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VANSLEB. Nouvelle relation en forme de journal d'un voyage fait en Egypte en 1672 & 1673. Paris, Estienne Michallet, 1677.

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Product Description

In-16, vellum, title, [12], 423, [17] pp. A rare and precious first edition. A significant account for Western knowledge of Egypt, this work by Vansleb— a German philologist and theologian—was commissioned by Colbert for a planned journey to Ethiopia. However, he never traveled beyond Egypt, where he spent 20 months observing, gathering information, and undertaking numerous excursions. Unlike other travelers, Vansleb deliberately avoided rehashing previously documented sites, such as the pyramids, instead offering his readers entirely new insights. While not the first travelogue on Egypt, it is the first written by a long-term resident of the country. In that sense, it stands as one of the earliest accounts of its kind, if not the very first. The author had previously visited Egypt once before and had published a narrative in Italian. However, on that initial journey, he lacked knowledge of Arabic, which limited his interactions with the local population, and he had not stayed in the country for an extended period.