

REVIEWS

ORANG-UTAN. By BARBARA HARRISSON. Collins, 1962, 25s.

This highly readable book addresses itself above all to the conservationist. Mrs. Harrisson works in collaboration with her husband, who contributes a foreword and an epilogue.

In spite of its title this is not a comprehensive monograph on a single species for, although it is concerned with the present status of the Orang in Sarawak, it is based largely on the authoress's experience in bringing up confiscated baby Orangs in a state of semi-liberty. She substitutes human attentions for parental care until the animals can be self-dependent and returnable to the jungle or, alternatively, to some good zoo. Much discussion relates to the relative merits of these two alternatives in efforts to conserve the species, without, however, any definite conclusions being offered. There is considerable criticism of zoos and their directors' policies *a propos* of exhibition and breeding of Orangs and other apes; but a few are singled out as having more altruistic motives and better policies and facilities than most. Doubtless some of this criticism is justified, but, on the other side of the picture, not enough has been done by local authorities to check the wanton destruction of Orangs by indigenous inhabitants.

This book evinces a keen appreciation of the critical state of the Orang-utan and has the laudable object of preserving the species, but the Harrissons display inadequate knowledge of the established differences between Bornean and Sumatran Orangs; and are unacquainted with certain structural developments associated with maturity, which they interpret as pathological states. The illustrations for the most part are well chosen and of excellent quality, but it is unfortunate that the dejected animal photographed in the Johore Zoo (facing page 176) is a chimpanzee and not, as stated, an Orang at all!

W. C. O. H.

GOMA DAS GORILLAKIND. By E. M. LANG. Albert Muller Verlag Ruschlikon-Zurich, 1961. 104 pp. S.fr. 12.80.

This is a well-produced and beautifully illustrated account of the early life and upbringing of the first gorilla to be born in captivity in Europe. It is written by Ernst M. Lang, the energetic director of the Basle Zoological Garden where the birth took place. The accompanying 56 photographic illustrations are from various sources but include a large number by the author, the remainder being acknowledged at the end of the book.

The work is with good reason dedicated to Mrs. Lang whose hand in the rearing of Goma is very evident. Though clearly intended for the use of the juvenile and lay reader, the book is fully authoritative and will serve as a handy reference to early gorilla life, behaviour, and early development. Goma's story is covered from birth up to the age of two years, by which time she had become fully independent.

It is to be published in English by Gollancz, London.

W. C. O. H.

SAVING THE GAME. By ANTHONY CULLEN and SYDNEY DOWNEY. Jarrolds. 25s.

The authors have combined a bit of journalism, a good appreciation of biology and ecology, and a long experience of Africa, to produce a balanced report on the wildlife problems there.