

All who take a wide interest in preservation need this book. It is a companion volume to the *Extinct and Vanishing Mammals of the Western Hemisphere*, by G. M. Allen, and *Extinct and Vanishing Mammals of the Old World*, F. Harper. Allen's book is out of print, but Harper's may still be bought, price \$4, post free, from the American Committee for International Wild Life Protection. To avoid exchange difficulties, English orders should be given through booksellers.

C. L. B.

PHOENIX RE-BORN. By MAURICE BURTON. Hutchinson, London. 25s.

It is not every day that we get a book that combines mythology with up-to-date zoological research and experiments, and, as very considerable make-weights, glimpses of the author's pets and some very worth-while observations on the behaviour of birds loosely known as "anting".

Maurice Burton has always had that first prerequisite so valuable to a real naturalist—an insatiable appetite for wanting to know "why". Without this laudable curiosity no naturalist is going to get much further than making lists of birds or plants or dragonflies and so on—which often do not get one anywhere in particular.

Burton's pet hobby is to debunk debunkers; and he often starts off with the object of discovering if there is not, after all, a grain of truth in some zoological fable. In this book he sets out to see what might be behind the ancient legend of the Phoenix; and it will seem fairly clear to the reader that he has gone a long way towards giving a reasonable explanation of what may have stimulated the imaginations of very early writers. The author has not merely done this, he has thrown much light on what may be the reason for other seemingly pointless pieces of behaviour among birds.

The book is clearly yet simply written with a refreshing minimum of the jargon so much beloved by some writers of animal behaviour.

Dr. Burton is to be congratulated not only on a very fascinating book; he is equally to be congratulated on having a young daughter whose graphic sketches and excellent photographs add much to the text. Seeing is said to be believing: this may not always be the case, but seeing photographs of what is described goes a very long way towards strengthening any writer's theories.

M. K.