

**NOMENCLATURE OF DISEASES:
PREPARED FOR THE USE OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICERS OF THE UNITED
STATES MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE
BY THE SUPERVISING SURGEON**

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Nomenclature of Diseases: Prepared for the Use of the Medical Officers of the United States
Marine-Hospital Service by the Supervising Surgeon by John M. Woodworth

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JOHN M. WOODWORTH

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FOR THE USE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICERS

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UNITED STATES MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE

BY THE

SUPERVISING SURGEON

(John M. Woodworth, M. D.)

BEING THE CLASSIFICATION AND ENGLISH-LATIN TERMINOLOGY
OF THE PROVISIONAL NOMENCLATURE OF THE
ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, LOND.



WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1874.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
BUREAU OF U. S. MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE,
Washington, D. C., January, 1874.

The attention of Medical Officers is respectfully called to the following extract from the *Regulations of the United States Marine-Hospital Service*, approved October 1, 1873:

The "Provisional Nomenclature" of the Royal College of Physicians of London, (Eng.), is adopted by the UNITED STATES MARINE-HOSPITAL BUREAU, as the nosological system to be observed by medical officers of the Service in their reports and communications.

As this is too bulky to insert in a volume of Regulations, intended also for the guidance and information of others not concerned with the professional details of the Service, the *Nomenclature* is issued separately, and will be supplied to medical officers, on requisition, by the BUREAU.

It is desired that the *Report of Diseases and Injuries* (Form 15) and the *Report of Surgical Operations* (Form 16) be made out in strict conformity with this system.


Supervising Surgeon.

NOTE.

WITH the approval of the Honorable the Secretary of the Treasury, the Supervising Surgeon has adopted, and herewith presents, as the official nomenclature for the use of medical officers of the United States Marine-Hospital Service, the English-Latin terminology and the classification of the Nomenclature of Diseases drawn up by a Joint Committee appointed by the Royal College of Physicians of London, Eng.

This action has been taken in the belief that the 'Provisional Nomenclature' forms the most promising basis, at least, for a standard and international nosonomy and classification—subject, as it is, to decennial revision, in which there is reason to expect the profession of this country will be represented, and being, in itself, the work of those 'who hold, or have held, the highest places as representative men in the Science of Medicine,' among whom, as will be seen by the subjoined preface to the English edition, were the chiefs of the medical departments of the public services, thus ensuring the official recognition of the system throughout the British Empire.

In this country—previous to this, its first official adoption—the classification of diseases in the Statistics of Mortality for the IXth Census of the United States was made, in all essential particulars, in accordance with it. It is, practically, adopted, through the medium of the American edition of 'the representative book' above quoted,* by the Medical Department of the

* AITKEN'S *Science and Practice of Medicine*.—CLYMER.

United States Army. It has been endorsed, *pro tanto*, by the profession, through the action of the American Medical Association at its session May 6-9, 1873. And its provisional adoption in the United States was formally recommended by the American Public Health Association at its last annual meeting.

From the foregoing it will be seen that its promise to become the common nomenclature and classification for at least all English-speaking peoples is in a fair way to be realized; and in furtherance of this end the present edition—aside from the omission of the French, German, and Italian equivalents, the transposition of the English and Latin names, the verification of the Index, and the correction of a few clerical and typographical errors—has been made a literal transcript of the English original.

In this connection the Supervising Surgeon desires to acknowledge his obligation to Dr. FRANK W. REILLY, U. S. M-H. S., for valuable assistance in the preparation of the work for the press.

BUREAU U. S. MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE,
January, 1874.

PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL ENGLISH EDITION.

FOR PERFECTING the statistical registration of diseases, with a view to the discovery of statistical truths concerning their history, nature, and phenomena, the want of a generally recognised Nomenclature of Diseases has long been felt as an indispensable condition.

The advantages accruing from accurate statistics of disease are likely to be the greater and the surer in proportion as the field of investigation is the wider.

The statistics of a single town may be instructive; but more instruction will be obtained from the compared statistics of various and many towns. This is alike true of different districts of the same country, and of different countries and climates: and the most instructive sanitary statistics would be those which related to the whole of the inhabited portions of the globe.

For the registration of such statistical facts it is clearly requisite that there should be a uniform Nomenclature of Diseases, co-extensive with the area of investigation; and taking the largest area, the universal globe, the Nomenclature would need to be one that can be understood and used by the educated people of all nations.

Among the great ends of such a uniform Nomenclature must be reckoned that of fixing definitely, for all places, the things about which medical observation is exercised, and of forming a steady basis upon which medical experience may be safely built.

Another main use of the statistical registration of diseases on a wide scale, is that it must tend to throw light upon the causes of disease, many of which causes, when duly recognised, may be capable of prevention, removal, or diminution.

When a general and uniform Nomenclature of Diseases has once been carefully framed, when we are sure that medical observation is occupying itself everywhere with the selfsame diseases, the value of statistical tables becomes very high, as representing the course of events in disease under various circumstances of time, place, season, climate, manners and customs, age, sex, race, and treatment.

This general, or common, or *standard* nomenclature need not be imposed upon every nation and people as its proper nomenclature.

It could not. It would be unintelligible by the people at large, and embarrassing to those by whom the necessary returns must be made. But the nomenclature proper or peculiar to each country, and which may be called its *national* nomenclature, should be readily convertible into the *standard* nomenclature.

The one, or the other, of these standard and national nomenclatures may first be framed by an English (or by any other) Committee, or the two may be framed simultaneously.

The Committee appointed by the Royal College of Physicians of London have prepared a Nomenclature suitable to England, and to all countries where the English language is in common use. For each name they have supplied the corresponding Latin term, which is the language of ancient science, and probably the fittest language for a nomenclature common to all the world; and also the equivalent term in the three modern languages which are the richest in medical learning and literature, the French, the German, and the Italian languages: and in this way they hope to have laid the foundation for a Nomenclature of Diseases in any language extant on the earth.

In the English list of names, it seemed desirable that as little deviation as possible should be made from those employed by the Registrar-General of England; otherwise his settled plans and his forms of returns, which have been followed for thirty years, would require to be remodelled; the comparison of future with past returns would be made difficult and perplexing, if not impossible; and a damaging break would be caused in evidence which becomes more and more trustworthy and valuable, in proportion as it is prolonged and continuous.

Again, it is desirable that all lists should consist, as much as may be possible, of short names—names comprised in one word, or in the fewest words; also, in the nomenclature proper, or national, that they should be names in common and popular use, especially when these are single, or short, and distinctive, and imply no erroneous or doubtful theories.

Names are not necessarily to be excluded, however, merely because they may seem to express only vague or imperfect knowledge; such names as DROPSY, CONVULSIONS, PALSY—disorders which may severally depend upon various and different morbid changes within the body, not always easy of recognition. It has been well observed by Dr. Farr, whose aid has been of great value to the Committee, that the refusal to sanction such terms as these in the registration of diseases 'would have an obvious tendency to encourage reckless conjecture' in making returns.