

**THE CATHOLIC SERIES. LIFE OF
COMPILED FROM VARIOUS
SOURCES: TOGETHER WITH HIS
AUTOBIOGRAPHY, TRANSLATED
FROM THE GERMAN, VOL. I**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649289974

The Catholic series. Life of compiled from various sources: together with his autobiography, translated from the German, Vol. I by Eliza Buckminster Lee & Jean Paul F. Richter

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ELIZA BUCKMINSTER LEE & JEAN PAUL F. RICHTER

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The Catholic Series.

L I F E
OF
JEAN PAUL F. RICHTER.

COMPILED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

TOGETHER WITH HIS

AUTOBIOGRAPHY,

Translated from the German.



"The history of great minds is a mirror, wherein each reader may behold the treasures and possibilities of his own nature."

VOL. I.

LONDON:
JOHN CHAPMAN, 121, NEWGATE STREET.

M.D.CCC.XLV.

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TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

THE republication of the following Work is in accordance with arrangements made with the Author, who has a pecuniary interest in its success.

The numerous errors—especially in the German words—which appeared in the American edition, have been carefully corrected by Mr. WILLIAM HOWITT, who kindly undertook this task, in order to obviate the necessity of the delay which would have been occasioned if the Author had corrected them herself. The Publisher deems it needful to make this statement, because it is possible that the book may be reprinted and sold in competition with this edition, which is, and will be, the only one published with the Author's sanction, and for her advantage; and he believes, that although there may be many, who would disregard any rightful claim made for an Author beyond the Atlantic, yet that there are also many who would, when they knew the facts, fully

recognise it—regardless of the accident of law, which sometimes supports, and sometimes thwarts, the establishment of absolute justice—and who would gladly compensate those from whom they derive moral and intellectual benefit in the only way they can.

The Autobiography, which constitutes the early part of the First Volume, will probably be felt by many readers who are strangers to JEAN PAUL, to be less interesting than the remaining portion of the book, in which they would find abundant compensation; but those who already know him through his works, or who may hereafter become acquainted with his vast intellectual resources, his exuberant and exhaustless imagination, his glowing fancy, and heart overflowing with sympathy and love for humanity, will find the minute traits of his childhood, however full of detail in the description, doubly acceptable because written by himself, and endeared to them by the knowledge of his nobleness as a man.

London, March 21, 1845.

P R E F A C E.

THE following pages are presented to the reader, as containing an *authentic* life of Jean Paul, although they are not a literal translation of any *one* of the biographies of the great German Poet.

It is well known, that he was the most frank and unreserved of authors, and that he has interwoven, in all his romances, much of his personal experience. When, in the latter part of his life, he began his great comic romance of "*Nicholas Margraf, or Poetry from the Life of an Apothecary,*" he undertook at the same time, as parallel or companion-piece, his "*Autobiography, or Truth from my own Life,*" intending to interweave the *two*, as the *romance* and *reality* of *one* life. From hence results the comic tone, and the apparent affectation speaking in the third person, in his Autobiography, which was continued only to his thirteenth year. He found, perhaps, that it was only in childhood he could *idealize* his own life, and do

that better, in his fictitious heroes, than when he was *avowedly* his own.

The *first* part of the following Life is as literal and accurate a translation of Richter's *own* biography as I am able to make; the mystification already mentioned, has added obscurity to the "bewildering conceits" with which he usually illustrates his wit and his wisdom. My desire to preserve, as much as possible, the peculiarity of the original, has perhaps, given to the English a German dress, which, I trust, is thrown off in the remaining parts of the work.

The *Life* is continued from "*Wahrheit aus Jean Paul's Leben*" (Truth from the Life of Jean Paul). "*Spazier's Biographical Commentary*," and Paul's correspondence with his friends. The materials furnished from these sources I have drawn out, and woven together again with the same threads, although in a different form; and my embarrassments, which have not been small, have arisen from the abundance of the materials, and the difficulty of selection, where I wished the reader should enjoy the whole. But as the whole is comprised in scarcely less than twenty volumes, I have selected only such parts of the letters as would throw light upon Jean Paul's personal concerns, and explain the peculiarities of his character.

Are readers disappointed in this *selected* Life? I must have the honesty to assure them the fault is in the setting; should they search the original, they will find *gems* worthy of the purest gold, and the richest pattern.

Should German scholars find any discrepancy in the extracts from the letters, the reason may be, that I have translated, as happened to be convenient, from *three different* versions; from Otto's and Spazier's *selections*, and from Jean Paul's correspondence with Otto.

AUGUST 12, 1842.