

The other mountain is called "Westmount" and it belongs to the English. The English Canadians who live in Westmount are rich. The houses are late nineteenth century family houses with large gardens, big rooms, well equipped kitchens, children, dogs, several cars and at least one maid. The grand old French Canadian families live between Westmount and The Mountain. The more recent immigrants live around them in village-like clusters — miniature replicas of Italy, China, Greece and Poland. The young French Canadians have moved down to *Vieux Montréal*. *Vieux Montréal* is the oldest part of the city, built by the French when they originally settled there, and it is down by the river, by the port. It looks very like a port in the north of France.

Pale grey stone

The streets are narrow and cobbled, the houses built of large blocks of pale grey stone which keep out the cold in the winter and the heat during the summer, and the doors are made of thick, well-seasoned wood. *Vieux Montréal* is riddled with churches and chapels, from Le Cathédral to Notre Dame, Le Seminaire de St. Suplice, La Chapelle Notre Dame de Sonsecours, and they all echo on varying scales the churches and chapels to be found in France. There is the Château de Ramezay, a small pale grey, turreted but unpretentious building which used to be the house of the Governor in Montreal; it is now a small museum of French Canadian furniture, spinning wheels, cradles and shoes. Nowadays, apart from the docks, a few remaining old-fashioned lawyers, the odd seed merchant, the old grocers in their corner shops, *Vieux*

Montréal belongs to the young French Canadians.

The first winter I spent in Montreal I lived in *Vieux Montréal* and spent my time mainly with the young French Canadians who lived there too. It was a good time to arrive, just before Christmas. The French Canadians love Christmas, but (like the French in France) they enjoy even more the New Year. It was exciting, quite new, quite different, from any other Christmas I had spent before.

The young French Canadians are an exciting people. A re-emerging people, still slightly stunned by their renaissance which took place in 1967, the year of Expo. Before Expo, French Canada had been a forgotten backwater. Now it is in the process of becoming a very fast-moving cultural revolution.

Like all re-emerging peoples, the young French Canadians are highly politically conscious. They long for 'Québec Libre,' for a small, separate French Canada of their own. Like the Joul they speak, they are of mixed origins. A combination of French, of English, of American, they still retain their own intrinsic qualities. They despise the Americans, sneer at the English, laugh at the Queen and have uneasy relations with the English Canadians. They are proud of themselves and uncertain of themselves. They are mixed-breds who do not quite know if they wish that they were thoroughbreds. But when you think of overbred lapdogs, inbred Egyptian kings or Russian Tzars, a mongrel has its points. After all, a lurcher is more intelligent than a greyhound, can catch its own rabbits and is a much stronger animal, even though it may not run so swiftly after an electric hare.

I was very glad that I already spoke French, and it didn't take long to pick up a few phrases of Joul.

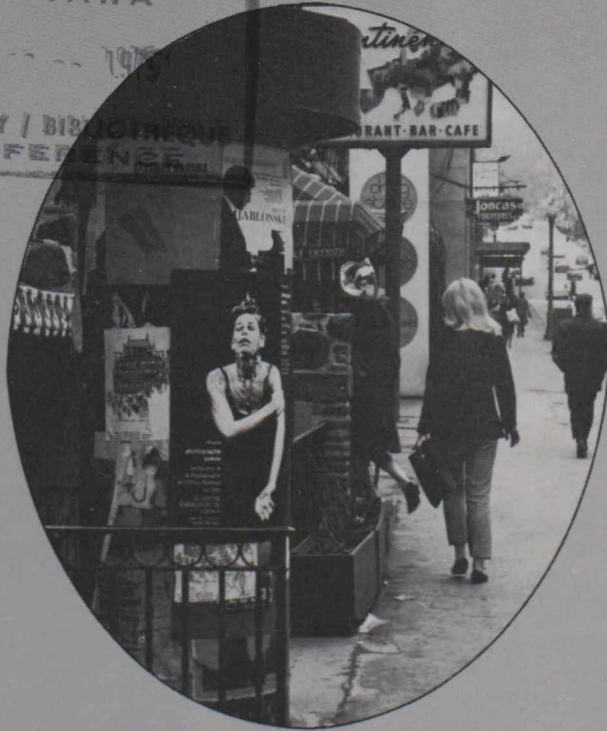
A friend and I had been lent the apartment of Robert Charlebois, the French Canadian pop star. Inside it was very pretty, warm and comfortable, with dried flowers, wooden spoons, a large stone fireplace stacked with maple logs (which we seldom burned because of the central heating), and Indian artcrafts. It was in the Rue St. Claud, a steep street of low stone houses just round the corner from the Hotel Nelson in the Place Jacques Cartier. The Hotel Nelson is the headquarters of the young French Canadians and most of our friends, who were musicians, writers and painters, lived in it rather in the style of Rip Van Winkle hippies.

Christmas itself in *Vieux Montréal* is rather quiet. Up in Westmount, Christmas is a big day for the English Canadians. But down in *Vieux Montréal*, we just had a small party and some wine to drink and because, as everybody knows, Christmas isn't Christmas without them, we had presents. And we had Cauchemar.

*"Envoyé Alban, un aut' p'tit shot de
whiskey blanc,
"Encore un aut' au plus sacrant,
"Si t'étais moi t'en f'rais autant,
"Toi t'es o.k., un homme santé,
"Moi chu racqué, mal amanché,
"Sais-tu pourquoi, ben moi je l'sais.
"T'as pas d'belle-mère pis moi j'en ai.
"Cauchemar! Mauvais sort!
"C'est pour ca qu'aster je bois du fort,
"Cauchemar!"*



Among the immigrant groups in Montreal are the Chinese.



Places of entertainment are sprinkled across the city.