

Editorial

In this issue, we are pleased to have a Guest Editorial prepared by Morton F. Mason, Ph.D., President, American Academy of Forensic Sciences, and Editor Emeritus of the *Journal*. Dr. Mason is a distinguished forensic scientist who is presently Professor of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology at University of Texas Southwestern Medical School at Dallas, Director of the Criminal Investigation Laboratory at the Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences, and Toxicologist for Dallas County. He is a graduate of Oregon State College and he received his advanced degree in biochemistry from Duke University. The author of over 65 scientific publications, Dr. Mason is a member of numerous professional organizations and the recipient of awards from the Dallas Society of Analytical Chemists, the American Chemical Society, and other organizations. Last year he served as Visiting Professor in the Department of Clinical Pathology at the University of Beirut, Lebanon. As the Associate Editor for the *Journal* from 1958 to 1965 and as the Editor until 1973, Dr. Mason provided outstanding leadership, counsel, and scientific guidance to many authors. It is fortunate that Dr. Mason has continued to serve as an advisor to the *Journal* and that he has agreed to reflect upon his new responsibilities.

During the past year, the Editorial Board endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee, American Academy of Forensic Sciences, for the publication of Editorials and Letters to the Editor. Neither the Academy, the *Journal*, nor the publisher will assume any responsibility for the content of these letters. Letters to the Editor should not pertain to personal matters or to the business of the Academy, but they should reflect the personal opinion of the authors in a discussion of articles which have been published in previous issues of the *Journal*.

The *Journal* serves as a forum for all the disciplines of the forensic sciences, and there is a continuing need for well-written manuscripts. We hope to receive manuscripts in advance of oral presentations at national meetings in order to provide our readers with information of recent advances in the forensic sciences. Authors are advised to refer to the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Style Manual, to adhere to "Editorial Communications" which appears in each issue, and to review the style of similar articles which have been published previously. The preparation and revision of articles submitted for publication is solely the responsibility of authors. The Editorial Board offers professional guidance and the editorial staff of the publisher provides assistance for grammar and style. At the present time, there is a delay of 6 months between the time accepted manuscripts are received by the publisher and their publication. The process of review by the Editorial Board, and perhaps revision by the author, requires about 60 to 90 days. Consequently, articles submitted to the editor during the Annual Meeting, American Academy of Forensic Sciences, may not be published the same year. Time-consuming reviews, editorial changes, revisions by authors, and changes in style by the publishers delay the publication of articles which are otherwise acceptable for content and scientific merit. In addition to original articles, reports of technical procedures, letters to the editor, and reviews of new books, the submission of in-depth reviews of a particular subject is encouraged.

When an article is received by the editor, a file is established and an acknowledgment is sent to the author. The editor will not assume responsibility for manuscripts submitted to other persons. At least two members of the Editorial Board, representing the same discipline in the forensic sciences as the author, will review the article. If there is a difference of opinion, the editor will arrange for independent review by a referee who is an authority

in that field. Manuscripts which are acceptable for publication are sent to the publisher for further editing to conform to the style of the *Journal*, and authors are informed of these procedures. When there is recommendation for rejection, conditional acceptance, or mandatory revision, the manuscript is returned to the senior author.

Except for rejection, the author is provided with the comments and recommendations of the reviewers. It is requested that revised manuscripts be returned promptly to the editor.

The Editorial Board of the *Journal of Forensic Sciences* wishes to maintain the quality of the *Journal* and to ensure rapid processing of manuscripts. The quantity and quality of accepted manuscripts, however, is largely dependent upon the motivation and cooperation of the contributors. The size of issues in January and April 1973 reflected the sparse number of well-written, accepted manuscripts available at the deadlines for publication.

Charles J. Stahl, III, M.D.
Editor