

banded together to form a group to be known later as Le Rideau Vert. Le Rideau Vert now has the most varied and ambitious of Montreal's theatrical repertoires.

When they disbanded in 1952, Les Compagnons de Saint-Laurent left a significant heritage — the French classics had been revived, foreign plays had been performed and the way had been paved for the acceptance of modern and even contemporary plays. In 1951, two former members of Les Compagnons established a new group — Le Théâtre du Nouveau Monde. This new group was well received in Montreal and has since become a truly international company. French theatre has been the mainstay of Le Théâtre du Nouveau Monde but it has also given notable productions of foreign plays. In 1954, plays by Canadian authors were presented for the first time.

Until the advent of professional theatre in French Canada, it was difficult to create a distinctive dramatic literature that reflected French-Canadian society. Since the professional theatres (with few exceptions) have made it a practice to present each season at least one play by a Quebec writer, French-Canadian drama has built up an interesting repertoire. Preferring to explore psychological and social themes, the work of these dramatists is generally well received by the Quebec public and, in recent years, their plays have attracted the largest audiences.

The "Englang" (English language) theatre in Quebec reflects the same vitality as its French-speaking counterpart. As is the case with the French theatre, English theatre activity in Quebec is situated almost exclusively in Montreal. The "Englang" repertoire provides a window on world culture, is sophisticated and lively in its views and makes an important contribution to Montreal

theatre. Established in 1969, the Centaur Theatre group is the leading English company in the province. Although it can be classed as an "establishment" theatre, it is not afraid to challenge itself and its audience to new approaches. It also seeks out native playwrights and undertakes the responsibility of presenting new works.

#### Stratford Festival

The giant of the theatre world in English-speaking Canada is the Stratford Festival. Opened in 1953 to give summer seasons of Shakespearean plays, Stratford was a success from the beginning and has maintained its reputation throughout its existence. The Festival is now one of the most important theatre events in the world and the company is one of the best in North America. The advent of good theatre in the relaxed atmosphere of summer-time has added a new dimension to the cultural evolution in Canada. Situated on the banks of the River Avon, the physical facilities of the Festival are impressive and have had no less impact than the artistic aspects. The Festival opened in the largest tent in existence, containing, rather than the traditional proscenium stage, a "thrust" stage, or one which projected out into the audience. In 1957, the tent was replaced by a permanent theatre with the same type of stage.

The Festival has extended the length of its season and has expanded to include contemporary drama and other attractions such as opera, concerts and art exhibits. It has also created an opera and drama workshop where actors can learn something of music and singers can be coached in drama. Other celebrated festivals include the Charlottetown Summer Festival and the Shaw Festival at Niagara-on-the-Lake. The latter was founded in 1964 to perpetuate the work of Shaw. Emulating the Stratford Festival, it has expanded to include the work of other playwrights and a music festival has been added. (*The foregoing article is one of a series, reprinted from the July/August issue of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Commercial Letter.*)

*Continued from Page 2*

centre around trade, but there have been some other differences on policy, some perhaps more apparent than real over the Vietnam peacekeeping idea or truce supervisory idea. Are political differences hampering other relations?

A. I don't think so, I don't see any evidence, indeed, I was gratified the other day when Secretary Rogers was asked whether the conditions we laid down for our Vietnamese participation on the Supervisory Commission were reasonable and he said perfectly reasonable, the Canadians are perfectly reasonable. So if anybody had had any doubts about this before I think they were removed by Secretary Rogers' statement. Some people had suggested that there was a misunderstanding, a difference of view, but as far as I knew there wasn't. And I was gratified without any coaching from our side when Secretary Rogers answered a press inquiry by saying that the conditions we laid down for our participation were perfectly reasonable. I don't think that we have any major political differences, we have some difficult trade issues and these I think in 1973 will be discussed at great length, I hope they can all be settled amicably. I don't think there is any reason why they shouldn't be. We both are mutual beneficiaries, for example of the automobile agreement. Both Canada and the United States have benefited. This is... then if we approach it from this basis I don't think we'll have difficulty in reaching settlement. On resources, there aren't any differences. The Americans have certain objectives and so have we and I believe that we can probably settle our differences to be mutually beneficial. After all, in any trade negotiation it is only successful if both sides benefit....

*Canada Weekly*, which replaces the *Canadian Weekly Bulletin*, is published by the Information Division, Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, K1A 0G2. An index will appear quarterly.

Material may be freely reprinted, for the use of which credit would be appreciated; photo sources, if not shown, will be provided on request.