

- 1904 Undertakes the study of Hebrew to add to his list of foreign languages (Greek, Latin, French, German, Dutch, Italian, and Spanish).
- 1910 Publishes Totemism and Exogamy in four volumes, which in turn inspires Freud's Totem and Taboo (1913).
- 1911-15 Third edition of The Golden Bough in twelve volumes.
- 1914 Accepts knightship largely to gratify his wife who revelled in being called Lady Frazer.
- 1918 Publishes Folk-Lore in The Old Testament.
- 1931 Goes blind presumably from ruptured blood vessels in his eyes. Beginning of slow decline.
- 1941 Dies at the age of 85. His wife dies several hours after he does.

#### Family Background and Temperament

Like his father, James was 5'3" tall, was abstemious and enjoyed good health and long life. His parents were both religious; he describes his father as a "staunch Presbyterian and free churchman." James himself came to be opposed to religion in general and Christianity in particular, but it does not appear that he had any direct religious conflict with his parents during his youth. He stayed connected with his family his whole life.

The family was middle class. His father, an outgoing man, was a druggist and was active in politics. James was from an early age shy and bookish. He read voluminously starting with the books on his father's shelf which included Sir Walter Scott, John Calvin, Don Quixote, and the Arabian Nights. By the age of 22, James had an uncommonly wide command of the Greek and Latin classics in the original. He loved literature and his favorite poets were Heine and William Cowpers.

James was noted for his broad and deep learning, his remarkable powers of concentration, and a boundless energy that kept him working over thirteen hours a day (7 days a week, 50 weeks a year) throughout most of his long life. Despite his great talents, he generally lacked self-confidence. He was very much of a rationalist and had trouble showing his emotions.

#### The Golden Bough

The book is essentially a speculative historical reconstruction of a distant period in human mental evolution. The first edition is an examination of primitive Aryan religion and is expanded to worldwide scope in later editions.

Frazer hoped to reach both the expert audience and the general reader. He received very favorable reviews from both quarters. The