



**West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
Africain**



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HILARY FRY.

In this first number of the Bulletin to appear since Hilary Fry left Nigeria in July last, it is fitting that some tribute, however inadequate, should be paid him. The Nigerian Ornithological Society owes him an immense debt of gratitude and his moving to other spheres will be a great blow to the Society.

While spending Christmas 1963 in Kano with Bob Sharland we discussed the possibility of starting a society for Nigerian ornithologists. There were enough people in the country, we thought, interested in birds to make this a worthwhile project. The idea was easy enough to formulate, but who on earth could be found, mug enough to undertake the real administrative work, if such a society were indeed launched? Then Hilary Fry came upon the scene, literally as well as metaphorically, as though in answer to prayer! Recently appointed to Ahmadu Bello University he offered there and then to undertake, like Pooch-Bah, all the offices that mattered, Secretary, Treasurer and, most arduous of all, Editor of the Bulletin. To his untiring efforts the Society has not only owed its continued existence but also its increasing recognition from other ornithological organisations. That the Bulletin has been received by all the Universities in Nigeria and by a number of learned societies in England has been due to Hilary's initiative. That copy has been found for the regular appearance of the Bulletin has been due to his drive and persistence. That the Bulletin has been a journal with enviable standards of productions and with articles of worthy calibre has been due on the one hand to Hilary's ability for getting the authorities at Ahmadu Bello University, where the physical production of the Bulletin has been achieved, to allow this to happen and on the other to his good-humored chatting up of the members to send him material. Also as Secretary/Treasurer he has handled the affairs of the Society most efficiently.

In short we are all most indebted to Hilary. It is not too much to say that hitherto he has carried the Nigerian Ornithological Society almost unaided. It remains for me to wish him, on behalf of the Society, the very best of luck in his new post at Aberdeen University.

May I also take the opportunity of wishing good luck to the new officers of the Society who are going to carry on the work in the face of very real difficulties. Is it too much to hope that as Nigeria emerges from her present travail, as emerge she will, that the Ornithological Society's members may find renewed opportunities for rewarding studies of the local avifauna, an avifauna whose recollection brings an almost unbearable nostalgia to the writer?

John Elgood.