



BRITISH GOBLINS

WIRT SIKES

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BRITISH GOBLINS
WELSH FOLK-LORE, FAIRY MYTHOLOGY,
LEGENDS AND TRADITIONS

BY
WIRT SIKES

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them; and then these spirits of darkness became more bold and intruding; and the people, as I said before, in their great ignorance seeing them like a company of children in dry clean places, dancing and having music among them, thought them to be some happy beings, . . . and made them welcome in their houses. . . The Welsh entered into familiarity with the fairies in the time of Henry IV., and the evil then increased; the severe laws of that prince enjoining, among other things, that they were not to bring up their children to learning, etc., by which a total darkness came upon them; which cruel laws were occasioned by the rebellion of Owen Glandwr, and the Welsh which joined with him; foolishly thinking to shake off the Saxon yoke before they had repented of their sins.'

Whatever their locally accepted causes of being may be, it is beyond any question that in the fairy folk-lore of Wales, as of other lands, are to be found the *debris* of ancient mythology--scintillant fragments of those magic constellations which glow in the darkness of primeval time, grand and majestic as the vast Unknown out of which they were evolved by barbaric fancy. Through the aid of modern scientific research, 'those ages which the myths of centuries have peopled with heroic shadows'⁶¹ are brought nearer to us, and the humble Welsh Tylwyth Teg may reach back and shake hands with the Olympian gods.

⁶¹ Marquis of Bute, address before the Royal Archaeological Institute, Cardiff meeting.