



John Buchan, once Governor General of Canada, said it is "essentially a country of the larger air." The picture, by Shin Sugino, is from *Together We Stand* (Gage, 1978).

Ces Enfants de ma vie, Gabrielle Roy, Editions Internationales Alain Stanké, 1977.

Narrowly speaking, Gabrielle Roy is not a Quebec novelist. She was born in Saint Boniface, Manitoba, and was over thirty when she moved to Quebec. But her well-known first novel, *Bonheur d'occasion* (*The Tin Flute*), published in 1945, established her as a keen observer of life in the Montreal slums.

In *Ces Enfants de ma vie* she takes us back to the time, between 1919 and 1937, when she was a schoolteacher in Manitoba. It is the story of a teacher's love for her young schoolboys, many of them immigrants struggling with a new language in a new land. She is a surrogate mother who is permitted neither to embrace nor caress. The situation is just as delicate for the boys: their teacher must be conquered, and the young men quickly realize what this implies.

Gabrielle Roy's clear, precise, instinctive writing sensitively expresses the hopes and fears of young people. It should soon be translated into English.

Les Anthropoïdes, Gérard Bessette, Editions La Presse, 1977.

Les Anthropoïdes is the work of the author of *Le Libraire* (*Not For Every Eye*), an ironic novel of censorship in a small Quebec town during the 1950s. (As if to prove the point, Quebec editors refused it, and it was published in Paris in 1960.)

Bessette's new novel is far away from contemporary Quebec: it is the story of prehistoric tribes moving from Asia to North America during the later Paleolithic period. Bessette calls it a "*roman d'aventure(s)*," and it recounts the adventures of an adolescent named Guito in the midst of violent tribal combats.

Les Anthropoïdes is also an attempt to define a new approach to the art of the novel. Episodes are told and retold, often with conflicting details, as Guito develops into both the hero and the narrator of his own literary creation. This makes for some difficult reading, but the determined reader may find that Bessette's imagination makes it all worthwhile.

Hubert Aquin romancier, Françoise Maccabée Iqbal, Presses de l'Université Laval, 1978.

Hubert Aquin, one of the most outspoken of *indépendantiste* authors, committed suicide in March 1977. His novels are not easy to understand. He often tried to trick the reader, leading him into blind alleys, giving him quotes that never existed. Françoise Iqbal's work deciphers the true from the false and helps to resolve some of the contradictions in Aquin's novels. She suggests that Aquin saw suicide not as oblivion but as a rebirth into a world in which man would be free to determine his own existence.