

COLLECTED PARODIES

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Collected parodies by J. C. Squire

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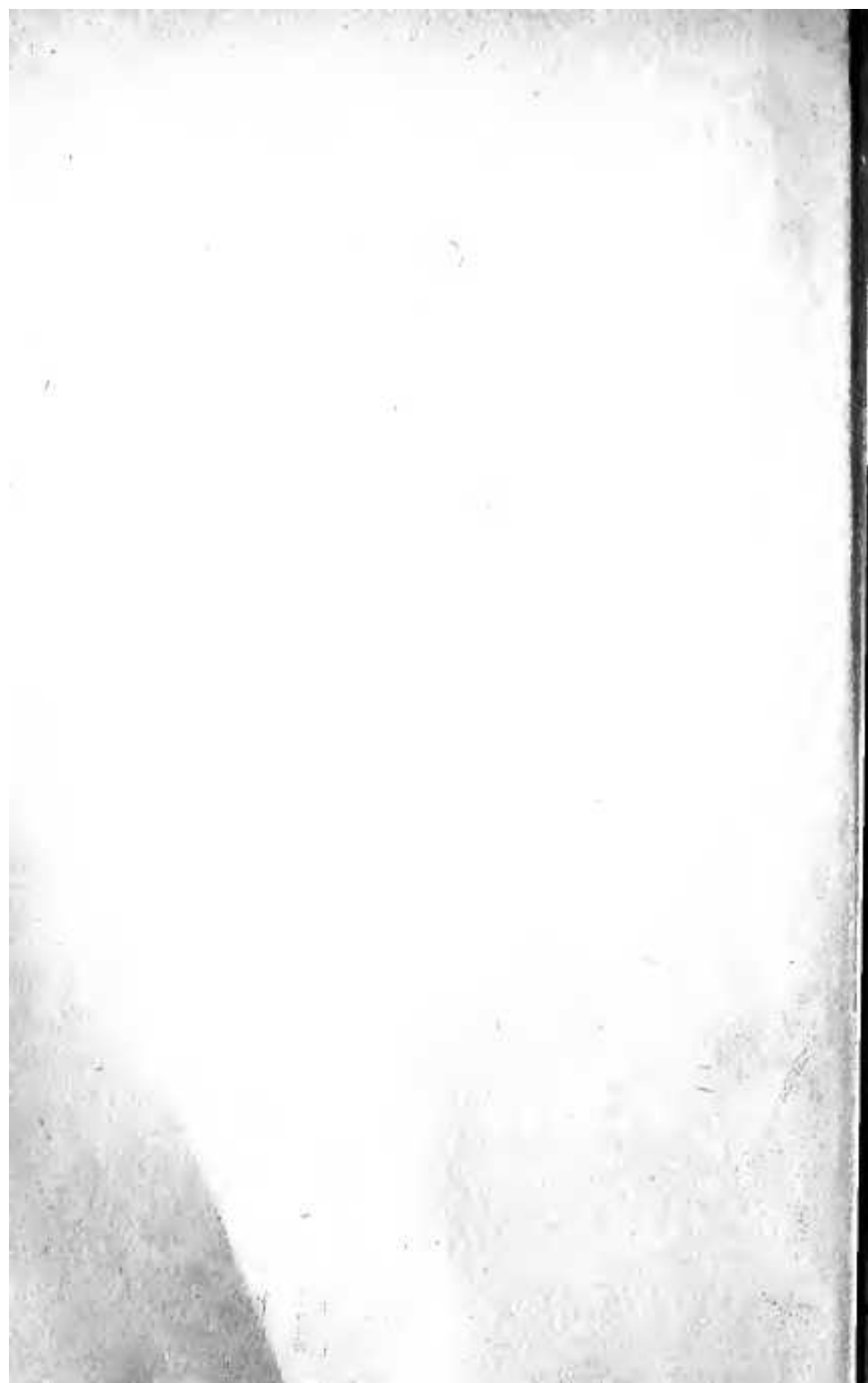
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J. C. SQUIRE

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PREFACE

THIS collection includes almost the whole of three previous books: "Imaginary Speeches," "Steps to Parnassus" and "Tricks of the Trade," which contain all the parodies I have ever published or, I imagine, ever shall publish. For permission to reprint from the first two I am indebted to Messrs. Allen and Unwin. Some of the parodies have been re-grouped; a few have been omitted. I was not quite sure what to do about the "Imaginary Speeches" in which I endeavoured to exhibit the mannerisms of mind and language of a number of politicians who were prominent in 1909, when they were written. The speeches dealt with a hypothetical future which will not now exist. They mentioned persons no longer conspicuous. They treated problems which have been either shelved or partially solved: one, for instance, visualized women's suffrage coming under conditions very different from those which saw its achievement. I have, therefore, compromised by reprinting three only of them in the hope that, as some readers, when they first appeared, found them interesting as topical criticism, so others may now find them interesting as recalling "the world before the war."—J.C.S.

I

REPERTORY DRAMA

M. MAURICE MAETERLINCK

PELISSIER AND MARIANE

[SCENE. *A glade in an ancient forest. The trees have vast trunks. Over and through them (L.) one can dimly see the crown of a ruined tower. Its stones are massive, and it has been inhabited, but is so no longer. It is evening. PELISSIER and MARIANE stand by the bole of a great tree, melancholy and silent, gazing at the last light. He is of robust build, and she clings to him for support. Both are pale with that mysterious pallor that lives in moonbeams when a cloud half covers the surface of the moon.*

MARIANE. Pélissier ! [*A wind shakes the branches and the leaves rustle.*] Pélissier ! . . . It is a little wind ! . . . Did you not hear it, Pélissier ?

PELISSIER. Yes, Mariane, it is a little wind, a child wind. Perhaps it has lost its way in the world. We, have we lost our way, Mariane ?

MARIANE. Pélissier ! . . .

PELISSIER. Yes, I think we have lost our way. . . . I dreamt last night that I was walking, walking amid the meshes of an enormous net of bushes and plants which sucked and throttled me so that I could hardly breathe. . . . And you, you were there too, Mariane. I could hear you somewhere making little cries, the cries I have often heard you make when you have found some wounded thing : some bird, perhaps, that the cruel cat has been tormenting. . . .