POEMS: FIRST SERIES

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Poems: first series by Sir John Collings Squire

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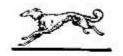
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SIR JOHN COLLINGS SQUIRE

POEMS: FIRST SERIES



POEMS FIRST SERIES BY J. C. SQUIRE



ALFRED · A · KNOPF NEW YORK MCMXIX

DEDICATION

Lord, I have seen at harvest festival In a white lamp-lit fishing-village church, How the poor folk, lacking fine decorations, Offer the first-fruits of their various toils: Not only fruit and blossom of the fields. Ripe corn and poppies, scabious, marguerites, Melons and marrows, carrots and potatoes, And pale round turnips and sweet cottage flowers, But gifts of other produce, heaped brown nets, Fine pollack, silver fish with umber backs, And handsome green-dark-blue-striped mackerel, And uglier, hornier creatures from the sea, Lobsters long-clawed and eyed, and smooth flat crabs. Ranged with the flowers upon the window-niches, To lie in that symbolic contiguity While lusty hymns of gratitude ascend.

So I
Here offer all I have found;
A few bright stainless flowers
And richer, earthlier blooms, and homely grain,
And roots that grew distorted in the dark,
And shapes of livid hue and sprawling form
Dragged from the deepest waters I have searched.
Most diverse gifts, yet all alike in this:
They are all the natural products of my mind
And heart and senses;
And all with labour grown, or plucked, or caught,



PREFACE

The title of this book was chosen for this reason. Had the volume been called —— and Other Poems it might have given a false impression that its contents were entirely new. Had it been called Collected Poems the equally false impression might have been given that there was something of finality about it. The title selected seemed best to convey both the fact that it was a collection and that, under Providence other (and, let us hope superior) collections will follow it.

The book contains all that I do not wish to destroy of the contents of four volumes of verse. A number of small corrections have been made. There are added, also, a few recent poems not previously published. The earliest of the poems now printed is dated 1905, in which year I was twenty-one. Some of the subsequent years, such as 1914 and 1915, contributed nothing to this book: the greater number of the poems were written in 1911–1912 and 1916–1917.

Some of the poems were not written as I should now write them; and many of them reflect transient, though mostly recurrent, moods which I do not necessarily think worthy of esteem.

J. C. S.

March, 1918.



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