Diagnosis and treatment of surgical diseases of the spinal cord and its membranes

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DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF SURGICAL DISEASES OF THE SPINAL CORD AND ITS MEMBRANES

BY

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WITH 158 ILLUSTRATIONS
THREE OF THEM IN COLORS

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PREFACE

The present volume is a record of personal experiences in the surgical treatment of diseases and injuries of the spinal cord and its adnexa. As all work must be in part based on the labors of the past, an account of the experiences of a single worker must include much that has been learned from others.

The attempt has been made to keep the book from extending beyond its proper limits—a consideration of the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the spinal cord that may require surgical interference—and all matter which belongs more properly to text-books on neurology or general surgery has been given the briefest mention.

A certain amount of neurology has been included because the author is convinced that only those can do successful neurologic surgery who have gained a working knowledge of organic neurology. It has been the good fortune of the writer to be closely associated in his work with the neurologists of the New York Neurological Institute and of Mount Sinai Hospital, New York City, and it is with pleasure that the author expresses his indebtedness to Dr. Pearce Bailey, Dr. Joseph Collins, Dr. Frederick Peterson, Dr. Bernard Sachs, Dr. I. Abrahamson and their associates.

It may occasion some surprise that hematomyelia and spinal gliosis are included in a work on the Surgical Diseases of the Spinal Cord. In these diseases, much harm is done to the fiber tracts by compression, and the relief of this compression by surgical means, has already resulted in marked improvement in a number of patients. The time is at hand when selected cases will be regularly subjected to operative interference.

The chapter on the X-ray in spinal disease has been incorporated in the book in order to give illustrations of the abnormalities which are often found on the X-ray plate, many of which have nothing to do with the disease from which the patient suffers. The majority of the X-ray illustrations are from the collection of Mount Sinai Hospital, and the writer is indebted to Dr. L. Jaches, the Director of the Roentgen Laboratory, and to the physicians and surgeons of the Hospital for permission to use a number of X-ray plates. Dr. Ernest Fahnestock has kindly placed at the writer’s disposal a most unusual X-ray of fracture dislocation of
the cervical vertebrae, and Dr. Richard Derby, one of a bullet in the spine taken by Dr. Jangeas of the American Ambulance of Paris.

The illustrations for the volume are mostly original and were executed from specimens, dissections, and from sketches made at the operating table by Mr. Josef Lenhard. The artist has admirably succeeded in the reproduction of the actual appearance of spinal lesions found at operation. The attempt has been made to illustrate conditions as they appear to the surgeon, and Mr. Lenhard has accomplished this object most successfully.

Finally, the writer desires to express his thanks to Dr. Edward Rochfort and Dr. Ira Cohen for assistance in the preparation of the index and in the correction of proof, to Miss Edna Brucks for help in the preparation of the manuscript, and to his publishers, W. B. Saunders Company, for their cooperation and interest in the work.

Charles A. Elsberg.
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