

BOOKER PRIZE

Meeting held at National Book League at which Rayner Unwin, Martyn Goff, JNM and MJW are present.

The future running of the Booker Prize is discussed in view of the Publishers Association's decision to close its Public Relations department as soon as possible. In view of this, they will not be retaining the services of Marilyn Edwards and it is suggested that maybe the National Book League takes over the administration of the Booker Prize and employes Marilyn Edwards to handle it.

Marilyn Edwards is paid £1,650 per annum by the Publishers Association and approximately 20% of her time is spent on the Booker Prize (this 20% is clearly not spread evenly throughout the year). Bookers pay for any incidentals such as telephone, postage, entertaining, etc., but they are not prepared to pay for Marilyn Edwards' salary.

Martyn Goff says that the National Book League, in principle, agree to take over the running of the Booker Prize and JNM suggests that the Publishers Association should make a contribution to the National Book League towards Marilyn Edwards' salary.

It is left that Rayner Unwin will put Marilyn Edwards in the picture and she will then meet Martyn Goff. It is not certain whether she will agree to the move or to the other work the National Book League will be able to give to her to keep her fully occupied. The NBL will shortly be running another prize called the Bowater Prize for Book Design and Marilyn could probably deal with this as well. It will, however, depend on Marilyn Edwards' reaction and also the present publicity person at the NBL.

It is agreed that the Publishers Association name should still be used in connection with the Prize since it has certain advantages when dealing with publishers. The NBL are not too concerned whether their name is associated with the Prize providing they get the kudos from handling the Prize.

A meeting of the Prize Committee has been arranged for 3.15 on 2nd February at the Publishers Association and it is hoped that Marilyn Edwards can have been put in the picture by that time.

  
MJW