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A Book of British Ballads (Classic Reprint)

By R. Brimley Johnson

Forgotten Books. Paperback. Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. 370 pages. Dimensions: 9.0in. x 6.0in. x 0.8in. Excerpt from A Book of British Ballads. The word ballad is admittedly of very wide significance. Meaning originally a song intended as the accompaniment to a dance, it was afterwards applied to a light simple song of any kind with a leaning towards the sentimental or romantic; and, in its present use, is defined by Dr. Murray as a simple spirited poem in short stanzas, in which some popular story is graphically told. Passing over the obsolete sense of a popular song specially celebrating or scurrilously attacking some person or institution, we may note that Dr. Johnson calls a ballad a song, and quotes a statement from Watts that it once signified a solemn and sacred song as well as a trivial, when Solomons Song was called the The Ballad of Ballads, but now it is applied to nothing but trifling verse. Ballad-collectors, however, have never strictly regarded any one of these definitions, and to me their catholicity seems worthy of imitation. I have demanded no more of a ballad than that it should be a simple spirited narrative; and, though excluding...


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