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IN REPLY REFER TO:

October 27, 1971

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe
Department of Environmental Health
Kettering Laboratory, College of Medicine
University of Cincinnati
Eden and Bethesda Avenues
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

Many thanks for your letter of October 18. I must say that I feel that my pediatric colleagues in Cincinnati surely do not know what they miss by failing to walk across the street. This is surely a problem that spans across the entire field of medicine. We are all, to a certain extent, hesitant to move out of our little niche.

I have been reflecting on the future course of my own work during the past few months and have just about reached the conclusion that I should concentrate a bit more in the area of porphyrin metabolism. In vitro studies strongly suggest that formed porphyrins, such as coproporphyrin and protoporphyrin, are biologically active compounds with toxic metabolic potentialities. Furthermore, they are photodynamic substances. I quite agree with you that insofar as heme synthesis in the blood is concerned, reduction in hemoglobin is the significant feature. However, I think we must keep in mind that there are other heme enzymes in the various tissues and that, insofar as we know, each cell synthesizes its own heme for the formation of its own hemoproteins. Inhibition in heme formation or alteration in function within other types of cells certainly seem to me important areas for investigation, since alteration in heme synthesis in other tissues may be just as important to them as hemoglobin is to the function of blood.

Again, many thanks for your recent letter.

Yours sincerely,

J. Julian Chisolm, Jr., M.D.

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