contracts it at the moment of birth. Dr. Mookerji, in his address on Ophthalmology at the Indian Medical Congress of 1894, stated that in Bengal alone there were 500,000 totally blind beggars, 40 per cent. of whom are children. More than half a million of our poorest children, that is, from geriatric to the mother (Transactions Ind. Med. Cong., 1894, p. 168), and this refers to the beggar class alone, and not to other classes. Such a horrible launuch of half a million from the day of birth to time of death, must surely satisfy the call for vengeance of 40 per cent. of whom are under the sins of their fathers. In addition to the shocking results on sight, the writer says he takes no account of the suffering from cystitis, stenosis, etc., as results of geriatric, and the so-called lesser forms of venereal disease are not to be made light of.

ERRATA.—In the British Medical Journal of May 15th it started that Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Gorkney, M.D., is promoted to be Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel instead of Brigade-Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel. Mr. Thomas Hailes is mentioned as having been awarded the "Distinguished Order;" it should be "Distinguished Service Order."

MEDICO-PARLIAMENTARY.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL.

The report of the amendments to this Bill having been received, the Earl of Derby moved an alteration in Clause 4, in the following terms. "Any person retaining or receiving an infant whose parents or guardians have not been able to pay exceeding £20 paid down, and without any agreement for further payment, as value for the care and bringing up of the said infant until it is capable of self-support, shall within forty days from the time of receiving such infant give notice of the fact to the local authority; and if such notice be not given, the notice required by this section he shall be liable to forfeit the amount paid and the sum of £20 paid down, or such infant, or such less sum as the Court having cognisance of the case shall direct, and the Court shall give directions as to the manner in which the sum forfeited shall be applied for the benefit of the infant, and shall, if necessary, cause the infant to be removed to a workhouse or place of public charity, unless the house shall receive such infant, which shall be maintained in the workhouse or place of safety until it can be otherwise lawfully disposed of." The object of the amendment was to provide a deterrent in cases where a lump sum was paid down for the care of an infant. Where a comparatively small sum, say £10, is paid down for the care of an infant of up to the age of one year, the inference might fairly be drawn that the parent may as well have abandoned the child. On the other hand, a payment of £20, if the mother, or some other person acting under her authority, instead of the father or the child's guardians, paid down, would at all events ensure if not the care of the child, at all events the removal of the child to a house of public charity, where it will be provided for and brought up. The amount fixed at £20 would include the greater number of cases of baby farming which were at the root of so many of the evils connected with the trade, and would exclude the greater number of genuine cases in which well-to-do people, who, being obliged to leave the country, paid down a lump sum for the care and up-bringing of the children they left at home. The clause was agreed to.

At a subsequent sitting the Bill was read a third time and sent down to the Commons.

CONGREGATIONAL DISEASES IN THE ARMY.

On the question of the property of a woman's memorial, which is signed by Princess Christian, the Duchess of Connaught, and other ladies, which has been moved in the House of Commons, by Mr. Blackstone, Mr. White, Mr. Freer, and Mr. King; Lord Granville, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Chesham, St. Albans, and Montrose; the Marchionesses of Hertford, Tweeddale, and Zetland; the Countess Dowager of Shrewsbury, Suza, Countess of Jersey, the Countess of Oxford; the Countess of Arundel and Iden; Countess Lytton; the Countess of Erne; Countess Falmouth; the Countesses of Selkirk, Onslow, Latham, and Ancaster; and a large number of other noble ladies, Mr. Blackstone moved a resolution, on the motion of Mr. Balfour, M.P.; "To the Marquis of Salisbury, K.G., the Marquis of Lansdowne, K.G., the Right Hon. Lord George Hamilton, M.P., and the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, M.P.; We desire to express our anxious hope that effectual measures will be taken to check the spread of contagious diseases among our soldiers, especially in India." We appreciate and respect the opinions of those who, notwithstanding theTensor, the state of a competent committee appointed by the Government, has recently given authority, are opposed to us on this subject. We believe as a matter of fact, in all sincerity, that the present system is the safest and the risk of degrading women outweigh all other considerations. It is not our purpose to speak against these views. We believe not only that preventive measures, if exercised with scrupu- lous care, do not do any real danger to women, but that they constitute a valuable safeguard of women's virtue, and afford a great opportunity of escape from a life of vice.

