

**THE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL  
AND RETROSPECTIVE  
MISCELLANY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649469055

The Bibliographical and Retrospective Miscellany by Edward Richard Poole

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**EDWARD RICHARD POOLE**

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THE  
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL

AND

**Retrospective Miscellany,**

CONTAINING

NOTICES OF, AND EXTRACTS FROM, RARE, CURIOUS, AND USEFUL  
BOOKS, IN ALL LANGUAGES; ORIGINAL MATTER ILLUSTRATIVE  
OF THE HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND  
IRELAND; ABSTRACTS FROM VALUABLE MANUSCRIPTS;  
UNPUBLISHED AUTOGRAPH LETTERS OF EMINENT  
CHARACTERS; AND NOTICES OF BOOK SALES.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN WILSON,  
19, GREAT MAY'S BUILDINGS, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

1830.

25805. e. 5

THE FOLLOWING NOTICES OF THIS LITTLE WORK HAVE  
ALREADY APPEARED.

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" We are well pleased with the design of this work ; every attempt to disseminate knowledge deserves encouragement ; and as this is one of an unambitious character by virtue of its subject, while its execution is plain and simple enough, and entirely divested of arrogant pretension, it gives us pleasure to afford it our decided approbation."—*The Atlas*.

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" The appearance of this work must be highly gratifying to the literary world. Its plan is excellent."—*The Olive*.

" The Bibliographical Miscellany is a respectable follower of the pleasantest periodical, in its earlier numbers especially, that ever died a premature death—we mean the Retrospective Review."—*The Spectator*.

" The plan of this little work is excellent."—*The Globe*.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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To the devastating influence of war, which for nearly thirty years ravaged the territories of the continent, may be attributed the dispersion of the countless literary and pictorial collections, that had remained for centuries undisturbed in public institutions, or the repositories of private individuals. Upon the restoration of peace, the whole of continental Europe when compared with England, seemed as if dead to the pursuit of the Fine Arts, and Bibliography in particular; since, for the lapse of several years, scarcely any competition was manifested on the part of foreigners, to prevent Englishmen, from becoming possessed of the rarest objects of every description that were offered for sale. To an innate taste, and the predominating love of speculation therefore, we stand indebted for the incalculable stores that have found their way to our coast; for it is impossible to deny, that Great Britain has enriched herself, as regards objects of *virtu*, since the year 1814, in a ratio that sets all calculation at defiance. The numerous dispersions of important libraries that have taken place in this country during the same period, and which are of especial interest to the lovers of English

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literature, far exceed in extent and value those of any other country in Europe; and it has therefore been a subject of infinite regret that, for many years past, no regular account of them has been preserved, nor can a knowledge of the existence of many works of intrinsic merit and rarity be obtained, except through the medium of a sale catalogue, which is generally thrown aside after being used for the immediate purpose for which it was compiled. These facts being admitted, it seems almost paradoxical to observe, that with such inexhaustible sources before us, the study of Bibliography should have been so much neglected, as to draw down upon us the invidious and well merited sarcasms of foreigners; who, in respect to the subject adverted to, have, by their judicious and teeming labours, left us far behind them in the prolific field of Bibliographical research.

We are well aware that these remarks may prompt some fastidious and wealthy critics to enquire, whether the literary efforts of a Dibdin, are not sufficient to redeem the credit of our nation from the stigma alluded to. In reply we beg to observe, that without entering upon a scrupulous examination of the productions of that writer, it will be sufficient to remark, that the expence necessarily incurred, in the purchase of his volumes, acts as a prohibition to the acquiring of them by the major portion of the community. In a literary point of view, the importance attached to the research into Bibliography, is so manifest, that it would be superfluous to descant upon the topic; in

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order, therefore, to render it as attainable as possible to the community, becomes a leading consideration, and such has been the main object of the Editor, in offering this opening number to the friends of useful literature.

From the foregoing remarks it is almost futile to observe, that the chief object of the present undertaking is to advance the study of Bibliography, and we may conscientiously affirm, that however inadequate the talents of those employed may prove in the fulfilment of the duty imposed, they have nevertheless entered upon the task with an inherent veneration for the undertaking, which it is hoped may entitle them to some degree of credit, for having hazarded the attempt.

As the term Bibliography may import to the minds of many, a mere enumeration of the various editions of rare works, their dates, &c. ; or the description of books possessing no other intrinsic worth, but their antiquity to recommend them ; we deem it essentially necessary to correct such erroneous opinion, in order that the public may not be misled in forming an estimate of the present undertaking. We now conceive it requisite to state, that the plan upon which this work is to be pursued, differs in every respect from any previous effort that has emanated from the press on a similar subject ; and however diffident, therefore, the projectors may feel, they nevertheless conceive, that some trifling portion of merit is their due, as the present publication will unquestionably rank the first of the kind hitherto attempted.