

THE French Government has conferred the honour of the Grade and Diploma of Officier de l'Instruction Publique in the Academy of France upon Sir Thomas Oliver, M.D., Sir Ronald Ross, F.R.S., Professor E. W. Hope, M.D. and Professor Georges Dreyer, M.D., as presidents of the Sections at the Congress of the Royal Institute of Public Health held in Paris in May last.

AT a meeting of the Northern Association of Medical Women, held at Liverpool on December 5th, Dr. Catherine Chisholm of Manchester being in the chair, and twenty-one representatives of northern towns present, Dr. Sophia M. V. Witts of Sheffield was elected President for the ensuing two years. At the same meeting a committee was appointed to consider what steps the association should take, if any, in regard to furthering the campaign against venereal disease.

THE Harveian Society of London will hold its annual general meeting and election of officers on Thursday, January 8th, at the Stafford Rooms, Titchbourne Street, Edgware Road, W. On the same occasion the outgoing president, Dr. Leonard Guthrie, will deliver an address dealing with the early transactions of the Harveian Society, the proceedings terminating in a smoking concert.

A CONSIDERABLE number of Glasgow institutions benefit under the will of the late Mr. William Weir, of Kildonan, chief partner in the firm of Baird and Company, iron-masters. The Royal Infirmary and the Western Infirmary each receive £10,000, Glasgow Victoria Infirmary £5,000, and the Glasgow Eye Infirmary and the Glasgow Ophthalmic Institution £500 each. The University itself is left a sum of £5,000, to be devoted to the provision of additional assistance to the Professor of Materia Medica, and Kilmarnock Infirmary and Ayr Infirmary each receive £2,000.

A LEAGUE for the protection of childhood has been formed in the Belgian Congo. It is intended to arrange courses of practical puericulture for nuns, missionaries, wives of functionaries, merchants, and employees who have to live in the colony. Clinics for nurslings will be established; five are already being organized at Boma, Matadi, Kisiant, Luebo, and Leopoldville. A part of the work of the league is the preparation of a practical manual of hygiene and treatment, having in view the special needs of the black child. The headquarters of the league are at Brussels. The president is Madame Leon Vandepere; the secretary, Mademoiselle E. Patris.

HEARSEY, in his *Sleeping Sickness Diary*, Part XXI, states that during May, June, July, and August of this year 25 additional cases of human trypanosomiasis have been notified in Nyasaland—namely, 6 in May, 3 each in June and July, and 13 in August. Of this number, 7 have been discovered in the Marimba district, 16 in the Dowa district, and 2 in the South Nyasa district. These 25 cases, added to those previously reported, make a total of 153. Preventive measures, consisting of clearing bush, removing villages, and burning grass, are all in operation, and it is to be hoped that these will result in a cessation of the malady. Nothing is said in the report as to the driving back and destruction of game.

ON November 18th, as the result of a test case before it, the Supreme Court of New Jersey decided that the Act of the State Legislature of 1911, providing for the sterilization of epileptics, feeble-minded, criminals, and other defectives, is unconstitutional. The court held that this new law "was based upon a classification that bears no reasonable relation to the object of the police regulation, and that it denied to the individuals of the class so selected the equal protection of the laws." The Act was judged to be contrary to the Constitution of the United States guaranteeing equal protection of the laws to all, and to exceed the police powers of the State. The court went on to point out the danger of allowing legislatures to prescribe those upon whom the operation should be performed, since if sanctioned the penalty might be extended to include those regarded as undesirable by a majority of a legislature in power. Eight states of the American Union now have laws providing for the sterilization of imbeciles and certain criminals. In Washington the law has been adjudged constitutional. In Indiana, according to the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* of November 27th, about 1,000 persons have already been sterilized under the operation of the law. The United States Constitution expressly forbids "cruel and unusual punishments," and some lawyers maintain that this applies to sterilization.

## Letters, Notes, and Answers.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES and LETTERS forwarded for publication are understood to be offered to the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL alone unless the contrary be stated.

AUTHORS desiring reprints of their articles published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are requested to communicate with the Office, 429, Strand, W.C., on receipt of proof.

Queries, answers, and communications relating to subjects to which special departments of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are devoted will be found under their respective headings.

### LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

#### MEDICAL PRACTICE IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS.

WE have lately received several complaints as to the conditions of medical practice in the Falkland Islands, and we have now had submitted to us a copy of the agreement to be signed by a doctor accepting appointment with the West Falkland Farmers' Association. The following are the terms of agreement, which we think sufficiently indicate the conditions of service. The document calls for no further comment.

1. That the doctor should be medically examined and passed as physically fit for service on the West Falkland Islands, and if selected for the appointment would be provided with a free passage and up to three of a family to the Colony on signing the agreement. Should the doctor appointed leave before the term of three years, he would be required to refund the said passage money, unless leaving for any other reason than mental or physical infirmity.
2. The West Falkland Farmers' Medical Association agree to give a salary of £600 per annum, to be paid half yearly if required, and an unfurnished house situated at Fox Bay, the Mail Port.
3. That the doctor should agree to visit medically without extra charge the members of the Association and their families, or in their absence from the Island, their representatives and their families.
4. Should any dispute, medical or otherwise, arise between the doctor and any member of the association, the doctor agrees to place the matter before a committee of three members to be appointed by the secretary, who shall have power to deal with the same.
5. That the doctor agrees to find, at his own expense, the means of transport within a reasonable time for paying all medical visits, and to leave home at the earliest possible moment after receiving a call from a subscriber soliciting his services, and to return as soon as the necessities of the case permit. In the case of an urgent call, which would mean his instant departure, perhaps at night, a horse would be provided by the subscriber sending for him.
6. That he should be allowed eight horses, one to be kept at Shag Cove, one at Goring House, one at Double Creek, one at Teal River, and four at Fox Bay.
7. That he should be allowed to cut as much peat for firing as required.
8. That he will not be allowed to accept any outside appointment unless agreed upon by the association.
9. That all non-subscribers shall pay according to a scale of fee to be adjusted by the association.
10. That this agreement shall hold good for not more than five years from the date of his arrival on the West Falklands, but that the period may be extended for a further term of years by mutual agreement between himself and the association, that six months' notice on either side be sufficient, but he will be requested not to leave before his successor arrives.
11. In the event of his serving to the satisfaction of the association for the term of five years, his passage and up to three of a family will be paid home.
12. That he should bring out all drugs and instruments, as none are supplied; also riding outfit, but not saddle or bridle, as the ones obtained locally are better and cheaper.
13. That all damages to the house should be repaired by the tenant.

#### ERRATUM.

IN the article on the Insurance Struggle in Germany, in the JOURNAL of December 20th, p. 1594, col. 2, line 5 from foot of page, for "of" read "or."

#### SCALE OF CHARGES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.

	£	s.	d.
Seven lines and under	...	...	0 5 0
Each additional line	...	...	0 0 8
A whole column	...	...	3 10 0
A page	...	...	10 0 0

An average line contains six words.

All remittances by Post Office Orders must be made payable to the British Medical Association at the General Post Office, London. No responsibility will be accepted for any such remittance not so safeguarded.

Advertisements should be delivered, addressed to the Manager, 429, Strand, London, not later than the first post on Wednesday morning preceding publication, and, if not paid for at the time, should be accompanied by a reference.

NOTE.—It is against the rules of the Post Office to receive *postes restantes* letters addressed either in initials or numbers.