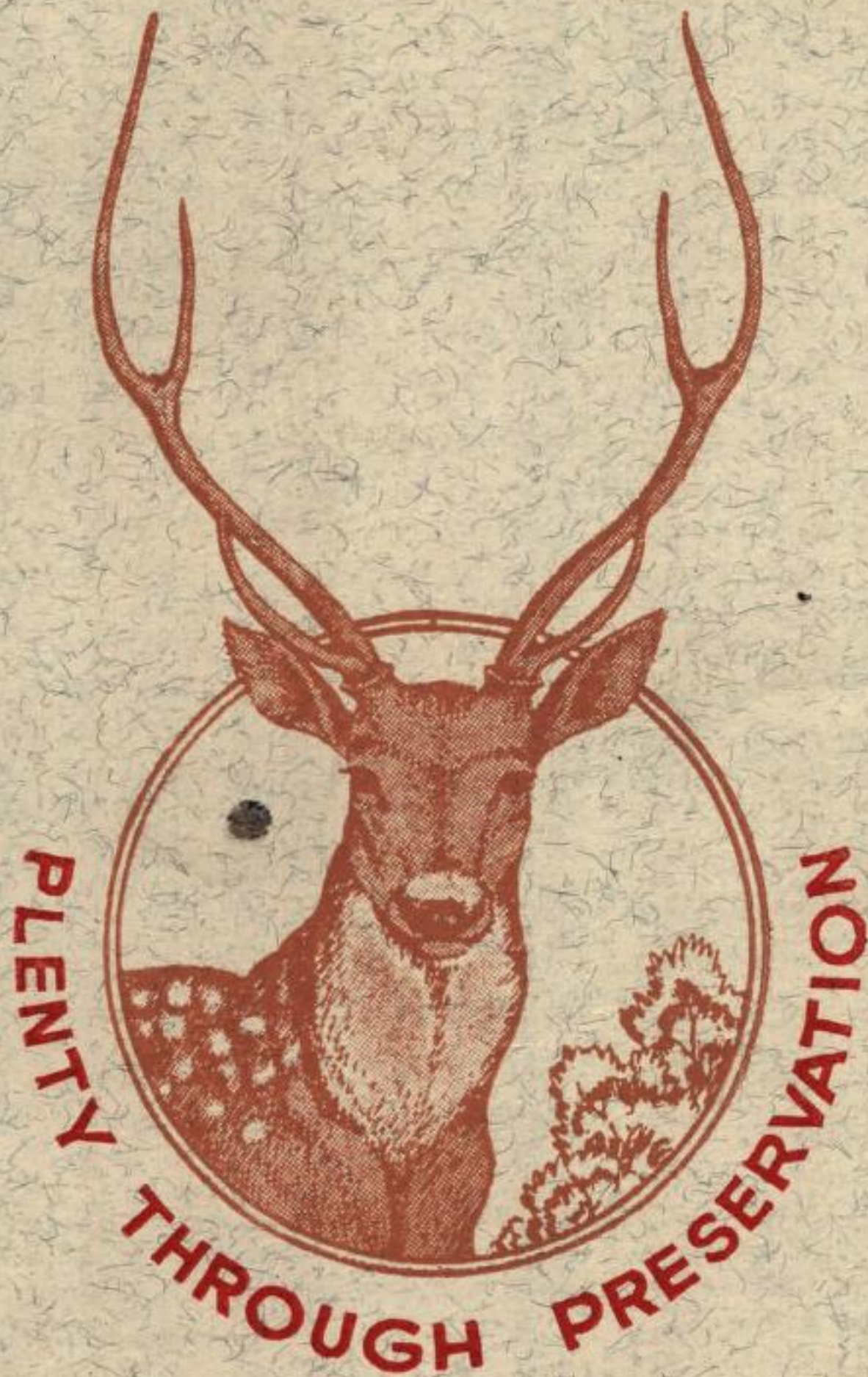


CHEETA

A Journal of

Wild Life Preservation Society of India



VOL. 7

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No. 1

THE CHEETAL

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The finishing touch to the action is the engraving. This is traditional and can, if desired, be carried out to a purchaser's specification. Engraving is a highly skilled work done by men who prefer to work on their own.

In the making of a "best" gun, then, 20 or 30 different men, each a specialist in his own field, may be involved.

(31A163).

Reviews:

The Wild Life of India:

By

E.P. GEE, (Collins):

There have been good books on wild life before; only last time we reviewed Pat Stracey's *Elephant Gold* as an example. But never before has there been such a book on Indian wild life as this.

This result of thirty years of enthusiastic amateur work in the field, Mr. Gee's effort breaks new ground with every chapter, even though most of them have already appeared in various newspapers.

Apart from the magnificent photographs in colour and black-and-white, (there are 21 of the former and 92 of the latter), and the warmth and sincerity that pervade the book, it is full of valuable 'firsts'. Mr E.P. Gee, who is one of the Wild Life Society's most active and valued members (he is Senior Vice President of the North-eastern branch of the Society), is learned in animal lore and a member of the Executive of the Indian Board for Wild Life since its inception. He has used all his known expertise to produce what will remain for long a source book on Indian wild life.

Besides the usual chapters on tiger and other animals that might be found elsewhere, there is much unpublished material on the rhinoceros, the wild ass of Kutch, the Golden Langur, and an account of a fascinating search after the Hispid Hare.

Lively anecdotes brighten the theme, like the oft-quoted one about the old-time pucca Forest Officer, E.O. Shebbeare, as distinguished for his hunting, forestry and mountaineering,

as for his disdain of frills by way of clothes. He spent all his forest service days, it is said, wearing khaki shorts and shirt, with brown canvas shoes innocent of sox. One day the Governor came visiting, and Shebbeare was seen in the usual outfit, plus a pair of sox. To enquiries for this sudden display of respectability, he is said to have replied: 'Oh, that ! One must cut a bit of dash on these occasions, you know'. Do our contemporary foresters stand comparison ?

We feel compelled to add a note of discord by recording the fact that we do not agree with several of Mr. Gee's views. For instance, he says that 'cheetal' stags and hinds do not separate during certain seasons, whereas we have always seen companies of stags living, moving and having their being entirely in 'stag' parties during certain 'spring' months. Nor do we wholly approve the somewhat supercilious attitude to Indian 'wildlifera' that expresses itself in his writings; we could point out several superficialities, like his cursory note on the Kansrao Sanctuary, on the basis, we happen to know, of a one-hour drive on the forest road in a jeep; but all this would be carping.

The fact remains that here, at last, is a book by an Indian 'wildliferman' about wild life in India, which has very few defects and very many outstanding virtues; it is an absolute 'must' for the bookshelf of anyone even vaguely interested in sport, conservation, nature or life.

This is the jungle: Kenneth Anderson (Allen & Unwin)

Man-eater yarns are common stuff now, ever since the early days of Tsvao's lions and Corbett's tigers. Mr. Anderson himself has written no less than five, and then added this wholly unnecessary and discursive potboiler. We cannot appreciate its lack of style and restraint, its obvious pondering to sensational sentiments, its poor natural history or its typographical and printing errors.

We have read with interest and even mild enthusiasm Mr. Anderson's earlier books, but when he can confuse rabbits with hares, and give us unverified details in language that is at best mediocre narrative, then we feel he is approaching too close to the genre of the current-day standard of work which we so often condemn. Such literature does not instruct or elevate, and we are not amused !