

Catalogue of the Philatelic Library of the Earl of Crawford
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This is a book review

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CATALOGUE OF THE PHILATELIC LIBRARY OF THE EARL OF CRAWFORD

by **E. D. Bacon, London, 1911, (£2)**

A book of 924 columns in folio format as the inventory of a philatelic library. Moreover this is the greatest collection of its sort so far assembled, and the work has been splendidly planned. However, we get only a survey of the richness of the international literature on philately. The work consists of four sections. The first part records details of the most extensive handbooks and monographs, down to humorous items and dealer's offers. The second and most detailed part is devoted to the periodical literature, in strict alphabetical arrangement. The third part lists the periodicals by countries (with short title, place and date of publication). The fourth part gives a survey of all works relating to philatelic literature. However, the first two parts are more than just a mere library catalogue, they are a bibliography. The individual works are not listed under the name of their author, but under the name of their country and separately under a key word for the contents (e.g. "Reprints"). Every work is shown with the height of its format and the number of pages: the periodicals are shown with the format for each individual volume plus the number of issues and the date. Everyone interested in Philatelic literature, society librarians in particular, is now in a position to find out exactly what is missing from his library. The work produced by Bacon with immense diligence is thus almost beyond price as a reference book. The thanks of all philatelists are due to him and the generous owner of the greatest philatelic library, the Earl of Crawford, who made this work possible and brought it into being: also however to the Philatelic Literature Society, which, with the consent of the Earl of Crawford has brought out a popular edition of 300 copies of the work. This makes the catalogue generally available, since a private edition for the owner of the library is for presentation only, and is thus limited to a very small number of copies. Small mistakes naturally do not outweigh the value of the work of this kind to the philatelist, still, the great advantages make the small, easily avoided mistakes doubly regrettable. For example, the Indian convention States (Faridkot, Chamba, etc.) are not given special keywords, although they have been as exhaustively treated in monographs as Bhopal, the only one for which an exception has been made. Peculiar keywords have often been chosen for the works that appeared anonymously, e.g. Black (for Black List, etc.), Under (for Under the Trade Sign), 3000 (= three thousand) for a pamphlet of

which 3000 copies were printed, New (for New Issues, etc.) This is a result of the principle of taking the first word of the title- apart from articles-as the key word: however it means that the exact title must be known if the work is to be found. It would probably have been better to take the word relating to the contents from the title.

Some striking divisions of words, such as “Verein-Smittheilungen”, “Fests-Chrift” obviously point to Mr. Bacon’s ignorance of German. The catalogue of monographs goes in general to the end of 1908, that of periodicals to the end of 1906: nevertheless, new periodicals appearing in 1907 and 1908 are listed along with supplements and changes that became known up to the printing of the work. However, anyone interested can relatively easily carry on the catalogue, it will be easy to build on such a foundation as is provided by this monumental catalogue.

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