

came better understood, it was used more carefully, and that of late years its use by the laity had given rise to increased fatalities. The true explanation, of course, is to be found in the fact that when acetanilid was a new remedy it was widely discussed and precisely reported on; and that as soon as the novelty wore off and its nature and action became thoroughly known, it naturally ceased to be the subject of frequent and detailed report and possibly was not used to quite the same extent as formerly.

And so the matter would have rested but for its agitation by the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and its lay allies—*Collier's Weekly* and the *Ladies' Home Journal*—during which the country was scoured for evidence, genuine or spurious, to bolster up their indictment against American medical specialties, and which represent precisely the five years or so in which the bureau pretended to find an increase in the number of fatalities.

All of which is so transparent, and its instigation by the special interests of the medical ring so plain, that the only danger of the report lay in the color of authority given to it by the prestige of the United States Bureau. And all of which also is in marked contrast with the fair methods, the unbiased data and the straightforward presentation which characterizes Dr. Boone's report.

The result of this orderly and competent investigation of Dr. Boone's is, as we have seen, precisely the reverse of the anomalous and incompetent inquiry conducted by the Department of Agriculture. Its net showing is, as any sane man would expect it to be, that the disasters and fatalities from acetanilid and the other preparations named have been no more and no less than those from other equally potent drugs; that, as a matter of fact, their untoward effects, as in the case of other powerful drugs, have been comparatively few; and that the beneficent effects of the coal tar products, including acetanilid, have been far in excess of their harmfulness.

It is immaterial to our criticism whether the subject under inquiry be acetanilid or any other product. What the medical and pharmaceutical professions are interested in is that investigations of drugs, by whomsoever undertaken, shall be fair and honest, which that of the Department of Agriculture can not be said to be, and which that of Dr. Boone's most assuredly is.

But without regard to the fairness and honesty of Dr. Wiley's investigation, we are unable to find any warrant in law for his proceedings in this matter. We do not understand by what or whose authority he has presumed to take it upon himself to advise the medical profession and the public in general as to what drugs they should or should not use. Nor are we aware of any statute which, however liberally construed, can be fairly said to give to the Agricultural Department the right to print and