

What is the use of operating year after year in a routine manner, having but a hazy idea of what has finally become of the patient? At least one tactful clerk in every hospital should be assigned to the task of keeping in constant contact with those who have been operated on. In this manner one can at a glance tell how many patients have been relieved by operation. The results of one operator are compared with those of another—of course in a most friendly way, and there is no doubt that a runner can always make better progress with a pacemaker. The careful analysis of a large number of cases always demonstrates wherein future improvements can be made. This continually keeping track of the patients will in itself strongly impress the former patients with the hospital's interest in their welfare, and will stimulate them to urge their fellow-companions to undergo the same treatment if they be taken ill.

These data, to be of use, must from time to time be thoroughly analyzed and published. You and I are continually gleaning knowledge from the publications of other men, both on this and the other side of the water, but how many of us are doing our share in the dissemination of knowledge? In fact, we manifest a remarkable tendency to become sponges instead of springs for the pouring forth of our medical experiences—experiences that other surgeons should know of and profit by. Follow up all your cancer patients; see what has become of them. Many of them will be dead, but some that you have lost track of are still living and well. You will soon become so interested in the return letters that you can hardly wait for the postman to arrive, and when, now and then, a reply says that the patient is alive and well at the end of ten or thirteen years, it will warm the cockles of your heart; it will more than outweigh many of the disappointing results you have had and will make you feel that after all the fight is well worth the undertaking.

A year ago I was asked to write the surgeons of the Southern States to find out what their final results were after operation in cancer of the cervix. The results of my inquiries are given in *Surgery, Gynecology and Obstetrics* for March, 1913. The vast majority had kept but scant histories, and had finally lost track of their patients, so that at the present moment few surgeons in the country have any adequate idea of what their labors have accomplished. Do let me urge upon you the systematic recording of every cancer case, the employment of the most thorough operation in these cases, and the tabulation at yearly intervals of the results. You will thus continually improve your methods, will grow more enthusiastic in your campaign against this dread malady, and