

INTRODUCING . . .

We live in an age of cliches. We hear expressions used over and over again unthinkingly, until they have lost their meaning. Perhaps the media is responsible, or perhaps it is a general societal phenomena. Perhaps it is especially prevalent in the field of public speaking, where it tends to be part of the speaker's charisma. I shall try to avoid such expressions at all costs, like the plague, though the odd one may tend to creep in unheralded.

Let me begin by saying, then, that unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I have to advise you that, at this point in time, I count it an honour and a privilege indeed to have this opportunity of proposing the toast of our distinguished visitor.

Due to the crying need for the optimization of lecture resources academic-wise, I have much pleasure in reminding you that his lecture series is open not only to the general student body, but also to the public sector. Hopefully you will be able to attend at least one of the lectures. They will not be delivered at the grass-roots level, but by and large, in general, as a whole, and overall, you are sure to find that they will promote a dramatic escalation of your appreciation of classic Australian fiction, as such, right across the board. Hopefully you will be able to enter upon a meaningful dialogue with the lecturer.

Biography-wise, I am able to advise you that our distinguished lecturer is in origin a Westralian. West Australia is that other part, over there, where they see the sun sink daily into the Indian Ocean, as we in East-ralia watch it rise out of the Pacific. Another way of saying this is that every day in Perth has its swansong, as every day in Townsville has its Rising Sun.

As the climax to a distinguished academic career, our honoured guest is presently editorial adviser to what is quite literally one of our best critical magazines, and I feel that this should be spelt out.

I feel further that in this day and age our distinguished visitor is a good thing FOR the students IN Sydney AT the University OF New South Wales. Hence we are anxious to explore every avenue and leave no stone unturned in order to extend to him the hand of friendship and the gesture of goodwill. There is no viable alternative.

You have no doubt heard of a marathon, a walkathon, a bikeathon, and a swimathon. You may be interested to learn that there is also an academathon, and in this academathon our distinguished visitor is clearly out in front among the leaders.

In what I am about to propose, therefore, I have to advise that a prompt reaction would greatly oblige, and will produce the desiderated maximization of effect.

In the final analysis we come to the moment of truth. I ask you to join with me in honouring the toast to our guest lecturer for 1975.