

Try and Stop Me

By BENNETT CERF

THE MOST DISGUSTED author in Chicago is the man who heard via the grapevine that his latest floperoo (a novel that in seven months had sold a grand total of 977 copies) had been reported "out of stock" by the publisher. A long-distance call verified the news: the publisher had indeed sold the entire remaining stock of the book—over 3000 copies—to a single customer! The buyer: a fruit grower in South America, who proposed using the books to bullet-proof his trucks against bandits! The publisher had sold him the books for 6 cents a copy net—and admitted he had done better than he had expected!



Queen Victoria was riding in the royal coach through the streets of London when a loyal subject burst through the cordon of police and hollered, "Keep up the good work, Vic, or girl!" The miscreant was hustled off, and the Queen was heard to grumble, "That should never have been allowed to happen—but it was gratifying, quite gratifying!"

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Space Platforms To Be Used in Study of Stars

Bethpage, N.Y.—The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is building two observatories in space platforms with which to study the stars.

What is learned from experiments performed by these 1½-ton Orbiting Astronomical Observatories is expected to contribute to man's knowledge of the makeup of the stars and planets and of space itself.

Scientists believe the OAO's also may help provide a few answers to manned flight problems, although this is not their basic purpose.

NASA plans to launch the first 9½ by 6½-foot OAO into a 500-mile circular orbit from Cape Canaveral on an Atlas-Agena B missile vehicle in 1963.

In such an orbit, the space observatory would be above much of the earth's atmosphere which previously has prevented telescopes on earth from getting a clear view of the stars.

Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corp. has displayed a model of the OAO's it is building here under the direction of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

The body of the model looks like a large, eight-sided box which a Grumman spokesman said would be the observatory's coated aluminum skin.

This box has a double set of square "ears," paddles covered with solar cells to provide 350 watts of electricity to power the OAO's instruments. And it wears a sunshade—a curved paddle set vertically in the center of its top to shade its "eye," a telescope aperture, from the sun.

The OAO's being built on a

\$23 million NASA contract have another feature visible on the model—"star trackers" which look like small knobs. The star trackers are part of a stabilizing system to provide enough information by television and radio messages for scientists on the ground to send the observatory orders aiming it at a specific star or area of the sky.

The space observatory would be turned in the direction of its target by gas jets or wheels activated by these radio orders from earth, the Grumman spokesman said.

Walter Scott, Grumman's Space Sciences Department chief, said the stabilizing instruments would be "so sensitive they would detect the vibration caused by the coursing of blood through a human body."

He said these instruments would give the OAO "better pointing accuracy than that of any existing large observatory here on earth."

He compared this accuracy with keeping sighted on a basketball 500 miles away.

The Grumman spokesman said each of the OAO's was designed as a "standardized shell . . . into which one or could be fitted for each flight."

Planned for the instruments are experiments proposed by the Goddard Center, the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, the University of Wisconsin, Princeton University Observatory and Harvard University.

These institutions have suggested experiments which would seek greater knowledge of earth-sun relationships, the proportion of elements in space and the temperatures, structures, life histories and birth of stars.

ACTRESS GETS DIVORCE

Lost Angeles—Screen actress Leslie Parrish, 26, was granted a default divorce Wednesday from her actor-husband of five years, Eric Marlow, whom she charged with extreme cruelty.

Graceful Flying Swallows Are Useful; Zoologist Says They Feed on Insects

Corvallis—Graceful and expert flying swallows are useful birds because they feed on insects such as mosquitoes, according to Dr. Robert M. Storm, Oregon State university zoology professor. Expert flying comes in

handy because they mainly feed on insects on the wing. Since they are insect eaters, swallows are attracted to water areas.

Swallows probably spend more time in the air than any other of the perching birds. Another characteristic of the colorful and attractive swallows is the forked tail.

Mud nests of some swallow species are unsightly and that's probably the most damaging thing a person can say about them, Dr. Storm noted. Most prominent

Of the seven species in Oregon, the violet-green swallow is the most prominent and

popular. It nests in bird houses, holes in trees and building crevices, usually around towns.

All Oregon's swallows migrate between Mexico and South America in the winter from August to October, depending on the species, and return in February and March. Swallows migrate earlier than other birds and in flocks.

Tree swallows are similar in appearance to the violet-green, but usually nest in tree holes; although not turning down bird houses, bank swallows are rare in Oregon; but they can be found in isolated colonies.

Both the bank and rough-winged swallows nest in burrows which they excavate in perpendicular dirt banks. Cliff swallows fasten gourd-shaped mud nests under building eaves or overhangs of rocky cliffs. They can only nest where they can find mud of proper consistency.

Barn swallows build a little cup-shaped nest of mud and straw fastened to the braces or timbers of barns and other buildings. Purple martin swallows nest in holes of dead trees and don't use bird houses in the West as they do in the East.

It may be sacrilegious to write it; but zoologists label

as exaggeration the claim that cliff swallows return to San Juan Capistrano Mission in southern California at the same hour and day each year. Trouble With Sparrows

Many bird lovers have trouble with English sparrows using bird houses planned for swallows. English sparrows usually move in because the bird house builder bored too big an entrance hole. Dr. Storm recommends making a smaller wing-like entrance. This is done by drilling a one-inch hole, and then making a one-half inch wide and long wing-like extension on each side at the top of the one-inch hole.

Bird houses (for swallows) should be placed at least 6 feet high and where it's shady most of the day. For

observation purposes, swallow houses can be built without a back placed against a window. A piece of removable cardboard makes the back on the inside of the window.

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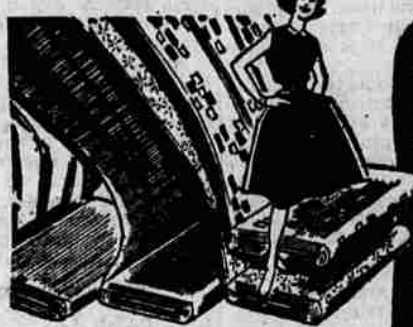
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