

SLANDER: OR, THE WITCH OF WOKEY °.

**I**N aunciente days tradition shows,  
 A sorry wicked elf arose,  
 The witch of Wokey hight p,  
 Oft have I heard the fearful tale,  
 From Sue and Roger of the vale,  
 Told out in winter night.

Deep in the dreary dismal cell  
 Which seem'd, and was y-cleped hell,  
 This blue-eye'd hag was sty'd;  
 Nine wicked elves have legends sayne  
 By night she chose her guardian train,  
 All kennell'd close her side.

° Wokey-hole is a noted cavern in Somersetshire, which has given birth to as many wild fanciful stories as the Sybils cave in Italy. Through a very narrow entrance, it opens into a large vault, the roof whereof, either on account of its height, or the thickness of the gloom, cannot be discovered by the light of torches. It goes winding a great way underground, is crost by a stream of very cold water, and is all horrid with broken pieces of rock: many of these are evident petrifications; which on account of their singular forms, have given rise to the fables alluded to in this poem.

¶ A petrification in the cavern of Wokey so called.

Here

Here screeching owls oft made their nest,  
While wolves its craggy sides posselt,  
Night howling through the rocks;  
No wholesome herb cou'd here be found,  
She blasted every plant around,  
And blister'd o'er the flocks.

Her haggard face so foul to see,  
Her mouth unmeet a mouth to be,  
With eyne of deadly leer;  
She nought devis'd but neighbours ill,  
On all she wreak'd her wayward will,  
And marr'd all goodly cheer.

All in her prime, have poets sung,  
No gaudy youth, gallante and younge  
Ere blest her longing arms;  
Hence rose her fell despight to vex,  
And blast the youth of either sex,  
By dint of hellish charms.

From Glaston came a lerned wight,  
Full bent to marr her fell despight,  
And well he did I ween;  
Save hers, sich mischief ne'er was knowne,  
And since his mickle lerninge showne,  
Sich mischief ne'er has beene.

He

He chauntede out his godlie booke,  
He crofs'd the water, bleste the brooke,  
Then—Pater-noster done,  
The gaffly hag he fprinkled o'er,  
When lo! where stood the hag before,  
Now stood a gaffly stone.

Full well 'tis knowne adown the vale,  
Tho' strange may seem the dismal tale  
Eke wondrous may appear;  
I'm bold to fay, there's never one  
That has not seen the witch in stone,  
With all her household gear.

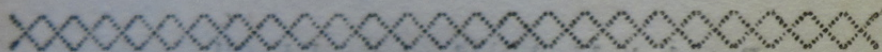
But tho' this lernede clerke did well,  
With grieved heart, alas I tell,  
She left this curse behind ;  
“ My sex shall be forsaken quite,”  
“ Tho' sense and beauty both unite,”  
“ Nor find a man that's kinde.”

Now lo e'en as this fiend did fay,  
The sex have found it to this day,  
That men are wondrous scante ;  
Here's beauty, wit, and sense combin'd,  
With all that's good, and virtuous join'd,  
Yet scarce there's one gallante.

Shall

Shall such fair nymphs thus daily moan?  
They might I trow as well be stone,  
As thus forsaken dwell;  
Since Glaston now can boast no clerks  
From Oxenford come down, ye sparks,  
And help revoke the spell.

Yet stay—nor thus despond, ye fair,  
Virtue's the gods peculiar care,  
Then mark their kindly voice;  
“Your sex shall soon be blest again,”  
“We only wait to find such men”  
“As best deserve such choice.”



## THE IGNORANCE OF MAN.

BY JAMES MERRICK, M. A.

**B**EHOLD yon new-born infant, griev'd  
With hunger, thirst, and pain;  
That asks to have the wants reliev'd,  
It knows not to explain.

Aloud the speechless suppliant cries,  
And utters, as it can,  
The woes that in its bosom rise,  
And speak its nature Man.