

8 February 1971

The Editor,  
Times Literary Supplement  
Printing House Square,  
London, E.C. 4.

BOOKER PRIZE

Sir,

We agree with the points made by your distinguished correspondents (TLS 5 February 1971). We also accept that further concentration of fiction publishing in the late Autumn should, in general, be discouraged. On the other hand we have learnt by experience that it is difficult to revive a novel a year to fifteen months after its original publication, whatever its merits, and the French have demonstrated the value of prize and publication being as nearly simultaneous as possible.

Publishers already have to resist authors' requests to be published in the late Autumn. Their task will be made a little harder by our experiment, but the great increase in prestige and sales that the new system may well achieve, not only for winning books, but for all fiction, surely justifies the change.

Yours faithfully,

MARK LONGMAN

JOHN MURPHY

Joint Chairmen

Booker Prize Committee