

all of them at the present time, can be controlled by other antibiotics which do not have this toxic effect. It is also as effective in treating gram negative and gram positive organisms, including Hemophilis influenza, an organism responsible for an extremely dangerous, previously quite uniformly fatal meningitis in the newborn and neonatal age group. Until quite recently, within the last two and a half, to 3 years there is no question but that if you suspected Hemophilis influenza meningitis in the newborn age group, Chloromycetin was the drug of choice and it was used quite commonly in a triple-shot type of treatment where it was combined with streptomycin and other antibiotics to treat this disease. This was done in infants who were severely ill, quite often even without the benefit of cultures of any kind because you had little time to treat them in this state of their illness.

Senator NELSON. Is there now another drug as effective?

Dr. WESTON. Yes, I believe, Ampicillin which has been on market two and a half to three years, somewhat in that period of time, has now been demonstrated to be as effective, if not more effective, in treating Hemophilis influenza infections. Ampicillin is being combined usually in a triple medication form remembering there is not the opportunity for a culture, and consequently, you might be treating Hemophilis influenza, you might be treating some other type of meningitis, you are not sure, but they don't wait ordinarily to determine what the organism is.

Senator NELSON. Well, the fact that it is known to be effective in a wide spectrum of infections may account for its being very frequently prescribed. But it seems to me that some other factor accounts for the fact that it is used prophylactically for the trivial infections. Testimony before this committee has been that it should never be used prophylactically. The fact is that it has been used for treating acne, minor infections of the gum; it has been used for head colds. In fact, Doctor, one of the doctors testifying yesterday pointed out a case of a lady who was, given chloarmphenicol and was told that whenever she had a head cold to take some. She developed aplastic anemia. Well, the fact that it is effective against this wide range of conditions doesn't account for this kind of indiscriminate prescribing, it seems to me.

Dr. WESTON. No, sir.

Senator NELSON. It just has to be that the doctors who are prescribing Chloromycetin in this way, it seems to me, can't be aware of what they are really doing.

Dr. WESTON. No, sir.

Let me give you a little personal experience. The day the telegram came in from the FDA recalling the 30-odd different products which had been shown to be absorbed and excreted at a slightly slower rate than the Parke-Davis preparation, I called attention to my secretary and said "Well, it looks like they might be starting to control the use of Chloromycetin; I sure hope they do." And she said "What do you mean?" And I said, "Well, I wouldn't want to give Chloromycetin to my child and I don't know any doctor who would give Chloromycetin to his child." She said, "Well, my son just got through taking it for 3 days." and I said, "Your son, for what?" "For flu," she said, and I said, "You mean your son just got through taking this?" And she said, "Yes, positively." And I went to the druggist that evening, unan-