



# The Anatomy of Bibliomania

*Holbrook Jackson*

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## **The Anatomy of Bibliomania** Holbrook Jackson

An unmitigated delight for any bibliophile, Holbrook Jackson's "Anatomy of Bibliomania" is the cornerstone of his indispensable trio of books on 'the usefulness, purpose, and pleasures that proceed from books'. "The Anatomy of Bibliomania" begins at the beginning, when books first started to appear, and gives book lovers the solace and company of book lovers from ancient Rome, the Renaissance, and the Romantics. Jackson inspects the allure of books, their curative and restorative properties, and the passion for them that leads to bibliomania ('a genial mania, less harmful than the sanity of the sane'). With deliciously understated wit, he comments on why we read, where we read - on journeys, at mealtimes, on the toilet (this has 'a long but mostly unrecorded history'), in bed, and in prison - and what happens to us when we read. He touches on bindings, bookworms, libraries, and the sport of book hunting, as well as the behavior of borrowers, embezzlers, thieves, and collectors. Francis Bacon, Anatole France, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Leigh Hunt, Marcel Proust, Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Shakespeare, and scores of other luminaries chime in on books and their love for them. Unlike most manias, bibliomania is an ennobling affliction, worth cultivating, improving, and enjoying to its heights and depths. Entertaining as well as instructive, "The Anatomy of Bibliomania" is a book no book lover - and certainly no bibliomaniac - can afford to be without.

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