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BUREAU OF OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES
JOHN M. McDONALD, M. D., D. P. H.
DIRECTOR

BALTIMORE CITY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Reussweiler

July 17, 1937

J. Van Cester

Dr. G. H. Gehrman
Medical Director, E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company
Wilmington, Delaware

Dear Dr. Gehrman:

In the last three years twenty-two Baltimore children have died of lead poisoning. Every one of these deaths has been investigated and we have found that in every case there was a history of the child's chewing a repainted surface, usually a crib.

I am therefore anxious to get information regarding paints which are safe for use in repainting children's furniture. I have been recommending the use of lithopone or titanium paint for this purpose. The question has arisen as to the possibility of obtaining colors such as greens, yellows and oranges which are made of lead free materials.

It occurred to me that the Haskell Laboratory might be able to furnish information regarding these paints and colorings. If so, will you be kind enough to advise me as to the safety of lithopone and titanium, and also as to what lead free greens, yellows and oranges are commercially available at a reasonably low price.

Very truly yours,

John M. McDonald
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Director, Bureau of Occupational Diseases

JMMCD/E

August 9, 1937

Mr. John M. McDonald
Baltimore City Health Department
Bureau of Occupational Diseases
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Doctor McDonald:

Your letter of July 17 to Dr. G. H. Gehrmann has been forwarded to me.

I inquired from our Philadelphia Laboratory, which has the greatest experience and knowledge of the pigments handled by our Company, whether there were any paints that were especially prepared for use in painting children's furniture and toys, in which the lead hazard was eliminated. I was notified today that they have not established a line of toy enamels and that most of this type of business is "tailor made", that is, the products are designed to meet the individual requirements of the customer. However, if the volume of business warrants, they feel confident that colors could be developed to meet these specifications.

In case you are interested in this proposition to the extent of having the Laboratory develop a line of paints which could be used safely for painting children's toys and furniture, I would suggest that you get in touch with Mr. E. W. Cresby, Philadelphia Laboratory, E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Co., 3500 Grays Ferry Road, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Sincerely yours,

W. F. von Oettingen, M.D., Ph.D.
Director