

part was very soft, being held together by the membranes. It was hardened in Müller's fluid and stained mostly with osmic acid.

The crushed portion was carefully examined in longitudinal sections and no nerve fibre found intact.

It is not to the credit of surgery to operate on any case when there is no chance for improvement.

In spinal injuries, the great question is, when should we operate and when should we not? It is clear that the operation in itself is not a dangerous one, and the danger of the operation should not be held, therefore, as a bar against its performance.

One thing is very evident, that injuries involving the cauda-equina are those which are most favorable for operation, and it is also evident that these are the cases in which delays are longest permissible. But as we approach the cervical region the injuries become more serious and operative relief less encouraging. What shall we do when the knee-jerks are abolished? We are led to believe that this indicates a total transverse lesion of the spinal cord, and in such a case, if any operation whatever should be done, it should be as soon as possible after the injury, in the hope that as many nerve fibres as possible may be saved from the inflammatory destruction produced by the pressure.

In those cases in which the reflexes yet exist we may wait (but I doubt the wisdom of such a course) the six or ten weeks which have been advised.

But in those cases *in which the reflexes are absent*, the earlier an operation is done the better.

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#### STRONTIUM BROMIDE IN EPILEPSY.

Roche (Lancet, September 26, 1896) warmly commends bromide of strontium and reports in detail or summary 16 cases. All had been previously treated with other bromides and all showed better results from the strontium. In some instances the improvement was not marked, in others very striking. None could be considered cured, but 8 of them at the time of the report had been free from fits for periods of from 4 to 16 months. The ordinary plan was to give 20 grains of bromide of strontium and 5 to 10 grains of one of the other bromides three times a day. The strontium salt was increased to 1 dram when necessary to control the fits and acne was prevented by the addition of arsenic.

PATRICK (Chicago).