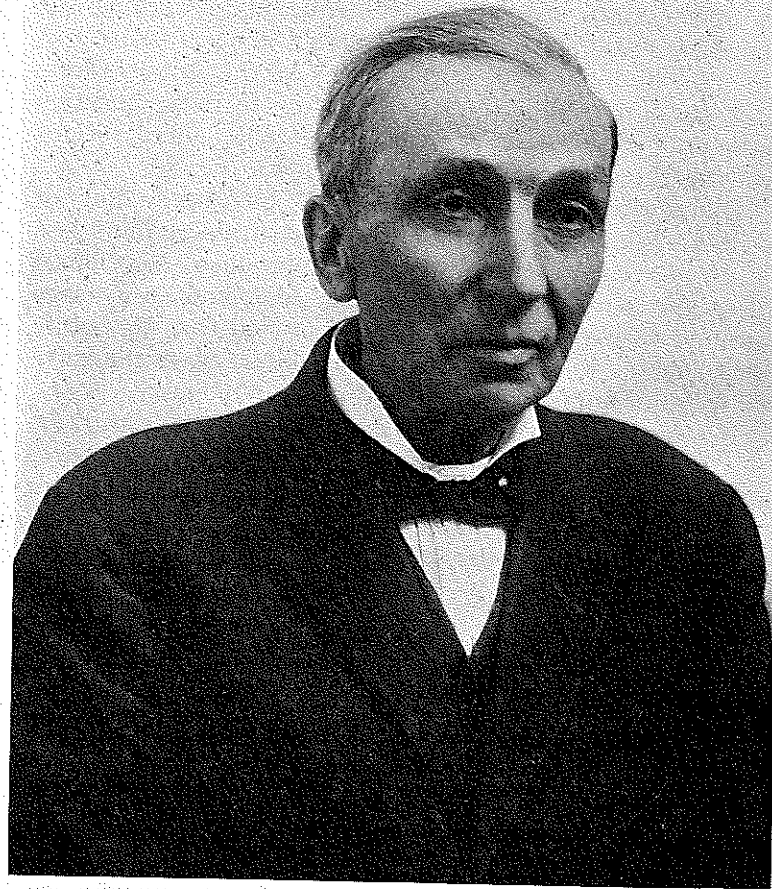
The college community of State College, as well as his myriad of friends throughout the entire state of South Dakota was shocked to learn of the death of Prof. James H. Shepard at St. Petersburg, Fla., where he had been passing his winters during the past three years because of ill health.

Prof. Shepard was born in Lyons, Mich., April 4, 1850. He received his baccalaureate degree from the University of Michigan in 1873 and for several years thereafter, was engaged in supervision of public school work in his native state. From 1882 to 1886 he was instructor in chemistry in the high school at Ypsilanti. He came to South Dakota as professor of chemistry in State College in 1888, and has been head of that department for thirty years.

During these years he has been closely identified with the upbuilding of the industries of this state. His investigations of food adulteration, the bleaching of flour, the computation of various feeding factors of native grasses and vegetables peculiar to this state, and his endeavors to establish the practicability of raising South Dakota to high rank in the list of beet-sugar producing states have been among the problems he has sought to solve in the midst of his busy life as an instructor and author.

His textbook on Elementary Inorganic Chemistry was among his first contributions to his science, and first brought him into professional notice, since it was one of the first texts to employ the radically inductive method of presentation. He has been urged, many times, to revise this text so as to include more of the newer theory, but has not done so because of lack of time and strength during his later years, as well as because he has regarded this elementary text as adequate for the purpose it has so well served, an introduction to practical analytical work in chemistry.

He was chemist for the state Pure Food Commission for nine years. During these years his work attracted wide attention and he was in demand as speaker and legal witness from coast to coast. His investigations into the physiological effects of bleached flour rendered him internationally



THE LATE PROF. JAMES H. SHEPARD

famous. And, through his efforts, combined with those of Professor Ladd and Dr. Wiley, the government was enabled to win its contention in this matter. His answer to the question: "What is whiskey?" called him into conference before President Taft in the now famous controversy on that subject.

Professor Shepard was director of the U. S. Experiment Station at Brookings for several years. During his incumbency, he made exhaustive analyses of artesian waters of the state and was instrumental in forwarding the extension of our state artesian wells. During his directorship, also, he made a chemical survey of the forage plants of the state, publishing bulletins relating to their digestion coefficients as of use in the calculation of balanced rations involving these feeds.

His greatest investigational work has been that of breeding of sugar beets from an original strain running less than 10 per cent to several which have produced individuals with sugar content as high as 25 per cent, and an average of around 18 per cent. He has fully proved that this state is well adapted to such production as should place the state upon a firm commercial basis in the sugar industry.

His passing leaves a vacancy among the educators of South Dakota that will be difficult to fill, while his benevolent disposition and his great popularity and efficiency as an instructor will cause his name to be held long in the memory of those who have had the privilege of working with him.