The membership of the Society has for the last few years hovered around the 900 mark and, if the Honorary and Life Members are deducted, it only leaves about 770 annual paying members. This small membership furnishes an income inadequate for our work, and a study of our Journal will demonstrate the extent of our activities. It is inconceivable that those in the Empire who are willing to support efforts to save the marvellous wild life with which Nature has endowed it, can number less than 1,000.

While expressing our gratitude to those who consistently help us to obtain new adherents, may we ask all other members to endeavour each to obtain at least one new recruit. We can assure one and all that the money will not be wasted.—Secretary.

DOMINICA “DIABLOTIN”.

(Pterodroma haematita.)

Reported Rediscovery of.

On 2nd May, 1932, Dr. Thaly, a French resident in Roseau (Dominica) and a keen naturalist, was invited by a woman named Mary Rose, living opposite Peebles Park, to inspect a strange bird she had found lying at her door that morning, after the previous rainy night.

He took it to the local Museum to compare it with photographs of the “Diablotin” and then took it to Government House to show the Administrator—the Hon. Mr. W. A. Bowring.

Sir Charles Belcher, the President of the West Indian Court of Appeal, happened to be in Dominica at the time. He is widely known as an ornithologist. He carefully examined the bird and believes it to be the Diablotin.

The Administrator advised the Society and we at once communicated with the Bird Department of the Natural History Museum and Dr. Percy R. Lowe states that the description given by Sir Charles Belcher corresponds exactly
with that of *Pterodroma hæsitata* which is the "Diablotin". The Museum has one specimen which is carefully preserved among the extinct treasures. The Society also communicated immediately with the Colonial Office urging the complete protection of the species as soon as possible.

By a later mail the Administrator forwarded photographs of the bird which were kindly taken by Canon Bolton and these are now reproduced. He writes: "The specimen we have here is in very handsome plumage. It has been placed in a big cage and is, I understand, inclined to eat fish. It will not, I fear, be possible to retain it in captivity, but when it was given an opportunity to fly away it would not do so. This may be due to exhaustion, though the bird looks in good condition, or it may be due to some internal injury—in which case it would have to be killed and in that event would be carefully preserved."

Three weeks later he wrote that the bird was still alive, that it seemed tamer, but was still unwilling to fly away. Further, that it declined to eat of its own volition and was fed by forcing small fish down its throat.

The "Diablotin" apparently abounded in the eighteenth century, and it is said that it was netted in hundreds and sent away to the adjacent islands, for it was considered a great delicacy.

It is alleged that it was exterminated by an animal locally termed the "Manicou", and one writer describes it as a Mongoose. The Administrator, however, states that there are no Mongoose on the island, the so-called "Manicou" being a species of Opossum, and he is very doubtful if this creature is responsible for the supposed extermination of the "Diablotin".

The last recorded capture of a Diablotin was by Ober in 1871, but an ornithologist named Richmond states that he saw three in 1900.

One interesting record of this bird is a water-colour drawing by Rabie which was made in October, 1778, and this was reproduced by Dr. Wetmore in *The Auk* in 1930. The Rabie drawing is said to be at the McGill University, Montreal.
In Godman's *Monograph of the Petrels*, p. 184, there is a description of the bird, a list of synonyms, and a coloured plate drawn from the specimen in the Natural History Museum, which is believed to have come from Haiti.

Colonel H. W. Fielden, in *The Transactions of the Norfolk Naturalists Society*, vol. v, 1890, pp. 24-39, gives an account of a fruitless expedition to the Morne Mountains on Dominica with the object of ascertaining if it still survived.


D. A. Bannerman, in vol. xl, 1919-20, p. 10, *Bulletin B.O.C.*, communicates a statement from Mr. F. Harper that he observed a specimen from a ship in long. 38° 05' W. and lat. 41° 43' N., i.e. about 100 miles west of the Azores.

It is impossible here to give all the references in ornithological literature regarding this bird, but enough has been quoted to demonstrate the great interest of the present discovery of a living specimen in Dominica.

Prior to the discovery of the Black-capped Petrel here recorded, I am informed by Mr. David Bannerman that the species has also turned up within quite recent years in Haiti—the island from which the only skin in the British Museum collection is supposed to have come. That the "Diablotin" is more likely to be found breeding in the mountain fastnesses of the Dominican Republic rather than in our own island of Dominica it is fairly safe to assert. No less than four specimens of *P. hæsitata* were captured at Moca on 14th and 15th May, 1928, and many more were observed over that town. Whence the birds came and whither they were going can only be a matter of conjecture, but Dr. Ciferri, who made the observation, has recorded that a strong north wind was blowing at the time accompanied by heavy rain, thunder, and lightning—the four birds captured being in an exhausted condition.

The capture of the specimen in Roseau is additional and gratifying proof that we must reinstate *P. hæsitata* amongst
the living forms and we desire to express our indebtedness to Dr. Thaly and the Administrator, the Hon. W. A. Bowring, and particularly to the latter, for so promptly bringing the matter to the notice of the Society.

We hope shortly to learn that steps have been taken to ensure that the species shall receive the most careful protection, for if it still breeds in the steep mountains of Dominica it is beyond doubt extremely rare.

C. W. H.

NOTE.—Since writing the above, information has been received that the bird died on 26th May. The skin is being preserved in the Museum at Roseau, the specimen proving to be a hen. The species has, moreover, been protected by a Special Legislative Order dated 1st July, 1932.

THE RHINOCEROS.

With reference to the article on this animal which was published in No. XIV of our Journal (pp. 18 et seq.), Mr. E. O. Shebbeare, of Darjeeling, a recognized authority, has submitted some additional information regarding the distribution of the Indian species and a few corrections, which are welcomed:—

R. unicornis.—There are still a limited number in North Bengal and the adjoining state of Cooch Behar and also in Bhutan. He doubts if there are any in Siam.

R. sondaicus.—There may be a mere handful still surviving in Burma in the Kahlilu Reserve and in Shwe-a-daung, but it is uncertain.

R. sumatrensis.—As regards India, there were a few still surviving a short time back in Burma, Assam (Lushai and Tappara Hills), and in the Chittagong Hill tracts in Bengal. Mr. Shebbeare has taken great pains in an attempt to estimate the approximate number of R. unicornis still surviving in Assam (North Bengal). They first occur about 51 miles south-east of Darjeeling and there are sporadic occurrences along the foothills for about 330 miles due east