have been called upon to make this annual address. In the intervening period nothing that I have seen or heard or learned has shaken my belief in the correctness of the principles laid down on each occasion, or altered my opinion as to what should be the aim and object of those about to enter the medical profession.

It may be, and I admit it is, difficult to enhance with any new and memorable charm of presentment truisms which are now venerable from their antiquity; but the prizes of life and how we may come at them are questions which knock for answer at the hearts of each successive race of new students. The answer is, that these prizes are to be obtained only by earnestness, industry, and perseverance; each of these active motors being dominated by a worthy aim—Excellence, irrespective of pecuniary reward—duty to be done for duty's sake.

In the dusty struggle, and often tainted atmosphere of daily business, it is well to carry about with us the purifying influence of a high ideal of conduct, fervidly and powerfully expressed, especially in such a profession as that of medicine, in which Honour is so indispensable and so precious that he who wants it or has soiled it has no business therein, and in which it should be your constant endeavour, first, last, midst, and without end, to dignify Truth by use.

ART. XVII.—*Tetanus an Infectious Disease.* By CHARLES B. BALL, M.D., F.R.C.S.I.; Surgeon, Sir P. Dun's Hospital; University Examiner in Surgery; Examiner in Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons; President of the Section.

It may appear strange how it is that a practical surgeon with no special claim to pathological knowledge comes to fill the important post of President of the Pathological Section of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland, and I am afraid it must be admitted that the explanation is one which we cannot contemplate with satisfaction. It is due to the fact that in this city there are no facilities for pathological research and teaching. The absence of a Pathological Institute is a want deeply to be deplored. My predecessor in this chair last year pointed out to us that the Pathological Society of Dublin, of which this Section of the Royal Academy of Medicine is the direct descendant, was the first society

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a Being the Presidential Address to the Pathological Section of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland, at the opening of the Session of 1887–88, on Friday, November 4, 1887.
of the kind founded in the United Kingdom, and for many years it continued to do good work; but at the present day the study of scientific pathology has become a vastly more extensive subject, while its methods of investigation require special manipulative skill and education, combined with large opportunity of obtaining material, so that it is not to be wondered at that, with comparatively few but brilliant exceptions, original research in this direction has largely passed out of the hands of practising physicians and surgeons into the hands of those whose whole time is devoted to the subject.

The Governments of the other important European countries fully recognise the national importance of making suitable provision for such institutions, so that the services of the most highly competent pathologists are retained, and the work done by them has abundantly shown that the expenditure has been well employed. Surely public money cannot be put to a more legitimate use than in aiding research into the causes of disease, as the results obtained tend directly to the benefit of the community at large. In the United Kingdom, however, instead of the pathologist receiving that fostering aid which he has a right to expect from the Government, he is thwarted and harassed by sensational and mischievous legislation.

That a Pathological Institute worthy of the Dublin School could be established if the licensing bodies and various hospitals cordially co-operated, I have no doubt. Let us hope that before long we shall see it an accomplished fact.

Practical physicians and surgeons, though possibly unable to do much in the way of original pathological research themselves, cannot afford not to keep pace with the progress of this science. If we compare the surgery of to-day with what it was but a few years ago, how vast is the change. Yet all this is brought about not by any great improvement in the mechanical details, but by more efficient methods of wound-treatment, based upon a more accurate knowledge of the pathology of those former scourges of surgical practice—diffuse inflammation, pyæmia, septicæmia, and phlegædena.

Recent investigations would tend to show that that dread disease, traumatic tetanus, is also of zymotic origin, and consequently presumably amenable to efficient prophylaxis. This subject is the more interesting to us at the present time from the fact that this disease has during the present summer existed, with almost epidemic virulence, in this city.