

ber 1970. The meeting was a giant affair, with 1,150 registered participants. The book contains 54 individual contributions, transcripts of 8 panel discussions, and a rousing message from President Nixon—'I commend your positive approach to turn the tide in an area that poses such an unparalleled threat to our society'. There is a Preface, followed by Welcoming Remarks by Dr. John A. Gronvall, followed by Welcoming Remarks by Dr. Harry A. Towsley. One discussant declares that 'Things that go down here will be read throughout the world, and since we have so many distinguished guests our words will carry a lot of weight'. On the kitchen scales, the book weighs approximately 3½ lb.

So much of it reads like a dream experience—one of those dreams that just go on and on, the images confused and repetitive. On page 88 a table gives the Home Office notification statistics; on page 149, there they are again. A paper on 'The Pharmacology of Madness' is followed by one on 'Clinical Pharmacology of Hallucinogens and Marihuana'. A section on 'Drug Dependence vis-à-vis Drug Abuse' categorizes types of drug abuse: it is followed by 'The Many Faces of Deviant Drug Use', and *déjà vu*. And it's definitely a nightmare if Mr. John E. Ingersoll, Director of the Bureau of Narcotics, is to be believed—'Many more delays, and the problem may conceivably begin eroding even more the national infrastructures to the point where social stability is endangered'. Somewhere in this confused experience there are, however, flashes of lucidity—Dr. Jerome Jaffe's eminently well reasoned discussion of maintenance treatments, Dr. Thomas Bewley's review of U.K. experience. Dr. Roger Smith's enormously interesting account of amphetamine abuse in Haight-Ashbury, and certainly some other papers besides. But this volume would have gained much in value if it had been edited down to about one third of its present length.

GRIFFITH EDWARDS.

Opiates and Their Alternates Pain and Cough Relief. Report of a WHO Scientific Group. WHO Tech. Rep. No. 495. Geneva. 1972. Pp. 19. Available from H.M.S.O., London. Price 30p.

Nowadays, fewer and fewer people become dependent upon opiates and other analgesics because they have been introduced to these drugs for originally therapeutic reasons. It is also probable that efforts at controlling the supply of opiates in order to reduce the amount entering the illegal market are doomed to failure or at least to only very moderate success. The expert group itself concludes, 'the

clandestine manufacture of many of the dependence-producing synthetic alternates for opiates is technically possible', and that of methadone has certainly been achieved. It is therefore questionable whether the 'substantial increase in research on chemical structure/activity relationships' to separate 'the desired analgesic and antitussive effects of drugs . . . from their adverse effects, particularly the capacity to produce drug dependence' and the other like measures recommended here are really worth the expenditure of time and money. After all, a very great deal of research has already been carried out, and, as this report indicates, the net results in all these fields are between two and five synthetic possibilities, the merit of only one of which has been indisputably demonstrated. There are of course commercial reasons why the effort continues, but though the world undoubtedly requires new and better drugs in various clinical situations, pain is not amongst these; with cough the situation may be somewhat different.

C. R. B. JOYCE.

Hallucinogenic Drugs. By F. CHRISTINE BROWN. Charles C. Thomas. 1972. Pp. 154. Price \$10.50.

This book states its aim on the front cover: to provide further knowledge of the chemistry of the hallucinogenic drugs. Not surprisingly, therefore, there is rather more chemistry than the general psychiatrist might wish to imbibe. Nonetheless there is a good admixture of psychiatry and sociology and some intriguing historical flashes. The book is written with a clarity of style and a judicious sprinkling of humour which makes it a pleasure to read and even the chemistry is comprehensible for the non-specialist. The psychiatrist who specializes in the treatment of drug abusers will almost certainly find the work of interest, and will have the additional bonus of finding himself several steps ahead, in knowledge, of the patients whom he treats.

R. P. SNAITH.

Biological Basis of Alcoholism. Edited by Y. ISRAEL and J. MARDONES. Wiley-Interscience. 1971. Pp. 453. No price stated.

In recent years research on alcoholism has been increasingly concerned with biological aspects. The appearance of this collection of essays is therefore timely. Topics treated include the metabolism of ethanol in general, and more specifically, its effect on the nerve cell and biogenic amines, damage to liver, heart and pancreas, nutritional problems, congeners (the small molecules other than ethanol)