

**MISCELLANIES IN
PROSE AND VERSE**

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Miscellanies in Prose and Verse by Ben. Hardacre

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BEN. HARDACRE

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BY

BEN. HARDACRE.

Well!—be the graceless lineaments confest!
I do enjoy this bounteous beauteous earth;
And dote upon a jest
"Within the limits of becoming mirth."

—Hood.

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & CO.

BRADFORD: T. BREAR AND W. MORGAN.

1874.

TO HIS VERY GENEROUS FRIEND,

MR. RICHARD HOLT,

WHO HAS A KEEN RELISH FOR HUMOUR AND
IS HIMSELF A HUMORIST, AND WHO HAS
WITHAL A NICE APPRECIATION OF
POETIC SENTIMENT,

THIS VOLUME

IS WITH SINCERE PLEASURE INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.



P R E F A C E .

GENTLE reader (readers are always gentle), should you read this preface before reading the whole or a part of the contents of this book, it may give you some idea what you may expect. I, the writer, have principally touched upon scenes, objects, and subjects belonging this sublunary world, holding the conservative notion that it is best for a man to keep within his own sphere. I have ventured in *one* lofty flight to touch on those luminaries, the sun, moon, and stars, but not so as to affect their evolutionary motions, or throw any new light on them. The deepest subject that I have tried to fathom is coal, a subject that might give much light if properly handled, though some consider it a miner question that may be easily settled. As I have not been a student in any department of science or learning, I do not presume to teach, therefore there will be found in this volume little that is instructive. To some extent I have been an observer of humanity, and I

have discovered that one of its distinguishing characteristics, is the power to cachinnate when those organs called risibilities—which do not exist in the ass and other serious animals—are tickled, and I find most people like to have their risibilities tickled. I hope my readers of this class will not be disappointed with my amateur efforts, but will find in the volume that which will tickle and amuse. There must of necessity be circumstances and occurrences in this life to force seriousness upon us, such as grinding poverty, and the severance of ties of affection and friendship. Levity would be out of place in the presence of want, affliction, and mourning, but I do not see why seriousness should be cultivated as though it were an attribute of goodness. There is a time to laugh, and there are persons so constituted, with such a keen and ready perception of the humorous and the ludicrous, that when any droll sight or saying suddenly present themselves to the eye and ear, for such persons to resist the impulse to laugh would be impossible. Such was the case with one of Bradford's worthies, the late Dr. Godwin. The following anecdote which I have heard, if true, illustrates and confirms what I have stated. It was stated that

the Dr. was preaching to a congregation, as it seems, a not very awakening sermon, inasmuch as a deep somnolency came over one of his hearers, whose head went back and whose mouth became receptive, as if desiring the fulfilment of the promise,—“Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it.” A power above, in the shape of a young urchin in the gallery, on looking over the front and seeing this apparently expectant feature directly underneath, unawed by the sanctity of the place, let down a small object by a thread, intended for the mouth of the sleeper. No sooner had the vigilant eye of the Dr. caught this piece of impish waggery than he suddenly became lost to sight, only that he was seen by occupants of the gallery making efforts with his handkerchief as if a terrible twinge of toothache had seized him, when in reality it was an effort to prevent exploding with laughter. It is this class of persons who may appreciate my small efforts to amuse. I lay no claim to any poetic faculty. I have never sat with pen in hand, looking up with an ether-piercing eye, in expectancy of a descent upon me of the divine afflatus. To put together a bit of jingling rhyme has oft been a pleasant bit of pastime. I only wish

that my liberal Bradford friends and others, whom I sincerely thank for their patronage, may have as much enjoyment in reading these trifles as I have had in writing them. I will here thank my friend Mr. James Wigglesworth, of Westgrove Street, for his kind aid in adding to my list of patrons.

B. HARDACRE.

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Horton Lane, Bradford.*