Since 1908 Mr. de Valera has been condemned to death by a British court, escaped from a British prison, and held office as a Prime Minister of a Commonwealth country. Time and science are good solvents of human differences. Again, three young chemists, H. F. Coward, Robert Robinson and John Simonsen, came to Dublin in 1908 and pitched their tent in Raheny, then a rural village outside the city, and cycled each day to the meeting. All were destined for fame. Coward became director of the Safety in Mines Research Station and the others were elected to the Royal Society and received the honour of knighthood; Sir Robert Robinson is a Nobel laureate and a past-president of the Royal Society. Sir John

Simonsen had looked forward to coming to Dublin in September, but it was not to be. Sir Robert Robinson will make the journey. He is organizing on behalf of Section B a symposium on the "Biogenesis of Plant Products".

It has been the aim of the organizers, while maintaining the traditions of the British Association, to give the Dublin meeting something of an Irish flavour. In the years since 1835 traditional Irish hospitality and friendliness have not altered. It is hoped that the 1957 meeting in Dublin will be a memorable one, and that the overseas visitors will return to their homes with happy memories of a rewarding stay in Ireland.

OBITUARIES

Prof. S. J. Shand

S. J. SHAND died on April 19 at Broughty Ferry in Angus at the age of seventy-four. He was grounded in chemistry and geology by Walker and Jehu, respectively, while an undergraduate at University College, Dundee (University of St. Andrews), and he continued postgraduate studies during 1905-6 under Busz at Münster in Germany. Here, by chance, he commenced to work on specimens from the curious igneous complex near Loch Borrolan in Assynt. The particular problems confronting him in this task provided two lines of research which he continued to pursue throughout his life. One was that the principle of saturation with respect to silica as shown by rock-forming minerals is of fundamental importance in petrological classification, and the other that the genesis of felspathoidal rocks depends upon changes resulting from the assimilation of limestone by granitic magma.

The classification of volcanic rocks was much debated in the early part of the century and it was in 1913 that Shand enunciated his views. After lively controversy with Alexander Scott during the next few years, he incorporated some aspects advocated by Prof. Arthur Holmes and emphasized the mineral response made to the amount of aluminium present in a rock. Thus he developed a complete working plan for classification in his book, "Eruptive Rocks", which appeared in 1927. Recast and modified in further editions, this philosophical book has served and satisfied a generation of students in Europe and North America.

Shand's studies in Assynt had led him to believe that assimilation of limestone was probably responsible for the formation of the nepheline-bearing rocks in this area. Therefore, when Daly in 1910 propounded the hypothesis of desilication of a felspathic magma by reaction with limestone, Shand at once became a disciple. He never would abandon hope of finding an adequate body of limestone in the vicinity of each nepheline rock complex. During his twenty-six years as professor of geology in the University of Stellenbosch, he examined and described several South African foyaites where limestone is associated.

After he graduated at Münster in 1906, Shand had five years as assistant in the Geological Department of the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh, and was the author of two 'guides', really small text-books on mineralogy and petrography, which sold at the

price of one penny each, an achievement which he was amused to recall in later life. During leave from Stellenbosch during 1916-19 Shand was commissioned in the Royal Engineers and served in Mesopotamia. After the armistice in 1918 he was seconded to the Anglo-Persian Oil Co., Ltd., and under its aegis he did some exploration survey in Baluchistan and Khuzistan. For a time he was resident geologist at Maidan-i-Naftun on the Masjid-i-Sulaiman oilfield. In 1919 he first established by microscopic comparison of well-cuttings and the rock from the type locality that the Asmari Limestone was, in fact, the main reservoir formation, thereby settling a controversy of many years standing and solving a problem of immense economic importance.

The third phase in Shand's life commenced in 1937, when as a professor at Columbia University in New York he had access to an excellent library and contacts galore with geologists and petrologists of many nations. As a result, he wrote a succession of provocative and neat petrological papers and prepared revised editions of his four books. His wife's death in 1947 was a blow from which he never fully recovered, and it eventually caused him to resign from his post in New York. He returned to Scotland in 1950, where he wrote his last book, "Rocks for Chemists", an invitation to chemists to scan the domain of volcanic rocks.

Shand was apt to appear aloof. Probably this developed as a result of prolonged isolation at Stellenbosch, which was partly due to the disapproval incurred when he gave a lecture on the Deluge, in which he followed the outline of this event as told by Suess in the "Face of the Earth". He thereby shocked orthodox opinion of many local members of the Dutch Reformed Church. Nevertheless, he could always be depended upon to take part with gusto in any discussion on rocks, recent plays, Rugby football, Gaelic or Mary Queen of Scots. As a student he served on the Students' Representative Council at St. Andrews. He was the producer of plays, and of many Gilbert and Sullivan operas given by the students at Stellenbosch, and on occasion he travelled as manager of that University's Rugby fifteen. Particular about his dress, precise in his speech, lucid in his written works, he will be remembered with gratitude by many former students as a stimulating teacher, always ready and able to give unlimited and willing help. J. V. HARRISON