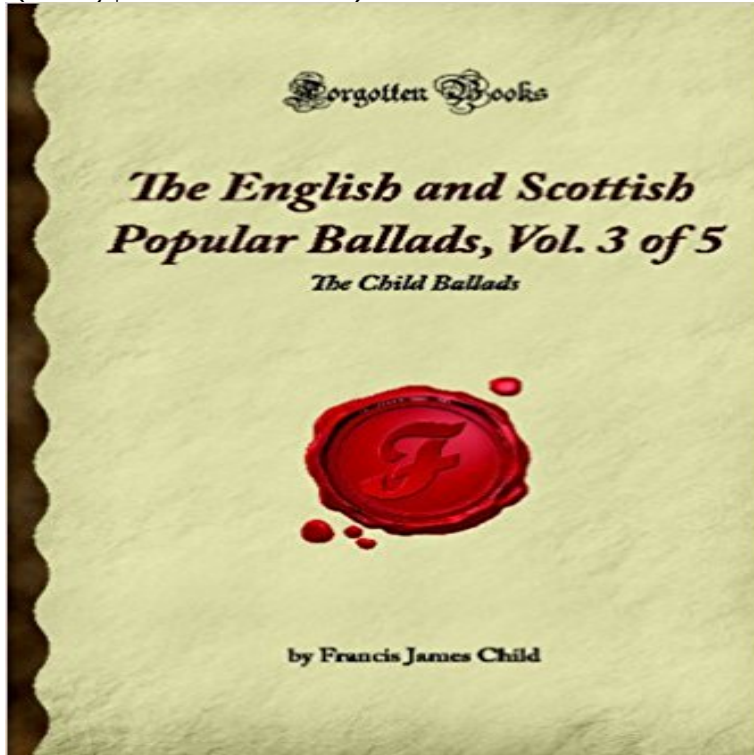


The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, Vol. 3 of 5: The Child Ballads (Forgotten Books)



Book Description: The Child Ballads are a collection of 305 ballads from England and Scotland, and their American variants, collected by Francis James Child in the late 19th century. The collection was published as *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* between 1882 and 1898 by Houghton Mifflin in 10 Volumes. The ballads vary in age; for instance, a version of *A Gest of Robyn Hode* was printed in the late 15th or early 16th century, and the manuscript of *Judas* dates to the 13th century. The majority of the ballads, however, date to the 17th and 18th century; although some probably have very ancient influences, only a handful can be definitively traced to before 1600. Moreover, few of the tunes collected are as old as the words. While many of them had been individually printed, e.g. as broadsides, Child's collection was far more comprehensive than any previous collection of ballads in English. (However, there were comprehensive ballad collections in other languages, like the Danish collection *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, which Child referred to in his comments.) One Child number may cover several ballads, which Child considered variants of the same story, although they may differ in many ways (as in *James Hatley*). Conversely, ballads classified separately may contain turns of phrase, and even entire verses, that are identical. The Child Ballads deal with subjects typical to many ballads: romance, supernatural experiences, historical events, morality, riddles, murder, and folk heroes. On one extreme, some recount identifiable historical people, in known events. On the other, some differ from fairy tales solely by their being songs and in verse; some have been recast in prose form as fairy tales. A large part of the collections is about Robin Hood; some are about King Arthur. A few of the ballads are rather bawdy. (Quote from wikipedia.org)

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