

[*The New Statesman*]  
THE TREASURE BOX

BY ROBERT GRAVES

ANN in chill moonlight unlocks  
Her polished, brass-bound treasure box,  
Draws a soft breath, prepares to spread  
The toys around her on the bed.  
She dips for luck, by luck pulls out  
A silver pig with ring in snout,  
The kind that Christmas puddings yield;  
Next comes a painted nursery shield—  
Boy-carved; and then two yellow gloves,  
A Limerick wonder that Ann loves,  
Leather so thin and sewn so well  
The pair fold in one walnut-shell.  
Here's patchwork that her sister made  
With antique silk and flower brocade,  
Small faded scraps in memory rich,  
Joined each to each with feather-stitch;  
Here's cherry and forget-me-not  
Ribbon bunched in a great knot;  
A satin purse with pansies on it,  
A Tudor prince's christening bonnet;  
Old Mechlin lace minutely knit,  
Some woman's eyes went blind by it;  
And Spanish broideries that pinch  
Three blossomed rose-trees to the inch;  
Here are Ann's brooches, simple pins,  
A Comet brooch, two Harlequins,  
A Posy; here's a great resplendent  
Dove-in-bush Italian pendant;  
A Chelsea gift-bird; a toy whistle;  
A halfpenny stamped with the Scots thistle;  
A Breguet watch; a coral string;  
Her mother's thin-worn wedding ring;  
A straw box filled with hard smooth sweets;  
A book, *The Poems of John Keats*;  
A chessman; a pink paper rose;  
A diary dwindling to its close  
Nine months ago; a worsted ball;  
A patch-box; a stray match — that's all.  
All? no! for slowly Ann unties  
The packet where her heartache lies.  
Watch her lids move, she slants a letter  
Up toward the moon to read it better  
(The moon may master what she can).  
R stands for Richard, A for Ann,  
And L for — what? But the moon blinks  
And softly from the window shrinks.

[L'Humanité]

## THE CHILD AND THE TOY

BY FREDÈRIC BOUTET

THE gift which Pierre's godfather sent to him every year arrived as usual between Christmas and the New Year.

It was an immense box, quite wonderfully wrapped up, and bearing the name and address of a famous toy shop. It was addressed to Pierre personally, but the child, though wild with curiosity, knew that it would be useless to ask that it be given to him at once. He must resign himself to wait until his father returned from his office, and was ready to undertake the solemn rite of opening the package.

At six o'clock, his father, a methodical and somewhat cross-grained government clerk, arrived. When he had washed his hands, kicked off his shoes, and put on slippers, he put the great box on the dining room table and calmly began to undo the knots of the cord.

The gift was an aeroplane, a magnificent toy, with large wings, a compressed air motor, and aluminum body. An enclosed note explained the method of making it fly. There was an impressive silence. Pierre stood with his mouth open, drunk with joy.

'It must have cost at least one hundred francs,' said the father.

'It is crazy to spend so much on a *gamin*,' said Pierre's elder sister enviously.

'I have never seen anything so princely,' said Pierre's mother, a large, active woman. She turned to her husband and added, 'You must take care, Leon, when you are tying the package

together again. It will have a magnificent effect.'

Pierre trembled as this enigmatic phrase drew him from his dream of joy. He lifted an anxious little face. His mother put on a grave, easy, and well-meaning air.

'My little Pierre,' said she, 'you are aware of the sacrifices which we are making to bring you up. Now you can make a sacrifice for us. Your father, who has great capacities, occupies a situation quite unworthy of him. M. Paytre, his chief, may try to advance him. Moreover, he invites us to his receptions. We owe him a return. He has a son of your age, Edmond, whom you have seen at the Tuileries. Well, we are going to offer him the present which your godfather has sent. And, after all is said and done, what could you do with it? One cannot fly a toy aeroplane in a fifth-floor apartment, and I never have time to take you out. Your godfather will know nothing about it because he comes to Paris only in the springtime; when he arrives, he will have forgotten all about it. I am sure, my little son, that you are happy to do this for us.'

She paused, waiting for an answer, but if Pierre was happy, he did not say so. His little face grew tense, and suddenly he burst into convulsive sobs.

His father grew angry. 'Ah, now! No scenes! That is all there is to it. Your mother is very good, too good, to explain it to you.'

'He is old enough to understand,' said the mother. 'He must be taught