the board wastes its breath in laboring this point. But when they also suggest that "necessity exists in every well-equipped hospital for the installation of an apparatus for the use of the Finsen treatment," they are suggesting a very improper extravagance. The Finsen treatment is as yet in its probationary stage, and it would be as foolish as it would be unnecessary for each of the very many small general hospitals in Dublin to incur the large expense such an outfit would demand. The requirements of the city, as regards Finsen treatment, are quite adequately met by the hospitals which already are furnished with the apparatus. The reports on the individual hospitals are in the usual complacent style of indiscriminate praise or mildest possible censure. To read them one would think that each of the hospitals was managed in a perfectly satisfactory manner, an opinion very far from being justified. For instance, we find no notice taken of the fact that the outbreak of smallpox with which Dublin was troubled last year, took its spread from the imperfect disinfection practices in a fever hospital where one imported case had to be treated. In the report on this same hospital there is no mention made of any precaution being taken to prevent secondary infection, yet it is notorious that secondary infection is there very common. Similarly the board of superintendence do not draw any attention to the fact that it is a by-law of another of the hospitals they have supervised that any official of the hospital taking part in, or conniving at, any examination of a dead body in the institution is *ipso facto* dismissed. Yet, if government superintendence is to do any good, it should aim at correcting such faults in management as these.

Presentation to Professors Coffey and Ryan.

An interesting ceremony took place a few days ago at the Catholic University School of Medicine, when the faculty, with a number of past and present students, met to present Dr. Coffey and Dr. Ryan tokens of friendship and regard on the occasion of their approaching marriages. Both men stand high in the esteem of the profession as successful and inspiring teachers, as well as for their personal qualities, while their contributions to the sciences—physiology and chemistry—which they respectively teach, maintain the reputation of the Dublin school.

Health of Dublin.

We are so used to regarding Dublin as one of the most unhealthy cities in Europe, if not indeed the most unhealthy, that it came as a pleasant surprise to us to learn recently that the death rate was approaching the figures that obtain in other cities in the kingdom. In one week indeed the rate ran as low as 16.7 per thousand, but unfortunately the improvement was only temporary. The real cause of the high mortality in Dublin is the fearful condition of the tenement houses, in which the majority of the poorer classes live, and to grapple with this serious problem no attempt has yet been made.

The Irish Medical Association.

The annual meeting of the Irish Medical Association, which was held here recently was occupied chiefly, as might be expected, with the demands for reform in the Poor Law Medical Service. Though progress seems slow there is no doubt that the public is at last being persuaded that the present system is bad. Mr. Tobin has succeeded Dr. Leonard Kidd as president of the association.

Correspondence.

International Congress of Arts and Science.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 26, 1904.

To Members of the Medical Profession:—The organizers of the International Congress of Arts and Science, to be held at the Universal Exposition, St. Louis, Sept. 19 to 25, 1904, desire to invite the special attention of your profession to the unexampled opportunity which it offers to meet and hear a great number of eminent men of learning. It is expected that more than three hundred eminent scholars of Europe and America will deliver discourses in the various departments and sections of the congress, and that several hundred shorter communications will be made by those present. Among the foreign members of the profession who have accepted invitations to speak are Profs. Brunton, Semon, Ross, Celli, Orth, Liebreich, Allbutt,

Kitasato and Escherich. Dr. William Osler is chairman of the department.

It is the desire of the directors of the fair and of all concerned in the organization that professors and instructors in our colleges and universities, and members of the learned professions generally, shall, so far as possible, do honor to our distinguished visitors by attending the meetings of the congress. For this no fee is charged and no formality is necessary except enrollment on arrival. It is, however, desirable to apprise Mr. Howard J. Rogers, director of congresses, Universal Exposition, St. Louis, in advance, what departments of the Congress one desires to attend. A program of its proceedings, with such other instructions as may be necessary, will be sent by Mr. Rogers on application.

SIMON NEWCOMB,

Chairman of the Organizing Committee.

NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER,

Chairman of the Administrative Board.

Method of Making Yellow Oxid Ointment.

BURLINGTON, IOWA, Aug. 23, 1904.

To the Editor:—I notice a suggestion in Dr. Bulkley's "Notes on Ointments," which I consider inadequate, if not misleading. Otherwise we would not have the perennial complaint from ophthalmologists that it is hard to get satisfactory "yellow oxid ointment." This suggestion is that gritty substances should first be rubbed up with a few drops of oil in a mortar to make a fine paste. I object to the use of the mortar because a sheet of plate glass and a spatula are better. Only with the latter can one be absolutely sure that no gritty particle is missed. No oil or water is needed. The spatula, holding a modicum of the base (just enough to do it), picks up the grits, which are then rubbed out until they can be rubbed no farther, and the spatula cleans itself. Not only can every particle of grit thus be felt, but one can also hold the plate up to the light for inspection with a magnifying glass. The base is now added in mass and the mixing completed with the spatula. I had the pleasure of demonstrating this method to the Section on Ophthalmology, producing a perfect yellow oxid ointment, at the Denver session of the American Medical Association.

H. B. YOUNG.

North Carolina's Early Law on Practice.

KINSTON, N. C., Aug. 24, 1904.

To the Editor:—I noticed in THE JOURNAL, August 13, that you state in an editorial that Illinois had the first effective law regulating the practice of medicine. North Carolina really should have that distinction, her law having been passed in 1857. The remarkably high standing of her profession, which we believe to be higher than any other state, on an average, is due to her splendid medical laws, which have been "effective more than a quarter of a century."

JAMES M. PARROTT,

Member of the Carolina State Board of Medical Examiners.

Queries and Minor Notes.

ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS will not be noticed. Queries for this column must be accompanied by the writer's name and address, but the request of the writer not to publish his name will be faithfully observed.

ARISTOCRACY IN MEDICINE.

B. writes: In an issue of THE JOURNAL published within the past year, attention was called to the fact that the degree of M.D. had a very wide range of value. It was pointed out that all classes of medical schools, the bad, the good, and the best, conferred the same degree, and that, unfortunately, no means existed whereby the value of the M.D. could be gauged. All were M.D.'s: all were physicians. This being so, I should like to have a careful consideration and an opinion on the following question: Is it unprofessional for a physician to insert in very small type on his sign the degrees he has and from what institutions, the lettering to be invisible except on close inspection? This additional in-