

February 4, 1942.

Mr. E. W. Fasig,
The Lowe Brothers Company,
Dayton, Ohio.

Dear Mr. Fasig:

You are quite right in questioning the statement from "The Safe Foreman", concerning the fumes given off from paint on a wall. There is no reason to suppose that anything happens to the lead whereby it becomes volatile, and I do not need to tell you that it does not give rise to dust from the surface. I have an idea that the chemist who arrived at this startling conclusion obtained some samples of the urine of persons who had been subjected to this alleged lead exposure, and that he found lead in the urine. This would not be remarkable in view of the presence of lead in all normal urines. If he were somewhat more careful in his observations, and if he took samples both before and after the alleged exposure, he may have found differences in the lead concentration before and after. Variations in the urinary lead concentration occur and may be of considerable magnitude, and by chance alone, variations might have occurred in the direction of increased concentration. There are many other possibilities for experimental error about which one could talk, but it seems entirely probable that the conclusions were based on observations carried on by an inexperienced experimenter.

I can certainly understand your interest in the matter and I think it is worth following up. I would suggest that you put it up to Mr. Porter to submit the evidence on which his statement is based, for critical examination. I think he should have it pointed out to him that this is a serious matter and that the most carefully obtained evidence would be necessary to prove such an otherwise unreasonable statement. As a responsible editor, he should know better than to trust fragmentary evidence, and he should either put up the evidence or retract his statement. There is all together too much loose talk in this field as it is. If there is anything further that I might usefully do, please let me know, but I think it is better, for the moment at least, for you to initiate any further action.

Cordially yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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