

REVIEWS

A HISTORY OF DOMESTICATED ANIMALS. By F. E. ZEUNER, D.Sc., Ph.D. Hutchinson, London, 1963. 84s.

According to the publisher's note inside the dust jacket, this most interesting book is the first ever to be published on the subject in the English language and the first for twenty-five years in any language. It is divided into two parts. In Part One the author discusses his theory that domestication came about as a result of the social relationships of man and animals, rather than in consequence of a conscious attempt by primitive man to exploit his environment. Part Two consists of twenty-four chapters, each devoted to a particular species or group of animals. Altogether some forty species of domestic animal are considered, ranging from elephants through fowls to silkworms and honey bees.

The author has spent a great deal of time and has devoted much care in assembling his facts, many of which are the result of original research and are hitherto unpublished. The 560 pages abound with interesting and unexpected material such as the predilection of reindeer for human urine. This extraordinary habit is almost certainly the result of an attempt by the reindeer to obtain certain salts which may be absent from its rather restricted diet and it is interesting to note that a recent development in the feeding of domestic cattle and sheep involves the use of urea as a foodstuff in order to stimulate the growth and activity of ruminal flora. In this way animals eating coarse herbage may be able to digest the fibre more completely. Rapid digestion of fibre needs a readily available source of nitrogen for the synthesis of proteins by the organisms.

The book ends with an extensive bibliography and a very comprehensive index. Scattered throughout the text are many excellent line drawings and photographs, but it is a pity that some of the latter lack pictorial quality or have been poorly reproduced.

This well-produced volume is expensive but it is one that will amply repay shelf space in the libraries of archaeologists, historians, agriculturalists and indeed all who are interested in man's association with the animal kingdom.

M. H. W.

THE GREEN TURTLE AND MAN. By JAMES J. PARSONS. University of Florida Press. \$8.

This is an unusual book, though the story it tells is common enough as the history of so many species falls into the same pattern—discovery, utilization, over-exploitation, followed by near extinction and finally, conservation. It is unusual, however, because it is written by a geographer and not by a biologist and it deals with a reptile of economic importance. Mammals seem uppermost in conservationists' minds these days—this book is a useful reminder that other animals have their uses as well. Dr. Parsons writes entirely from the utilization and conservation point of view and there is little reference to the biology of the turtle except where it bears on this. This makes the book a most useful work of reference, for conservation data is usually tucked away in works of general biology.

This is the kind of book that ought to find its way into Ministries of Natural Resources all over the tropics, where conservation of fauna is still sometimes regarded as the concern only of "game-hunters" and sentimentalists. After all, where else in the animal kingdom will one find a