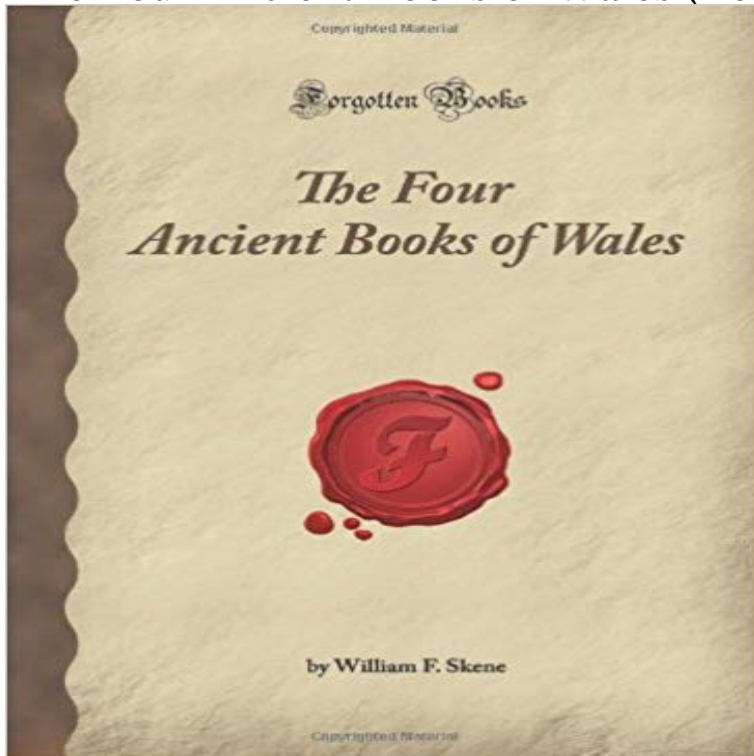


The Four Ancient Books of Wales (Forgotten Books)



Book Description: This is William Skenes anthology of dark-age Welsh Bardic poetry. Often cited, but difficult to obtain, this book contains every remaining piece of Bardic poetry known. The poems are translated from four manuscripts: the Black Book of Caermarthen, the Red Book of Hergest (which is also the source of the Mabinogion), the Book of Taliessin and the Book of Aneurin, all of which date from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries C.E. The poems themselves date from much earlier, probably from the sixth century by internal evidence. This corpus is one of the treasures of world literature. It is also the only true source material for the study of Bardic lore, which reputedly preserved the esoteric (and long-lost) beliefs of the Druids. Largely written to satisfy wealthy patrons, much of the subject matter is related to mead-inspired battles, particularly the renowned Gododin cycle. However, the poetry rises above the gory combat and toadying to achieve an artistic height that would not be reached for many centuries. Some of the later works, which use Christian themes as a jumping-off point, have an almost haiku-like quality. The poems are infused throughout with mystic clarity, strange flashes of wisdom, and insight into humanity and nature. (Quote from sacred-texts.com)

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