

operation may not be necessary but when the characteristic picture is clear and distinct; when after the so-called "lucid" interval gradually deepening unconsciousness results, associated with the other symptoms of compression operative interference is clearly and urgently indicated. Localized twitchings or paralyses, bruising of the soft parts, or the history of the injury itself, will more or less act as guides in the selection of the point of operation.

Bowen reported (Guy's hospital reports) 72 cases, out of which number 52 were operated on, with 28 recoveries, and of the 20 non-operated cases, in 10 the cause of death was found to be due solely to compression from hæmorrhage.

Weismann collected 257 cases. 110 were operated on, with a mortality of 27 %, while in the 147 not operated on, the mortality was 88 %.

Fracture of base differs from fracture of the vault in two important particulars, (1) the greater danger of injury to the delicate basal structures, viz., the nerves, the blood sinuses, and the important cerebral centres, and (2) the fact that basal fractures are in the majority of cases compound. This latter point is important from a clinical standpoint, since it indicates the necessity of as thorough asepsis as possible of the cavities communicating with the basal fracture, viz., the nostrils, the ear and the pharynx. Hence in addition to the general treatment of fractures referred to above, it is desirable that these cavities be freed from organisms as much as possible by means of antiseptic sprays, douches, dusting powders, &c. In fractures of the posterior fossa it has been suggested to trephine the occipital bone low down since death in these cases is due to compression of the sensitive centres in the floor of the 4th ventricle.

FRACTURES OF THE SKULL IN CHILDREN.

The elasticity of the bones of the skull in the child, the absence of diploe, and the presence of fibrous tissue between the individual bones limit the occurrence of fracture of the skull in childhood. As to intracranial hæmorrhage, the adhesion of the dura mater to the skull lessens the pressure effects of epi-