



**AUDUBON'S "FOX"**—A Cross Fox, *Vulpes fulva*, is identified by a black stripe down his back and another across his shoulders, forming a cross, part of which is visible in this photograph of one of J. W. Audubon's paintings. A Cross Fox is one of the phases of the red fox.

## MEDICINE

## Warn On Miracle Drugs

**Danger comes from the good done by the antibiotic drugs—they are so effective, other, more resistant germs may flourish.**

► A WARNING of dangers connected with widespread use of sulfa drugs, penicillin and other "miracle" drugs was given by Dr. Wesley W. Spink, University of Minnesota professor of medicine, in his address at the International Congress of Clinical Pathology in London.

One new danger comes from the good done by the antibiotic drugs, penicillin, streptomycin, aureomycin, terramycin and chloromycetin. Because these are so effective against some disease germs, other more resistant ones are given more chance to thrive in human tissues and to cause serious disease.

"More and more blood stream infections are being caused by gram-negative organisms (the resistant bacteria associated with kidney infections) which have their reservoir in the normal gastro-intestinal tract," Dr. Spink declared. "This phenomenon of a group of bacteria being given a chance to grow at the expense of another group is

an excellent example of how difficult it is to control nature.

"The antibiotics solve the problems associated with one group of infections but in doing so upset biological equilibrium and new problems are induced."

Second danger seen by Dr. Spink is that of taking the wrong antibiotic. This happens when the drug is taken, often without the advice of a doctor, before a correct diagnosis is made.

Penicillin brings dramatic improvement for a patient with a strep. sore throat, for example. But when the sore throat is due to diphtheria, penicillin may not prevent a fatal illness.

Development of germs resistant to antibiotics is one of the more serious medical problems today, Dr. Spink stated.

He stressed the importance of selecting the right antibiotic for each infection, and of combining two or more for treatment of some infections, such as brucellosis.

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## WILDLIFE

## Audubon Painting On This Week's Cover

► A PHOTOGRAPH of one of the eight original Audubon paintings, entitled "Snow Rabbits," presented to President Truman at the White House on July 18 is shown on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER.

The gift collection consists of 10 oil paintings, two others of which appear on p. 54 and opposite. Not until early this week was it known that two of the ten were by the son, J. W. Audubon, and not by the father.

The paintings are a gift to the American people from E. J. L. Hallstrom, Australian philanthropist and a director of the Taronga Park zoo. They will soon be put on exhibition at the National Gallery of Art. Mr. Hallstrom bought the paintings from John James Audubon's great-great grandson, Leonard Audubon.

The "Snow Rabbits" are really Arctic Hares, *Lepus arcticus*. One is in winter garb on the left, one in summer garb on the right. The rabbits themselves are painted in water color, while the background is done in oils.

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## MEDICINE

## Terramycin Effective Against Venereal Disease

► TERRAMYCIN, one of the newest of antibiotics, is the weapon with which gonorrhea can be virtually eliminated. This is the hope following tests on human patients reported by a Harlem Hospital group directed by Dr. Louis T. Wright.

Two other venereal diseases are treated successfully by terramycin. One of these is lymphogranuloma venereum, a virus infection found in both the tropics and the temperate zone, said to be increasing rapidly. Another is granuloma inguinale, once thought to be confined chiefly to the tropics but now increasingly prevalent in the United States. A study of this disease under terramycin attack was made by a group at the Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, led by Dr. Robert B. Greenblatt.

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## BIOPHYSICS

## Eye's Side Glances Important in Driving

► A CHILD running toward a motorist from the sidewalk or a truck approaching from a side road—these may be as dangerous as what is going on directly ahead of the driver on the road.

An instrument to test side-vision has been accepted as an exhibit in the Franklin Institute's Science Museum in Philadelphia.

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