

IN MEMORIAM

DR DIRK FOK VAN SLOOTEN (1891 - 1953).

by

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Many post-war present members of the Indonesian Natural History Society will know, at least by name, Dr van Slooten, either in his capacity as Head of the Herbarium Bogoriense or as Director of Kebon Raya Indonesia. But only few insiders will know the important role Dr van Slooten has played in the former life of the Society, as this now goes back for nearly two decades. In 1930 he entered the publication committee of "De Tropische Natuur". This was no small task as he was its main editor and was responsible for getting each number through the press. This task demanded much personal devotion which van Slooten amply supplied. Manuscripts were corrected, facts were verified, figures were embellished, and if necessary, others were added. Whole articles were sometimes rewritten if their style did not correspond with that of "De Tropische Natuur". Turning over the pages of the 5 volumes edited by him, 1930-1934, one is struck by the high standard which he was able to maintain.

Another big task he accomplished was that on the books devoted to special subjects, edited by the Society in the so-called: "Natural History Library". Four out of a total of seven were edited under his care. I remember very well the importance he attached to editing these books, and how he also later encouraged people to write more of these instructive works. In passing it may be remarked that the original manuscripts of one of these books was practically rewritten by him as well as illustrated.

When he laid down his editorship of the journal at the end of 1934, when going on leave, his task for the Society was far from being ended, as he served it later for a long period as president of its general council.

Societies like ours thrive by the grace of persons who not only love it, but are also prepared to work for it in a devoted unselfish way. It is through them that the Society has achieved so much in the past (and on them it will depend in the future) so that the journal, cementing together its members, may maintain its unique status. They literally carry it on their shoulders.

Dr van Slooten was one of this group of biologists who wholeheartedly spent much of their private time, energy and knowledge in the interest of our Society. All who have known him will be grateful for the kind and tolerant way in which he gave help to amateurs and junior colleagues for the benefit of our journal. His memory will live among us for ever.