

CHILDREN'S BOOK DEPARTMENT

# THE BODLEY HEAD

9 Bow Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 7AL Tel: 01-836 9081

Telegrams BODLEIAN, LONDON WC2



JMT/SAT

John Murphy, Esq.,  
Booker McConnell Ltd.,  
Bucklersbury House,  
83 Cannon Street,  
London E.C.4.

BOOKERS BOOKS	Date Recd
ACTUAL	2/1/71
	Copies
	✓

1st February 1971.

Dear Mr. Murphy,

Knowing that there is a certain amount of rethinking about the terms and conditions of the Booker Prize, I should like to ask Booker Brothers if they would consider making an annual award to the author of a book of fiction for children. As you know, there has been enormous progress made in this field of writing over the past few years both in standard and in presentation, and authors such as Lucy Boston, Hester Burton, Peter Dickinson, Leon Garfield, Alan Garner, William Mayne, Philippa Pearce, Katharine Peyton, Stephanie Plowman, Rosemary Sutcliff, have all written novels for children which could well hold their own in competition with novels published for adults. But children's writers have been sadly neglected for a long time in terms of awards.

Until recently the only one was the annual medal presented by the Library Association for "the most outstanding children's book", and this award carries no money prize. Then in 1967 'The Guardian' instigated their one hundred guinea annual prize for a children's novel published in Great Britain. In 1969 The Arts Council made their first award to the writer of a children's novel, and in 1970 International P.E.N. included children's fiction in their Silver Pen awards, but

cont'd...

THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED

DIRECTORS: Sir Hugh Greene KCMG, OBE (Chairman), Max Reinhardt (Managing), J.B. Blackley, L.A.Hart, J.R.Hews  
Sir Francis Meynell RDI, James Michie, Anthony Quayle CBE, Sir Ralph Richardson, John Ryder, Judy Taylor

John Murphy, Esq.,  
Booker McConnell Ltd.

1st February 1971.

- 2 -

both these latter organisations say that children's books will not be included every year in their awards programmes.

The art of writing well for children is one of the most difficult of all skills. It is essential that the best writers should be encouraged to write for children. A Booker prize might well achieve that.

Yours sincerely,



Judy Taylor