

Australian Minister for External Affairs. What is not recorded is the fact that the author was one of the last of a dying race of forest officers in India who knew and loved their forests and the wild life therein more than the office chair.

Soondar Mooni is a book as enchanting to read as it is accurate natural history, and must be one of the best yet written on the Indian elephant.

E. P. G.

ELEPHANTS. By RICHARD CARRINGTON. Chatto and Windus, 25s.

This book deals with both African and Asiatic elephants, as well as with their prehistoric ancestors since Eocene times and their historical contacts with man from Alexander and Hannibal down to Barnum and Bertram Mills. It is divided into three parts under the concisely self-explanatory titles "Elephants as Animals", "Elephants as Fossils", and "Elephants and Man".

Mr. Carrington has got to know the African elephant from personal observation and contact with men of experience: for his knowledge of the Asiatic one, apart from advice on some points from the late Colonel J. H. Williams, he has had to rely more on books. His researches in elephant literature have been thorough and he quotes from it extensively, often verbatim, and always with full reference. He has wisely quoted much from Sanderson who, though he wrote in 1878, was far ahead of his time especially in his grasp of what would nowadays be called "behaviour": he was, moreover, an ardent "debunker" of more imaginative earlier writers.

The author regards the digestion of elephants as inefficient, citing experiments which show that they digest only 44 per cent of the hay they eat as against 50-70 per cent for cows, horses and sheep. Hay is, however, unnatural diet for them—a poor substitute for green fodder which is scarce in the temperate zone. The dung of herds living in elephant country, in Asia at any rate, suggests very thorough digestion, for it attracts few insects, is useless as manure and when dry, is composed only of fibres.

Those familiar with the way in which elephants, on a hot march, draw trunkfuls of liquid from their mouths to squirt along their flanks will be surprised to read (p. 44) that "there is no scientific basis for this picturesque superstition". This refers presumably to the source of the liquid and not to the existence of the habit which is surely too well known to be in doubt.

Nobody I asked in India knew where this liquid came from and I never tried to find out for myself by dissection. It is far too copious for spittle, being often a splash rather than a spray, yet, if there is some "mysterious reservoir", it must be known to anatomists. The views of readers of *Oryx* on this point would be valuable.

Those not specially interested in evolution may think of skipping "Elephants as Fossils" until they see Charles Knight's illustrations of mammoths and mastodons and the delightful reconstructions of earlier types by Maurice Wilson: his etching of *Ananthus* on p. 118 in particular will appeal to any Indian "elephant-fancier" as a beautifully proportioned "kumeria".

I have enjoyed this book very much and learnt much from it. It is well indexed, very thoroughly referenced and the bibliography is the most complete list of elephant books that I have seen.

E. O. S.

NATURE PROTECTION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. Edited by
GEORGE DENNLER DE LA TOUR.

This work is published in memory of Dr. Hugo Salomon, President of the Argentine National Commission for the Protection of the Fauna of South America, whose name will be well known to members of the Fauna Preservation Society. They will remember that, in 1945 and 1947, following Dr. Salomon's visits to Asia and Africa, the Society published his observations as "Occasional Papers", and they will have read with sadness the notification in *Oryx* of his death.

The present book takes the form of articles in either French, Spanish, German or English by many authors. Three are from the writings of Dr. Salomon himself; other familiar names appear including Professor Charles Bernard, Honorary President of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, Mr. Conrad L. Wirth, Director of the U.S.A. National Park Service, and Dr. Théodore Monod, Directeur de l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire. But the bulk of the writing is by Dr. Dennler de La Tour himself, willingly and diligently undertaken in memory of his old friend and collaborator.

In spite of this book's title there are considerable geographical gaps. Europe has to make do with Switzerland and the Carmargue, Asia with India and Indonesia; Australia gets no article at all, though New Zealand has four. But the difficulties in compiling such a volume must have been immense and the