THE THREE HILLS AND OTHER POEMS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649758104

The three hills and other poems by Sir John Collings Squire

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SIR JOHN COLLINGS SQUIRE

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£18271 2/-

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AND OTHER POEMS & BY
J. C. SQUIRE & & & &

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LONDON: HOWARD LATIMER LTD.
GREAT QUEEN STREET, KINGSWAY
MCMXIII

TO FRANCIS BURROWS

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Many of the above poems have appeared in the "British Review," the "Eye-Witness," the "New Witness," the "Oxford and Cambridge Review," the "New Statesman," and the "New Age," to the Editors of which thanks are due for permission to reprint. Three of the short poems and most of the translations are extracted from an earlier volume.

ANTINOMIES ON A RAILWAY STATION

A S I stand waiting in the rain For the foggy hoot of the London train, Gazing at silent wall and lamp And post and rail and platform damp, What is this power that comes to my sight That I see a night without the night, That I see them clear, yet look them through, The silvery things and the darkly blue, That the solid wall seems soft as death, A wavering and unanchored wraith, And rails that shine and stones that stream Unsubstantial as a dream? What sudden door has opened so, What hand has passed, that I should know This moving vision not of trance That melts the globe of circumstance, This sight that marks not least or most And makes a stone a passing ghost?

r

On a Railway Station

Is it that a year ago I stood upon this self-same spot; Is it that since a year ago The place and I have altered not; Is it that I half forgot, A year ago, and all despised For a space the things that I had prized : The race of life, the glittering show? Is it that now a year has passed Of vain pursuit of glittering things, Of fruitless searching, shouting, running, And greedy lies and candour cunning, Here as I stand the year above Sudden the heats and the strivings fail And fall away, a fluctuant veil, And the fixed familiar stones restore The old appearance-buried core, The moveless and essential me, The eternal personality Alone enduring first and last?

No, this I have known in other ways, In other places, other days.

On a Railway Station

Not only here, on this one peak, Do fixity and beauty speak Of the delusiveness of change, Of the transparency of form, The bootless stress of minds that range, The awful calm behind the storm. In many places, many days, The invaded soul receives the rays Of countries she was nurtured in, Speaks in her silent language strange To that beyond which is her kin. Even in peopled streets at times A metaphysic arm is thrust Through the partitioning fabric thin, And tears away the darkening pall Cast by the bright phenomenal, And clears the obscurèd spirit's mirror From shadows of deceptive error, And shows the bells and all their ringing,

And all the crowds and all their singing, Carillons that are nothing's chimes And dust that is not even dust. . . .