

veyed by the Indian Council of Medical Research are placed on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-6177/66].

Recently, a survey in visual defects of school children covered by the School Medical Scheme of the Delhi Municipal Corporation was also undertaken by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Out of the 5026 children who were examined, refractive error was prevalent in 17.8 per cent of cases followed by muscular imbalance, 3.38 per cent and corneal opacities 0.72 per cent 1.15 per cent constituted the miscellaneous group.

(c) A National Trachoma Control Programme was launched in March, 1963 as a Centrally sponsored Scheme covering Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat, and on a limited scale in the States of Mysore, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir and Madhya Pradesh. A population of 6.6 million has been covered during the Third Plan. Special attention was paid to children. During the Fourth Plan it is proposed to cover about 122 million population under this programme.

Premature Retirement.

*1408. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to give certain benefits to the Government employees, who have completed fifteen years of service, in case they seek retirement voluntarily; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri L. N. Mishra): (a) Yes, Sir. Special retirement terms have been sanctioned for surplus staff who have put in a minimum of 15 years service and who opt to retire voluntarily.

(b) A copy of the Ministry of Finance Office Memorandum No. F. 12(9)-E. V/66 dated the 15th March,

1966, indicating the terms for voluntary retirement is placed on the Table of the House [Placed in Library. See No. LT-6178/66].

Bird and Company

*1409. **Shri Indrajit Gupta:**
Shri S. M. Banerjee:

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 75 on the 17th February, 1966 and state:

(a) the price at which the Indian parties have acquired 19,385 shares of M/S Bird and Co. and M/s Helligers from a former British Director;

(b) whether this purchase money has been remitted to U.K. with Government's approval;

(c) the progress made in the recovery of the balance amount of Rs. 10,20,000 realisable as personal penalties imposed on four individuals; and

(d) whether any effort has been made to secure extradition from U.K. of the British nationals involved in the said penalties?

The Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat): (a) and (b). Information in this regard is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha;

(c) A Bank guarantee has been executed for Rs. 15,000/- which represents 50 per cent of the penalty imposed on one individual, pending decision on the appeal filed against the order in original. As regards the balance of Rs. 10,05,000/- due from three other individuals, certificate action has been instituted under section 142(1) (c) of the Customs Act, 1962. The Calcutta Custom House has been informed by M/s Bird and Co. that arrangements are being made towards payment of these penalties out of certain assets of these persons lying with the company.

(d) The contraventions for which penalties have been imposed on the British nationals are not extradition offences within the meaning of sec-