

INTRODUCTION

THERE are one hundred and ninety-three living species of monkeys and apes. One hundred and ninety-two of them are covered with hair. The exception is a naked ape self-named *Homo sapiens*. This unusual and highly successful species spends a great deal of time examining his higher motives and an equal amount of time studiously ignoring his fundamental ones. He is proud that he has the biggest brain of all the primates, but attempts to conceal the fact that he also has the biggest penis, preferring to accord this honour falsely to the mighty gorilla. He is an intensely vocal, acutely exploratory, over-crowded ape, and it is high time we examined his basic behaviour.

I am a zoologist and the naked ape is an animal. He is therefore fair game for my pen and I refuse to avoid him any longer simply because some of his behaviour patterns are rather complex and impressive. My excuse is that, in becoming so erudite, *Homo sapiens* has remained a naked ape nevertheless; in acquiring lofty new motives, he has lost none of the early old ones. This is frequently a cause of some embarrassment to him, but his old impulses have been with him for millions of years, his new ones only a few thousand at the most-and there is no hope of quickly shrugging off the accumulated genetic legacy of his whole evolutionary past. He would be a far less worried and more fulfilled animal if only he would face up to this fact. Perhaps this is where the zoologist can help.

One of the strangest features of previous studies of naked-ape behaviour is that they have nearly always avoided the obvious. The earlier anthropologists rushed off to all kinds of unlikely corners of the world in order to unravel the basic truth about our nature scattering to remote cultural backwaters so atypical and unsuccessful that they are nearly extinct. They