

HYMNS IN PROSE FOR CHILDREN

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649610167

Hymns in Prose for Children by Mrs. Barbauld

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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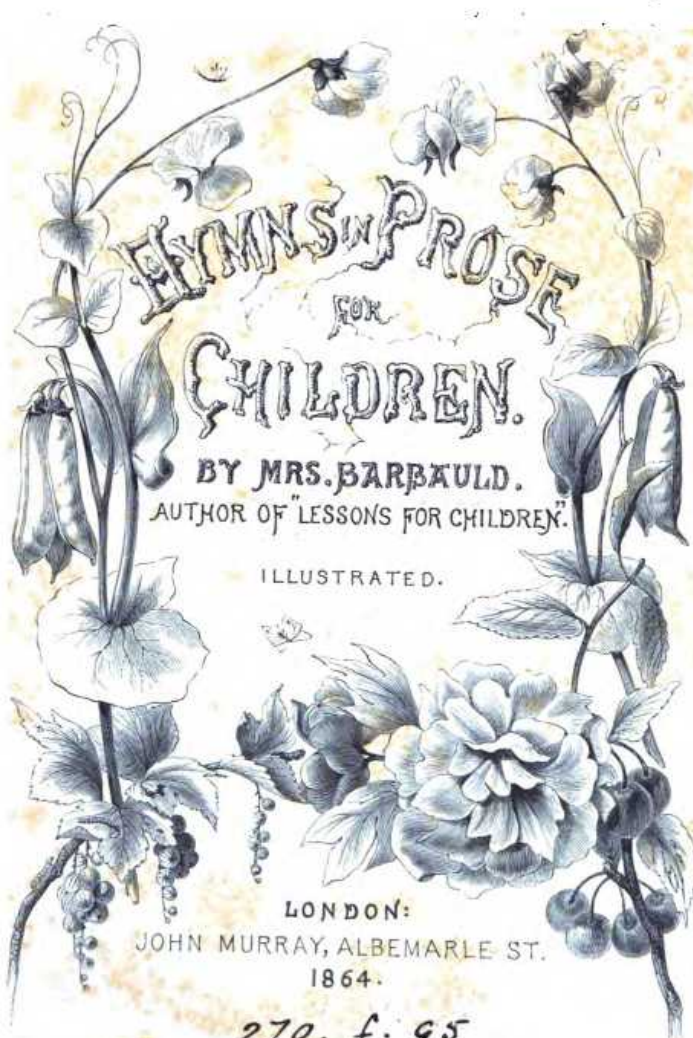
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MRS. BARBAULD

**HYMNS IN PROSE
FOR CHILDREN**



"HE MADE THE GREAT WHALE AND THE ELEPHANT."



HYMNS IN PROSE
FOR
CHILDREN.

BY MRS. BARBAULD.
AUTHOR OF "LESSONS FOR CHILDREN."

ILLUSTRATED.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE ST.
1864.

270. f. 95
~~250. 2. 12.~~

London:
Printed by William Clowes and Sons,
Stamford Street.



P R E F A C E.

AMONG the number of books composed for the use of children, though there are many, and some on a very rational plan, which unfold the system, and give a summary of the doctrines of religion, it would be difficult to find one calculated to assist them in the devotional part of it, except indeed Dr. Watts's Hymns for Children. These are in pretty general use; and the author is deservedly honoured for the condescension of his Muse, which was very able to take a loftier flight. But it may well be doubted whether poetry ought to be lowered to the capacities of children, or whether they should not rather be kept from reading verse till they are able to relish good verse; for the very essence of poetry is an elevation in thought and style above the common standard; and if it wants this character, it wants all that renders it valuable.

The author of these Hymns has therefore chosen to give them in prose. They are intended to be committed to memory, and recited. And it will probably be found that the measured prose in which such pieces

are generally written, is nearly as agreeable to the ear as a more regular rythmus. Many of these Hymns are composed in alternate parts, which will give them something of the spirit of social worship.

The peculiar design of this publication is to impress devotional feelings as early as possible on the infant mind ; fully convinced, as the Author is, that they cannot be impressed too soon, and that a child, to feel the full force of the idea of God, ought never to remember the time when he had no such idea—to impress them, by connecting religion with a variety of sensible objects, with all that he sees, all he hears, all that affects his young mind with wonder or delight ; and thus, by deep, strong, and permanent associations, to lay the best foundation for practical devotion in future life. For he who has early been accustomed to see the Creator in the visible appearances of all around him, to feel His continual presence, and lean upon His daily protection—though his religious ideas may be mixed with many improprieties, which his correcter reason will refine away—has made large advances towards that habitual piety, without which religion can scarcely regulate the conduct, and will never warm the heart.

A. L. B.

PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

IN offering this volume to the public, little need be said in addition to the original Preface, in which the Authoress fully explains the character and intention of the work; an effort singularly successful in raising the youthful mind to the praise of God, through the contemplation of His works.

To realise this conception more vividly than mere text can accomplish, has been the aim and intention throughout.

The varied and picturesque descriptions with which the continuous thread of argument is strung, render the task of illustration at once easy and suggestive.

Few works could be found which challenge the pencil and fancy of the artist in a greater degree; and it is hoped the present effort may be deemed worthy of the text.

The blending of the illustrations with the type will be found no unimportant feature; a unity being thereby obtained, which is alike pleasing and less fatiguing both to the mind and eye, a matter of some importance with the young.

LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1863.

