



Memoirs To Serve As A Natural History Of Animals, Followed By Measurements Of The Earth - Paris



16 000 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Paper

Width : 41,5 cm

Height : 55,8 cm

Description

Memoirs to Serve as a Natural History of Animals, followed by measurements of the earth - Paris - Royal Printing Office, 1671 - 2 parts in one large folio volume, 558 x 415 mm - red morocco, covers decorated with Louvre lace, gilt arms in the center of the covers, spine with raised bands decorated with the crowned double "L", inner roll, gilt edges (contemporary binding). Rare first editions - first printings. They were published by the Royal Printing Office in the famous collection of the King's Cabinet, an immense undertaking created by Colbert and intended to illustrate and glorify the reign of Louis XIV. (Claude Perrault) Memoirs to Serve as a Natural History of Animals. Frontispiece and 14 plates outside the text drawn and engraved on copper by Sébastien Le Clerc, except for the one

Dealer

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of the chameleon, engraved by Abraham Bosse. A title vignette with the royal arms, two headpieces, two initial letters, and eleven tailpieces, some repeated by Le Clerc or Bailly. These plates illustrate the anatomical descriptions of a lion, a lioness, a chameleon, a dromedary, a bear, gazelles, a serval, a sea fox, a lynx, a beaver, an otter, civets, an elk, and finally a coati. Brother of the author of the famous fairy tales, Claude Perrault (1613-1688), a physician, architect, and founding member of the Academy of Sciences, here lays the foundations of comparative anatomy in France. His highly precise anatomical descriptions are preceded by a general reflection on the scientific method. (Jean Picard) Measurement of the Earth: 5 plates (plate no. 2 repeated), a headpiece, an initial, and a full-page tailpiece, all drawn and engraved by Sébastien Le Clerc, except for one plate interpreted by La Boissière. This volume does not include the continuation of his memoirs, intended to serve as a basis for the natural history of animals, published 5 years later. Jean Picard describes the instruments he developed (notably the quadrant with two telescopes) and explains his mathematical method using triangulation. The very precise value of the Earth's radius thus enabled Newton to verify his theory of universal gravitation. PROVENANCE: The work was part of the library of Armand Joseph de Laistre (1726-1801), Count of Fontenay, advisor to the King in all his councils and ordinary secretary of the Council of State during the reign of Louis XV. Its provenance is attested by an old handwritten bookplate, "Armand Josephi Delaistre," inscribed on the verso of the title page, characteristic of scholarly and administrative libraries of the 18th century. A high-ranking official of the monarchy, Armand-Joseph de Laistre belonged to those administrative and intellectual elites directly involved in the management of the kingdom and close to scientific and academic circles. His library reflected this interest in major scientific,

mathematical, and natural history works from the King's Cabinet, intended to illustrate the intellectual excellence of Louis XIV's reign and to enrich the work of European scholars. The combination in a single volume of Claude Perrault's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle des animaux* (Memoirs to Serve as a Natural History of Animals) and Jean Picard's *Mesure de la Terre* (Measurement of the Earth), both cornerstones of the Academy of Sciences, perfectly matches the profile of such a collector and statesman. A high-ranking official of the monarchy, Armand-Joseph de Laistre belonged to the administrative and intellectual elite directly involved in the management of the kingdom and close to scientific and academic circles.

CONDITION REPORT: Some damp staining and foxing. Small repaired tear in the lower margin of the plate of the lynx. Large brown stain on page 41 (Perrault's text). Tear in the lower corner of page 27 of the second text. Damaged binding: scuffing on the covers, hinges and raised bands rubbed.