Editorial Preface

In the preface to the first volume of this series we emphasized the responsibilities and opportunities of neurosurgeons to apply whole areas of rapidly enlarging new knowledge to diagnoses and treatment of diseases of the nervous system. The snowballing increases in relevant facts have become even more obvious in the two and a half years since that first preface in November of 1965. At the same time, the clinical demands on the individual neurosurgeon have left him less rather than more time to keep abreast of the data he must master if he is to satisfy himself and his patients that he is providing the best of medical care in his domain. Hence our objective in these volumes of providing a critical summary of a highly circumscribed field seems, if possible, more urgent than ever. The author of each chapter has consecrated himself to the task, not only of summarizing the world literature in the limited domain of his assignment, but has aimed at the even more important goal of evaluating critically these publications.

The senior neurosurgeons, and other neuroscientists of the world now have the tremendous advantages of personal meetings with many of their confreres throughout the world. We hope that each in his chapter will be able to distill not only the broad knowledge permitted by his reading, but as well that further appraisal gleaned from manto-man associations. If the selection of authors is judicious and they devote the major length of time necessary to achieve this comprehensive objective, the neurosurgical world will, we trust, have available in wieldy dimensions sources of guidance not elsewhere obtainable.

The editors have been especially gratified to have almost no refusals of invitations to contribute chapters to the foregoing demanding specifications. We think that this is eloquent testimony to the general realization of the need for such communications. It attests as
well to the willingness of today’s outstanding men in the field of the nervous system to allocate the necessary effort to this philanthropic scholarly task.

IV

The chapters for Volume III are already finished, and this volume will appear in 6 months. The contributors to Volume IV on Pediatric Neurosurgery are well under way on their essays. Volume V will deal with disorders surgically treated almost exclusively by stereotactic methods. In Volume VI comparisons will be provided between stereotactic and open operative procedures in diseases in which the two general methods are now competitive. We invite critical suggestions from any reader of this, or the previous volume, which might in any way help us better to achieve the objectives we have outlined.

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