

countries of Europe, with particular reference to the urgent need for improving the private forests of Great Britain.

His devotion to his profession and his remarkable ability in summarizing clearly and fully the salient points of any forestry problem earned for Troup a unique position, and made him a worthy successor to the great men of the earlier years of Indian forestry. He was also a good 'jungle man' with a proper appreciation of life in wild places, with a keen interest in the forest flora and fauna, and, in his younger days, a great love of sport. He was a successful 'shikari' and a very good shot.

ALEXANDER RODGER.

### Prof. Ricardo Jorge

PROF. RICARDO JORGE, an eminent Portuguese hygienist and medical historian, was born on May 22, 1858, at Oporto, where he received his medical education and carried out some important work on plague in conjunction with Dr. Camara Pestana. He afterwards went to Lisbon, where he was appointed director-general of public health and professor of hygiene.

In 1912 Prof. Jorge was made the delegate for Portugal in the International Office of Public Health in Paris, where he was a regular attendant at its meetings and contributed important papers to its proceedings until shortly before his death. His published work comprised a large number of subjects, such as undulant fever, tuberculosis, pellagra, lethargic encephalitis and its mental sequels, alastrim,

post-vaccinal encephalitis, epidemics on ships, especially the typhoid form of malaria and dengue, spirochaetal jaundice, influenza and epidemic pleurodynia. As medical historian, he took an active part in the proceedings of the International Society of the History of Medicine, to which he contributed scholarly articles on the epidemics of the sixteenth century, the Renaissance in anatomy and medicine in Portugal, medical and scientific relations between England and Portugal and plague epidemics in Europe.

In addition to his medical activities, Prof. Jorge took a keen interest in literature, art, history, philosophy and philology, so that he has often been compared to the humanists of the Renaissance. He counted many friends in Great Britain, where he was elected an honorary fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine in 1938, twelve years after he had been made an honorary member of the Section of Epidemiology. One of his last writings was a sympathetic obituary notice of Sir George Buchanan, his colleague at the International Office of Public Health. His death took place on July 31 at the age of eighty-one years.

J. D. ROLLESTON.

WE regret to announce the following deaths :

Sir William Pope, K.B.E., F.R.S., professor of chemistry in the University of Cambridge, on October 17, aged sixty-nine years.

Dr. W. B. Wright, late of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, author of "The Quaternary Ice Age", on October 11, aged sixty-three years.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

### Ministry of Information

THE debate in the House of Commons last week on the Ministry of Information was announced too late for account to be taken of it in the leading article on the suggested Directorate of Scientific Information in NATURE of October 14, but there appears to have been nothing said which invalidates the comments in that article; indeed, the debate rather served to emphasize the importance of the principal points. Replying on behalf of the Government, Sir Samuel Hoare admitted that the public had lost confidence in the Ministry, and outlined the steps taken for its reorganization. Two factors have no doubt contributed largely to the difficulties of the Ministry, namely, confusion between the task of collecting information and of disseminating it, and the failure to utilize effectively organizations already in existence. The first has involved the Ministry in the difficult question of censorship and authority in relation to other Departments of State; the second has been responsible for excesses of expenditure and lapses of judgment for which the Ministry has been rightly criticized. It is not always realized that the collection of information in itself is a specialized activity. In the technical and scientific sense it is

the task of the numerous information bureaux or departments, such as various Imperial Agricultural Bureaux, those associated with different research and other associations or with individual industrial firms. Activities of this kind are to be found over the whole range of industry and science, including the social sciences. To some extent the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux serves as a clearing house in this field, and its services have already been offered to the Government. Official recognition of the vital necessity of information services and their co-ordination does not as yet appear to have been forthcoming, nor has their utilization by Government Departments and other organizations concerned with national service been encouraged, a situation which would scarcely have arisen had the Ministry been provided with adequate scientific guidance.

The collection of more general information in the sense of news is the essential task of the journalist, and some of the severest criticism of the Ministry of Information has been based on its neglect of the unrivalled experience and organization of the daily Press, both in the collection of news and in the problems involved in handling it. The statement