

## MEDICINE

## Penicillin Saves Babies

Syphilis, in early stages, in expectant mothers is either cured or suppressed, stillbirth and miscarriage are averted, and apparently healthy babies born.

► FRESH triumphs for penicillin and one case of allergy to it are reported (*Journal, American Medical Association*, Oct. 14).

Early syphilis in expectant mothers is either cured or at least suppressed, miscarriage and stillbirth are averted and apparently healthy babies are born when the mothers are treated with penicillin, Dr. J. W. Lentz, Dr. Norman R. Ingraham, Jr., Dr. Herman Beerman and Dr. John H. Stokes, of Philadelphia, report.

Babies born with syphilis make a good response to penicillin treatment. Not enough time has elapsed to be sure whether mothers or babies are really cured of the infection and more study is needed to determine the best dosage of the mold chemical. The Philadelphia doctors, however, appear hopeful that penicillin may prove as good as or better than present treatment with arsenicals.

Penicillin combined with sulfa drugs saved 12 out of 13 patients suffering

with meningitis due to pneumonia germs, a once 100% fatal disease, Dr. Antonio J. Waring, Jr., and Dr. Margaret H. D. Smith, of Baltimore, report. The penicillin-sulfa drug combination, they find, is more effective than either penicillin or sulfa drug alone or sulfa drug combined with serum.

Multiple boils following prickly heat or heat rash in babies, a common and often refractory problem in the south during warm weather, clear up more rapidly with penicillin than with any other known treatment, Dr. Rose Coleman and Dr. Wallace Sako, of New Orleans, report.

The case of acquired sensitivity to penicillin, analogous to drug or serum allergy, is reported by Dr. Leo H. Crip, of Pittsburgh.

It took the form of hives which showed as soon as a penicillin injection was given. The reaction continued until penicillin treatment was stopped.

*Science News Letter, October 21, 1944*

X-ray pictures are important not only for diagnosing the trouble but for showing the anatomic arrangement of the sinuses which varies in different persons. Such knowledge is important to the surgeon planning an operation.

The idea that the early morning post-nasal drip, which sends many patients to their doctors, is sinus trouble is a false conception of sinusitis held by many patients and doctors.

The terms "radical" and "conservative" in connection with operations for sinusitis "should be avoided as making no sense." Preferred terms are "adequate" and "intelligent."

*Science News Letter, October 21, 1944*

## ASTRONOMY

## Amateurs May Find Comet By Searching Crater and Leo

► AMATEURS interested in rediscovering Comet Berry, discovered at Dunedin, New Zealand, the middle of September, should search in the constellations of Crater, the cup, Leo, the lion, and Sextans, the sextant, according to

## MEDICINE

## Sinus Notion Debunked

The idea that once you have sinus disease, you always will have it, is called false. Sulfa drugs have been disappointing, penicillin offers more promise.

► GOOD NEWS for sinus sufferers appears in a report recently issued by the Mayo Clinic.

"Once sinus disease, always sinus disease" is branded as a "false notion" which it is hoped can be overcome.

The kind of treatment to be given and the question of whether an operation is necessary depends on whether the patient has fulminating sinusitis, acute sinusitis, a subacute or recurring acute form of the disease, chronic sinusitis or a mixture of allergic and infectious sinusitis. Treatment is primarily medical for acute, subacute and recurring acute sinusitis. It is primarily surgical for chronic sinusitis.

Sulfa drugs have proved disappointing, chiefly because the true identity of the

infecting germs was not suspected. Penicillin in conjunction with suitable surgical procedures offers more hope.

Five serious complications of sinusitis, almost always fatal when present all together are: spreading osteomyelitis of the cranial bone, meningitis, brain abscess, abscess in the eye socket and cavernous sinus thrombosis. The treatment for these complications is their prevention. They are not always due to staphylococcus. Another germ, against which penicillin is definitely effective, has been found as the cause in these conditions.

Several patients with spreading osteomyelitis who would ordinarily have been expected to die have been cured by penicillin.



**FOR GUIDING SURGEONS' FINGERS**—This shining steel device locates bullets and other foreign matter imbedded deep in wounded fighting men. A portable field X-ray machine device, shown here being assembled at the Westinghouse X-ray Division, measures the depth and position of the bullet. It also marks the patient's skin to enable the surgeon to position him on the operating table precisely as he was on the X-ray field table close to the combat area.