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The 4,650 records which have so far been input occupy two magnetic tapes.

We hope that these figures may help other curators in estimating the amount of work required to catalogue their own collections. We are lucky in Manchester in that we have an M. S. C. team of cataloguers (whom we gratefully acknowledge) available to carry out the work. Depending on how many eggs we have, it would seem that a four man team could catalogue all our egg collection in between 20 and 30 weeks (assuming 10,000 and 15,000 clutches respectively).

Dr. M. V. Hounsome

C. W. A. Pettitt

Manchester University Museum.

History in the Service of Systematics 13-16 April 1981

A joint conference organised by the Systematics Association and the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History at the British Museum (Natural History), South Kensington. This conference attracted 103 delegates from eight countries. Twenty one lectures were presented covering a variety of topics ranging from the fate of specific collections and expedition material to the evolution of the Zoological Code of Nomenclature. Examples quoted included algae, lichens and *Banksia* for the botanists and deep sea faunas, insects, molluscs, birds and even a rhinoceros for those whose interests lay with animals. The geologists in the audience had to be content with the remarkable fate of a Shropshire geological collection.

Having catered for the biologists, the needs of the bibliographers were not ignored by the organisers. The hidden resources of part publication and printed wrappers were explored. Those of us who are fascinated by biographical information learnt a great deal more about such characters as Sir Hans Sloane, Joseph Banks, Robert Brown and William Burchall.

The social needs of the delegates were well provided for with a reception at the Linnean Society on the first evening and a splendid buffet at the private view of Nature Stored Nature Studied at the museum. Some delegates took advantage of the afternoon excursions to Charles Darwin's residence at Down House and the Guildhall and Clock Museum in London.

Viewed overall the conference was well organised and provided an enjoyable and informative forum which maintained the standard set by the joint SBNH and BCG Conference of two years ago.

J. R. A. Gray
May 1981