

NEWS

*from the genetic world*¹

*** Meeting on blood group nomenclature.** There will be a meeting on blood group nomenclature on the evening of April 10, 1967, at the New York Academy of Sciences, 2 East 63rd Street, N.Y.C., Section of Biological and Medical Sciences; Dr. Herman Cohen, Chairman. Dr. Alexander S. Wiener will present an article on the subject, to be discussed by workers in the field present at the meeting.

Abstract: The terminology of science is international, so that each symbol has the same meaning for workers throughout the world, regardless of nationality and language. Such universal agreement among scientists regarding nomenclature fosters communication among them, so that every scientist can benefit from the discoveries and publications of other scientists. At one time there were three nomenclatures for the human blood groups, two of which used the Roman numerals, I, II, III, and IV, while the third used combinations of the letters A, B and O. Confusion and errors that occurred when translating from one system to another endangered the lives of patients requiring blood transfusions. The problem was solved when both methods of numbering the groups were discarded, so that at present only Landsteiner's A-B-O nomenclature for those blood groups is used. The same problem has recurred in connection with the nomenclature of the Rh-Hr blood types. Since these types are far more complicated, the issues have become obscured. The fact remains, however, that errors when translating from one terminology to another can jeopardize the welfare of patients requiring transfusions. The obvious solution is to use only a single nomenclature for the Rh-Hr blood types, as in the case of the A-B-O blood groups. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the nomenclatures currently being used, with the aim of selecting one as the international nomenclature.

¹ Requests for the release of news concerning Genetics and related sciences, and, more generally, Medicine and Biology, shall be favourably considered.