

but wholly incommunicable by diploma or otherwise. With that gift the art may be acquired by persistent labour, but without the gift the labour is hopeless; and that this fact is being recognized in all our large centres of population, even in the close hospital corporations of the metropolis, is one of the most hopeful signs for better surgical results. Another hopeful sign is the demand for complete and accurate statements of results. Public attention is now being drawn very largely to the question of hospitals in general, and a most wholesome rivalry is being established upon the question of results. So much is this the case that grave suspicions are being entertained regarding all institutions who neglect or refuse to publish their results. I remember very well, when engaged some fifteen years ago in writing a book on hospital mortality, that I asked a large metropolitan hospital to furnish me with the facts of their amputations for a period of sixteen years. The hospital was notoriously reticent upon all such questions. The medical board answered my request by a resolution that it was not expedient to furnish me with the information required. I replied that if they did not furnish me with what I wanted within a month, I should publish their resolution in *The Times*, and, as this hospital was entirely dependent on annual subscriptions, they reconsidered their decision. Their amputation results were ghastly; probably they did not themselves know how bad they were. Publication of these results had a marvellous effect, for now the same hospital has an amputation mortality of less than one-half what it was sixteen years ago,

To Sir Spencer Wells is most undoubtedly due the credit of putting the publication of surgical results on a business-like basis. When the results in abdominal surgery, which began to be obtained about twelve years ago, were first published, they were so amazing that the favorite criticism of them was that they must be lies. This sort of thing at first was very irritating, and used to make me very angry; but for many years past I have ceased to trouble about it, and the incredible things of eight or ten years ago are now matters of every-day experience.

Another great advance required is the division of logical plans in recording and classifying the results and also the adoption of reasonable methods of conducting the investigation. For example, no one would now, in making a research on the mortality of amputations, arrange his figures without a careful separation of amputations for accident and those for disease, and a perfect arrangement of the cases according to the limb affected and the point of amputation. But until Simpson pointed out the necessity for such divisions, the importance of them was not clearly understood, certainly was not fully admitted. Arising out of a matter so simple as this there are, there must be scores of points which require settlement, yet