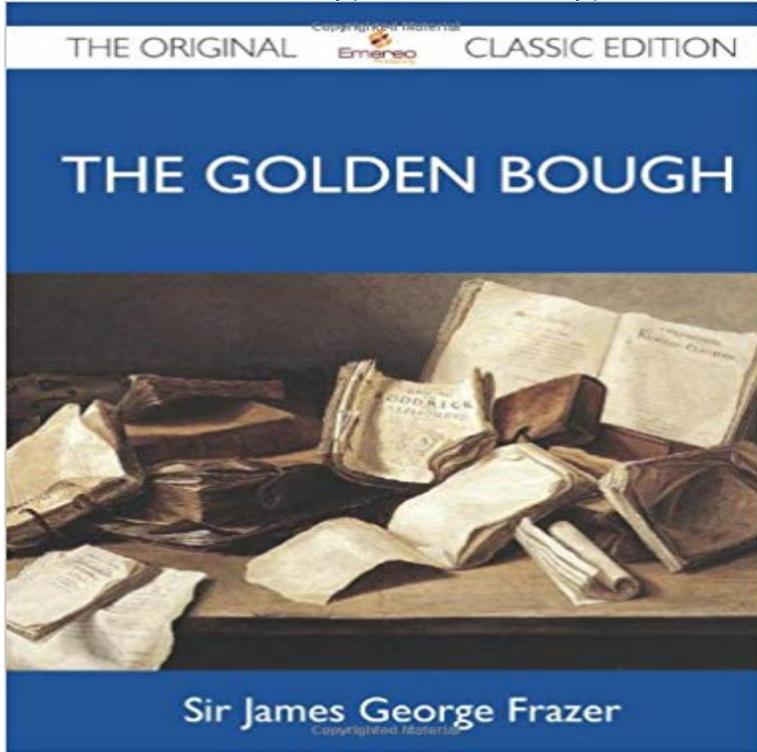


The Golden Bough - The Original Classic Edition



Frazer's classic *The Golden Bough* may justifiably be called the foundation that modern anthropology is based on. While it has been discredited in some areas since its 1st publication, it has stood the test of time remarkably well. It's still the best book known of to explain the origins of magical and religious thought to a new student of comparative religions. Especially suggest it to anyone interested in mythology, supernatural magic or religion, especially any of the modern neo-pagan religions. More than one critic has said that it should be required reading for everyone. Originally, Frazer sought to explain the strange custom at an Italian sacred grove near the city of Aricia. He wanted to know why it was custom there for a priest of Diana to continually guard a sacred tree with his life. Why was it required that this pagan priest murder anyone who dares to break a branch from the tree and why were so many willing to risk their lives to do so? What power did this broken branch have that made it a symbol of the priest's own coming death? Why could the priest only be relieved of his position by being ritually murdered and who in their right mind would strive to take his place? What Frazer discovered in his search for answers went well beyond what he expected to find. He very quickly found himself surrounded by ancient pagan beliefs and magic rituals that were as old as mankind and just as widespread. He slowly reveals to us, by way of hundreds of examples, that ancient or primitive man was bound up in a never-ending web of taboos and restrictions that regulated his existence here on earth. Every move, spoken word or even thought could swing the powers of the divine for or against pagan man.

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