

Sotheby's

Travel, Atlases, Maps & Natural History

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LOT 244

HELMAN, ISIDORE-STANISLAS

[SUITE DES SEIZE ESTAMPES REPRÉSENTANT LES CONQUETES DE L'EMPEREUR DE LA CHINE. PARIS, 1783-1788]

Oblong folio (356 x 478mm.), 24 engraved plates, numbered I-XXIV, modern blue cloth-backed marbled boards, without the index leaf, slight crease on plate 1, short repaired tear to plate 5

ESTIMATE 15,000-20,000 GBP

Lot Sold: 15,000 GBP

CATALOGUE NOTE

A RARE SET OF ENGRAVINGS, recording the battles, victories and ceremonies of the Chinese Emperor Qianlong. The emperor commissioned the original set of sixteen engravings of his conquests on 13th July 1765, for the central hall of the Imperial Palace in Beijing. The drawings were prepared in China by four Jesuit missionaries and were then sent to France, where they were engraved by eight artists under the direction of Charles-Nicolas Cochin of the Académie Royale at the Court of Louis XVI. These large engravings were completed in 1774 and distributed only in China, with only a few rare proofs remaining in Europe, but demand was so great that Helman reproduced the series in a reduced format between 1783-5, and then added 8 further plates of imperial ceremonies between 1786-8 to make up the present work.