

Book Reviews

Encyclopédie du tabac et des fumeurs, Paris, Editions du Temps, 1975, 4to, pp. 512, illus., Fr.250.00.

As the publishers claim, this is the first encyclopaedia on tobacco. It deals with all aspects of the latter and with those who smoke, but its main contribution is to the history of the subject. After a lengthy introduction, which includes considerations of chronology and etymology, there is an historical index of 144 pages containing brief biographies of those individuals important in the subject and with the customs as practised in various countries and by different races. The next four sections are concerned with more technical matters: the plant; the tobacco industry; consumption, commerce and distribution; scientific problems, including the effect of tobacco on health, its chemistry and pharmacology, and a useful listing of tobacco's vital statistics in different countries, arranged alphabetically. The last part of the book is entitled 'Tobacco and man', and for the historian this will be as valuable as the historical index. The topics covered include the psychology of smoking, smoking establishments, pipes, tobacco jars, matches, literature, art and tobacco, and, in particular, tobacco and the caricature in the United States, Germany, France, Britain and Italy. There is a considerable amount of historical material included here.

The masses of useful information that this treatise offers is one of its striking assets. Another is its remarkable series of illustrations. They are to be found on almost every page, often in colour and always of a high quality. Many of them are uncommon, and together they suggest that perhaps this work should have been entitled 'An illustrated encyclopaedia . . . '.

The publishers and the international panel of contributors are to be congratulated on producing such a valuable and exquisite source-book. The only criticism is that the reference material and annotations are scanty. In a book of this kind the user will often be seeking further books and articles. The bibliography, however, is restricted mainly to only eight pages, which must be a very small part of the total literature on tobacco and its usage.

GENE I. ROCHLIN (editor), *Scientific technology and social change. Readings from 'Scientific American'*, San Francisco, W. H. Freeman, 1974, 4to, pp. [5 11.], 403, illus., £8.30 (£4.40 paperback).

The central theme of these thirty-one articles reprinted from *Scientific American* is the interaction between science, technology and society. They deal only with the physical sciences and technology based on them, and are arranged in an historical order determined by their subject matter. Part I is concerned with early techniques, such as tools and the wheel, and empirical technology, Part II with the Industrial Revolution and invention in the era of materialism. Parts III, IV and V consider modern technology. Each main section has a brief introduction.

It is well known how carefully articles in *Scientific American* are composed and illustrated, and always produced by leading experts. It is, therefore, of great value to have a collection such as this, many of the selections being of direct or indirect interest to the historian of medicine or biology. On the whole scientific and technological matters overshadow the social ones, and although the usual brief bibliographies to the articles are included, the useful biographies of the authors are not.