

**POEMS
AND BALLADS**

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Poems and Ballads by Pryce Gwynne

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PRYCE GWYNNE

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AND BALLADS**

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BY
PRYCE GWYNNE.

"'Whate'er is lovely is divine.'"—*Burton.*



London
T. FISHER UNWIN

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THE TERRORS OF NIGHT.

WH! we laugh by day at the fears by night,
When the soul is gay and the skies are
bright,

Unheeding the sound of the noontide chime,
Or the rustling wings of the vampire Time;
For only by night, in the stillness drear,
Their fluttering sounds in the wakeful ear,
Like the conchèd shell's monotonous moan,
Or the drowsy hum of the beetle's tone.
Though this in the golden noon appears
To be but the "musick of the spheres,"
But at eve—ah! at eve—when the sun sinks down,
And the mystical gloaming buries the town,

Where the quaint old gables midway meet,
And totter and nod o'er the bouldered street ;
Ah ! why do we peer in the deepening gloom
That lurks in the nooks of the lonely room,
As the glare of the firelight faints and falls,
And the shadows steal o'er the wainscot walls,
Like thoughts o'er the brain, and lines o'er the
brow,

When we feel they are there though we know not
how.

Oh, what are these terrors that night conceals,
Which the mind repels, which the spirit feels—
These vague, evolving things which seem
The beings that haunt a dreadful dream ?
Say what are they, and the mystic notes
That come from the shadows' shapeless throats,
As if viewless garments were trailing o'er
The precincts of the days of yore,
Though we know not if there be really a sound,
Save the echo of heart a thought has found.
But we laugh no more, but while we muse,
We say that it is but the falling dews

As they drip from the trees so sad and still ;
Or the song of the distant purling rill,
As it wanders among the dewy bells
That nod in the dreamy woodland dells.
But when from her cloudy couch the moon
Uprising steals, in her silvery shoon,
Far over the shadowy wildwood bowers,
And over the ruins' crumbling towers,
And the creeping winds awake and pass
From their haunts in the tangled river grass
And the dreary fens and the dark morass ;
Oh then their uneasy, whispering moans
Evoke from our spirits responsive tones,
While the moonlit arras sways and sways
Till the armed figures their bucklers raise,
And the eyes of the pictures draw like fate,
And follow the orbs they fascinate,
Or direct their gaze towards a ghastly bust
That gloats in a niche in a shroud of dust,
With a mocking smile in its face and eyes,
As the black-winged clouds flit over the skies,
And the expiring taper flickers and flares,