

Book Reviews

BRIAN INGLIS, *The forbidden game. A social history of drugs*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1975, 8vo, pp. 256, illus., £4.95.

Involvement with drugs is one of the gravest social problems of today. However, it has been a feature of communities throughout history, and it is not only interesting to examine the drugs taken and the attitudes towards their use in the past, but it is valuable in assessing and handling the present-day threat. Drugs are of two kinds, those taken therapeutically, and those used “. . . to release us from normality . . .” (p. 9). Mr. Inglis is concerned with the second variety and he presents here an historic survey of their use and abuse, ranging from tea to the worst of them all, heroin. He covers many aspects of this large topic and his account is very readable, if lacking in scholarly documentation; there is, however, an eleven-page list of sources, and the author has thoughtfully deposited a copy of his text containing precise source references with the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence.

Although the earlier periods are dealt with, the more recent receive more attention because they are more relevant to the present. Control is the prime question and Inglis, citing the experience of the past, emphatically opposes the banning of drugs like cannabis, mescaline or L.S.D. Unfortunately history is of little help with the problem of how they should be legalized, and modern communities have adopted various controls for various reasons, some resembling the Spanish Inquisition, or the witch-hunts of earlier centuries or those of McCarthy in ours. Mr. Inglis believes that drug dependence is a measure of society and to cure the former the latter must change. But the suggestion that primitive man indulged in order to achieve a new level of reality seems unlikely. He was escaping from his disagreeable surroundings or from himself just as much as any hippie is today. However, to replace drugs with techniques such as meditation may be a useful approach in the attempt to limit their abuse.

HANS A. KREBS and **JULIAN H. SHELLEY**, *The creative process in science and medicine*, Amsterdam, Excerpta Medica; New York, American Elsevier, 1975, 8vo, pp. xii, 138, \$21.75 (paperback).

In May 1974 twenty-four distinguished scientists, doctors and philosophers met to discuss freely a topic divided into four sections: the analysis of scientific method and the logic of scientific discovery; patterns of creativity in animal and human behaviour; creativity in the biological sciences; the dynamics of creativity. Only four papers were presented formally and recorded here, and most of the time was devoted to discussion also reproduced. The end result is a fascinating conversation on a problem of general scientific and medical importance by men who, during their own careers in the biological sciences, have manifested inspired creativity. Throughout, a considerable amount of historical data is called upon and discussed, especially in the first section where philosophical concepts underlying the evolution of science are considered. In the fourth session, psychological and cultural factors were concentrated on, in view of the fact that motivation and environment play determining roles in the way in which a scientist plans his research.

Historians of medicine will find this book most rewarding, and it should, in fact, be required reading for them. The only criticism concerns the absence of a summary