The ultimate paper

The other night I dreamed a dream
Whose message came through strong
That every paper up to now
was incorrect and wrong
A Freudian dash up to my desk
Before the dream could turn to vapour
Took pen and paper and with the muse
Sat down and wrote the paper
'Twas a paper to end all papers, and
To set all medicine straight—
For there's nothing right ever written prior
To nineteen eighty-eight
To every editor on the planet
A copy of the opus was sent
It caused the wildest consternation
From Calgary to Tashkent
To every journal on the globe
In every script, in every tongue
'Twas typed on floppies, set in morse
And spoken or shouted or sung
In every paper previously sent, I showed
In each and every medical journal
Enough errors, faults and misprints
To please the fiend infernal
Physicians in universities or colleges
And others with jobs to cherish
On topics mundane or exotic
Have perforce to publish or perish
I showed that in all this writing
In which so much time was sunk
Was a simple turning, and churning
ie, that is, all junk
The paper was panned by reviewers
"Too much data" they wrote
"The title is wrong", "Not new", "Too old"
"Confused", "mixed up", to quote
But editors lauded the paper
And all deplored the reviewers
The editors thought it was wondrous
And all ignored the reviewers
Tho' editors may argue or bicker
Their feelings are not what they seem
To publish this master of papers
Was every editor's dream
Vying to see who would be first
The editor's to my consternation
Fought tooth and nail for the honour
Of earliest publication
'Twas the only paper abstracted in Yearbooks
And purchasers responded in glee
In deference to all the pages lost
There was a lowering of the cost
The first in history
The Yearbooks abstracted only my paper
For the year, which caused a din
All references were started from that date
And the book was one page thin
The date that the paper appeared
Was labelled year one, AP*
And everything prior was straightaway sunk
By garbage scows at sea
All honours followed the paper, and
My head swelled to marvellous size
When all savants in Sweden
Awarded the Nobel Prize
But when I went upon that day,
The Nobel Prize to take up
I found all swirling in a fog
And it was time to wake up
* Anno paperensis. The year of the paper. (L)

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