We feel that it is the duty of the State, which, of necessity, collects together large numbers of unmarried men in military service, to protect them from the consequences of their actions which are, in fact, responsible for such a community and under such conditions; and with the deepest earnestness we call on the Government to do all that can be done to save innocents, to mitigate the evils of the past and future generations from the terrible results of vice for which they are not responsible."

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE LONDON WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. Chaplin has brought in and the House has read a first time a Bill to amend the law with respect to the supply of water to the metropolis, and for that purpose the latter instance, if a consumer feels aggrieved he can in some cases apply to the magistrate, and in others appeal to the Local Government Board. In no case, however, must he have the support of twenty householders. By the new Bill, as explained by Mr. Chaplin, all his existing rights are preserved, but if he considers that a company has failed to perform any statutory duty the Bill enables him to lodge a complaint with the Railway Commissioners, and if the Company do not respond the duty. The local authorities are at liberty to aid and assist the consumer, or they may take the initiative themselves, in any question which they see fit to appeal to them.

The protection of the companies, however, the Railway Commissioners will have grounds, and the charge, for which the Bill provides, is inadequate to make a complaint. The Bill is backed by Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Ritchie, and Mr. T. W. Russell.

THE IRISH POOR LAW SYSTEM.

In Committee of Supply on the vote for the sum of £19,039 for the Irish Local Government Board, a debate arose on the Irish Poor Law. Mr. J. F. Parnell, in support of a reform of the system of domiciliary hospitalisation in Ireland, which was in most cases entirely unsuited to the unfortunate inmates. The so-called infirmaries in the average Irish workhouse were, in fact, the better parts of a confession of failure, from motives of humanity, tried to remedy the defects of workhouse management. The Local Government Board disapproved the expenses and principles of the system, and £10 of the Board's money was used for the purpose. The population of Ireland had decreased by more than a million, the tax for Poor-law purposes had increased by about £6,000. The Poor-law system in Ireland was a very antiquated one. The very poor of the community were not properly relieved; officialism took more than its share of money and work; and grants were needed before the Local Government Board in Ireland could be made to the Irish Poor-lawamt. Mr. Chamberlain, in reply to the debate, maintained that patient information was a question to the subject of dispensing doctors, who were not now of a character on which the districts could be conducted.—Mr. Parnell expressed approval of the work which the Board have done, and referred to the results of the system in Waterford were very satisfactory.—Mr. Tully welcomed the discrimination of the Court of the first class of cases of local government was to be established, for he believed that the present "antiquated machinery," as it had been justly called, had been of the meanest public life in many cases; and when the Board's system was replied for the Government, defended the Irish Local Government Board, and in conclusion, in the remarks which have been said he would be the last to say that he was satisfied with that system in Ireland. He had brought in a Bill of which was to make a thorough examination of the whole system possible. It was impossible to pass that measure this year, but he hoped sooner or later to see an amalgamation of unions which would make it more likely that they would not be thrown into a state of reform in different directions. The Local Government Board was continually trying to improve its administration, and he could not say that many complaints had been made against it to the effect that the Board had answered as Mr. Blackstone had said it would not have been written again. The limit of £20 would include the greater number of cases of baby farming which were the root of so many of the evils connected with the trade, and would exclude the greater number of genuine cases in which well-to-do people, who, being obliged to leave the country, paid down a lump sum for the care and up-bringing of the children they left at home. The clause was agreed to. At a subsequent sitting the Bill was read a third time and sent down to the Commons.