

never have built it. But he did paint it blue and added the brown rose-window figures that adorned the interior. And he himself had hung the flowered plastic curtains and chosen the dozen coloured kapok cushions strewn on the cabin floor.") Father spent his days fishing, his nights sleeping; Mother slept days and spent the nights reading Italian film fan magazines. "My God but Mother was gentle and beautiful, when she rose at dusk, in time to make our supper and put us to bed."

M. Godbout's fancy is full of pain. It has the poignant comedy of *Catcher in the Rye*. It is a short book, 131 narrow pages, in two sections, the first a triumph, the second not quite. It is a book of the young human under the stress of an indifferent world, a youthful, French Canadian cry in the night.

"I wonder if anybody will ever ask me, 'Galarneau, what were things like in your time?' In my time!

"It's raining harder than ever. I can hear the water from the rainpipe running into the barrel. It must be the weather that has me down at the mouth. In my time! In my time there was still one horse on his feet, name of Martyr, and he couldn't pull a load any more, but no one had the courage to finish him off. He died of old age at fifteen, when I was twenty-five. In my time, in my America, you had to be rich, very rich, to be happy; or educated, very well educated. Or else you went to pieces, or blew bubbles, or dreams, or 'ifs' to pieces."

In the Middle of a Life, by Richard B. Wright, Macmillan of Canada, Ltd., \$7.95. Mr. Wright is not so much a good, grey novelist, as the novelist of the good, grey man. After his success last year with *The Weekend Man*, he was called a poet of quiet desperation (by Christopher Wordsworth), which is close but not quite precise. His heroes are more gently persevering than quietly desperate.

In this reincarnation, the hero is Freddy Landon, forty-two, an unemployed greeting card salesman, divorced from a rasping wife; living (occasionally) with a shy but earthy, middle-aged schoolteacher; he is a man without guile in a world where guile is the leading commodity in the market place. But he survives intact, a complete man without money or power or respect, surrounded by fragmented people who have money or power or respect.

The Peacock Papers, by Leo Simpson, Macmillan of Canada, Ltd., \$6.95. Mr. Simpson is a funny, happy man who bites off more than almost anyone could chew. This is a satire of the way people, things, marriage, literacy, hair and happiness are this very minute. At its heart it involves,

more or less, an effort to convert the library of Bradfarrow, Ontario, from books to electronic tapes. Jeffrey Anchyr, a feed merchant with an ulcer, defends the thin black and white line of linear thought with, among other things, a moose rifle. He is assisted by Thomas Love Peacock, a nineteenth-century novelist who also serves as a second to a contestant in the annual Bradfarrow Baby Contest.

[NON-FICTION]

Wake of the Great Sealers, by Farley Mowat, with prints and drawings by David Blackwood, McClelland & Stewart, Ltd., costs and is worth \$16.95. Beyond Québec and the Maritime Provinces, to the seaward, there is another land, Newfoundland, part of Canada since only 1949 and still very much itself. Blackwood is an artist of startling and sombre originality; he offers Newfoundland in grey and white and blue and dark rose — black-cloaked men standing in black boats like the members of a funeral, high ships against the piercing arctic sky, grim people in a grim and beautiful land. If you see one Blackwood print, you will, whenever you see another, know whose work it is. Blackwood is a Newfoundland, the descendant of fishermen and seal hunters. Mowat tells the history of sealing from firsthand sources:

"... the first wooden wall as ever I shipped aboard was the *S. S. Esquimaux*. She was a little thing, only about a hundred feet overall, and had been a whaler for thirty year before being bought up for the sealing. She was soaked through and through with whale and seal oil and the stink of her was enough to make a goat lose his dinner. She was built with accommodation for maybe twenty men, but she carried a hundred and sixty the spring I went in her and we was out ten weeks, most of it in the ice with northerly gales and the coldest kind of weather. I don't suppose I was dry half the time, for there was no place to dry out your clothes, in them from the beginning to the end, and them soaked in seal fat and blood and dirt till they was so stiff they'd crackle. We slept in them too, for there was no such thing to be had as any sort of bedding. The only time I wasn't chilled half to death was when we was on the ice working seals and then you was on the go so hard you had to get warm. . . ."

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