

REVIEWS

BORN FREE : A LIONESS OF TWO WORLDS. By JOY ADAMSON.
Collins and Harvill Press. 25s.

Many lions have been tamed, for a game warden can hardly avoid coming into possession of an orphaned or deserted lion cub at one time or another. These pets soon become too obstreperous to have about ; so they are usually sent to zoos, where the rest of their life history is perhaps less interesting. But Elsa's life was different, for Joy and George Adamson loved their lioness and determined to return her to the wild. *Born Free* tells how they did it. The length of the task and its extreme difficulty, to say nothing of the devotion which the Adamsons accorded it, surely shows that if once we allow an assembly of wild ungulates and their predators to disappear, we can never hope to regain it by releasing animals bred in captivity—or are we to be content with farmed animals only, be they cattle or antelopes ?

The extraordinary developments which accompanied the work of teaching Elsa to be a wild lioness are suggested by the subtitle : how she helped to bring her kill back to camp, how she could be at one moment a wild lioness mated to a wild lion, at the next an animal member of a human family. This story, of which the accuracy cannot be questioned, forms a useful corrective to any who may still believe that animals live in a queer, subconscious world of drives and conditioned reflexes.

Besides all this, *Born Free*, which is illustrated with many fine photographs, takes us right into the life of a game warden and his wife in Africa. How important it is to emphasize the wife's part, for it is a lonely and devoted life to which few women take easily.

This is a wonderful book which well deserves success and which I am glad to say has attained great popularity.

C. L. B.

UGANDA IN BLACK AND WHITE. By H. B. COTT. Macmillan and Co., London. 1959. 30s.

This is a quite splendid book which truly gives pleasure, not merely informs. It is a very remarkable book, with its 109 pen and ink drawings, its short Foreword by Sir Andrew Cohen (then Governor of Uganda), its dozen pages of Introduction and then the author's explanatory paragraph relating to each and every drawing. As Sir Andrew says, " to those who know

and love Uganda and its people, this book . . . will bring great joy. More than words can, or even photographs, these impressions have the feel and flavour of the country." The author, as his friends well appreciate, is no mean photographer, but here his offering is on a higher plane. As he remarks, "the drawing, like the photograph, records appearances: but it can and should do much more. For it also reveals the artist's feelings for his subject. It is half-way between a thing and a thought; between a recording of fact and a revealing of experience."

The author has concentrated on picturing of the old Uganda, its scenery, its people, its fauna and its vegetation. All is strictly and accurately pictorial and in no sense symbolic. His special work on crocodiles, on camouflage and on colouration, together with his innate feeling for beauty, no less than his recognition of the over-harsh pressures which man exerts upon his fellow beasts, combine here to produce a satisfying wholeness and sympathy in these drawings. All that a reviewer or reader can now ask of Hugh Cott is that he should produce a supplementary volume for their further pleasure and instruction.

The reviewer would need more knowledge to comment adequately on Cott's technique of drawing, but a few remarks may yet be in place. Pen and ink seems to be the chosen medium throughout: work with scraper-board I think is absent. The originals I judge in general to have been perhaps half as large again in each dimension. Reduction to a near standard 6 by 8 inches seems to have caused no significant loss of detail. During the period of production of the originals there has been considerable experiment in technique, extending from several varieties of highly detailed surface penmanship, all the way to intricately-shaped areas of pure black upon the whiteness of the paper. There are several faces and torsos in the latter style which give a particularly fascinating effect. The varied treatment of dark skins is especially interesting.

A further interest and pleasure is to be gained by deliberate comparison of Hugh Cott's work with that of others. I chose a charming set of wood engravings, illustrations of New Zealand scenes, both real and legendary, by Mervyn Taylor. The appreciation of resemblances and contrasts heightened still further my appreciation of *Uganda in Black and White*. Here one learns so much and so satisfyingly, in comparison with those too common torrents of verbiage which almost drive reviewer and reader alike to despair. Here in Hugh Cott we have the craftsman biologist at his best.

G. C. L. B.