

LATEST ACQUISITION

ONE OF THE RAREST SETS OF
FRENCH 18th CENTURY ENGRAVINGS

- 105 **COCHIN, CHARLES-NICOLAS.** **Victories of the Emperor K'ien-Long of China in Lil and East Turkestan in the year 1755.** Paris, C. N. Cochin direxit, 1769-1774. 16 plates, folio oblong, 91 cm. by 54.6 cm., folded in the middle, engraved by Le Bas, De Launay, Choffard, Saint-Aubin, Prévost, Aliamet and Masquelier after the designs, taken from the wall-paintings in the Hall of Tzu-kuang ko, Peking, by Fathers Joseph Castiglione, Ignace Sichelbart, Jean-Denis Attiret, and Jean-Damascène Salusti. Accompanied by 18 folded sheets of Chinese text, printed in Peking, the same size as the engravings. Preserved between 2 Chinese wooden boards, in a Chinese quilted cloth envelope. £300

A complete set of the celebrated engravings executed under the direction of Cochin by command of the Emperor K'ien-Long, known as the "Victoires et Conquêtes de l'Empereur de la Chine," one of the most remarkable documents of artistic collaboration between East and West, and a chef d'oeuvre of French 18th century engraving, of which only 27 sets (several incomplete) have survived, only 9 of these preserved in private and public collections outside China.

The Emperor who had seen the engraved battle scenes by Rugendas, conceived the idea of having the battle scenes commemorating the victories of his army painted in the hall known as Tzu-kuang ko on the west shore of the central lake (Chunghai) in Peking, similarly engraved in Europe. He ordered the 4 missionaries Castiglione, Sichelbart, Attiret and Salusti to prepare the drawings from which the engravings could be made, and, through the French East India Company, ordered a 100 sets to be produced in Paris. A great deal of political importance was attached by the French to this order, and on the advice of the Marquis de Marigny, the brother of Madame de Pompadour, Cochin was appointed to direct a task which presented many artistic, historical and geographical difficulties, and which took 5 years to accomplish. The plates had to be sent to China, and only very few copies were struck off for the King and one or the other exalted persons in France. There seems to be some doubt whether 2 lots of 100 sets were in fact printed and sent by different ships—several authorities claim that many copies were lost at sea, in any case, of the copies left in Europe and sent to China only 27 were known to have survived, of these at least 4 incomplete, when W. Fuchs published his census as recently as 1944.

A Chinese introduction, explanation of each plate, and a postscript, apparently composed by the Emperor himself, was produced in woodcut in Peking on 18 sheets; only 11 sets of these have survived.

The above set consists of beautiful impressions of the plates, mounted in Chinese fashion; a few have an extremely light damp stain in one unimportant portion which could easily be removed, but which we feel to be unnecessary.

Sup

FINE BOOKS



No. 97.

Catalogue 88

MARTIN BRESLAUER

2, WEYMOUTH HOUSE
84-94, HALLAM STREET, LONDON, W.1

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 4640

CABLES: BIBLOGRAPH, LONDON