

THE  
Montreal Medical Journal.

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VOL. XXIII.

AUGUST, 1894.

No. 2.

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THE PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

In another part of this JOURNAL we print the "Report of the Committee on Prevention of blindness through Legislative enactment." This subject has been exciting a good deal of attention among medical men, and in several of the States laws have been enacted for the protection of infants against the ignorance and folly of midwives and parents. When it is known that the terrible disease, ophthalmia neonatorum, is a preventable one, and even when it is contracted is, in the majority of cases, curable, it is apparent to all that neglect of treatment is most culpable and should be made a criminal offence and punished as such. The report states that fully twenty per cent. of all blindness in early life is caused by this disease, and as it occurs principally among the poor, it adds greatly to the misery and hopelessness of their condition as they have little or no chance of any teaching, and their only way of making a living is by begging or more questionable methods.

It is a serious economic question, as well as a medical one, and should not be longer neglected. While our Boards of Health are doing such good work all along the line of contagious and preventable diseases, let them add this to their list and *insist* on notification of all cases so that they can be investigated and adequately treated. At the same time steps should be taken for the diffusion of knowledge