

176 pp., but also 121 illustrations—it is gratifying to have it available in English in so well produced a form.

IVOR MONTAGU

**Tigers, by Guy Mountfort.** David & Charles, £2.25.

I wonder what William Blake, when some 100 years back, he wrote those oft-quoted words, would have thought of the present-day tiger situation. More than 60 years ago the reviewer, serving in the Indian Army at a time when tigers abounded, was familiar with 'stripes' in the open woodland haunts in the Central Provinces where a system of strictly controlled shooting blocks was administered by the Forest Department: during one memorable morning twelve came to drink at a river-bed pool. Paradoxically, this was the most effective conservation method one could wish: the tiger population in each block was well known and never permitted to fall below a limit which would inhibit satisfactory recuperation. Villagers were allowed to destroy cattle marauders, though this rarely happened, as an abundance of deer, antelopes and wild swine provided ample tiger food. But the 1914–1918 war heralded an era of change.

Guy Mountfort deals comprehensively with every aspect of a tiger's life, with the maneater problem, distribution in the past, present status, and the operative measures to save so noble a creature. A most useful summary of information includes a map of the existing tiger reserves.

The book is profusely illustrated in colour but some criticism is justifiable, for whereas a superb picture of a tiger in all its feline glory appears on the glossy dust cover, the reproduction of a series of photos of varying merit on the semi-art paper of the text leaves much to be desired. Reproduction on a glossier surface of some of the better pictures would have enhanced the value of so praiseworthy an undertaking.

C. R. S. PITMAN

**Tiger Haven, by Arjan Singh.** Macmillan, £2.95.

It was providential that three books concerning the tiger should be published during the year when the World Wildlife Fund was concentrating its international efforts on saving the species from probable extinction. Arjan Singh, a dedicated tiger-watcher and conservationist, has made an important contribution to public awareness of the threat by this book, which in no way duplicates the other two.\* It is a personal account of his one-man crusade to prevent the disappearance of the tiger and other wildlife from one of the few unspoiled areas on the border between northern Uttar Pradesh and Nepal. He writes with enthusiasm, and he is outspoken in his criticism of the bureaucratic obstructions he had to overcome in winning official recognition for the sanctuary he has created at Dudwa. Conservation needs men of this calibre, who are not afraid to keep on reminding us that the survival of endangered species such as the tiger cannot be achieved at the agonisingly slow pace of normal official procedures. He writes also with intimate knowledge of India's wildlife, and his book is the more readable for its pungent comments on commercially sponsored poaching and on the indifference of local officials towards his enterprise.

Arjan Singh is one of India's relatively few wildlife photographers and cinematographers; some of the numerous illustrations in his book lack clarity, but most of them were taken under the difficult conditions of dense forest, where the major animals can be observed only at dawn or dusk. In a

\* The other two are Guy Mountfort's own book *Tigers*, reviewed above, and *Wild Beauty*, by Kailash Sankhala—see page 495.