

SUR LES FINANCES. Ouvrage posthume de Pierre André***, fils d'un bon laboureur, mis au jour par Mr *, Curé D *.**

Référence : 17043

A Londres, 1775. With 1 folding map and 4 folding tables. viii, 293, (1) pp. 8vo. Contemporary marbled calf, spine gilt in compartments, red morocco label with gilt lettering, gilt triple fillets on sides, red edges. Kress 7170; Goldsmiths 11330; Einaudi 5517; INED 4798; Higgs 6403; Peignot, Livres Condamnés, i, p. 141. First edition. Severely prosecuted attack on the Fermiers-Généraux, forbidden already in 1776. 'Diatribes sanglantes contre les fermiers généraux et les abus scandaleux de leurs agents. L'auteur met en scène un malheureux dont les 'suppôts de la ferme' ont ruiné la famille et fait périr le père de chagrin' (INED). According to a manuscript note in the Kress copy: '..... l'on croit que cette sanglante diatribe des fermiers généraux a été composée, imprimée et répandue sous les auspices du ministère actuel (celui de Turgot & Malesherbes)'. This, in fact, is the first edition of a work which became better known under the title "L'Ami du Peuple François, ou Mémoire adressée à Mr. Turgot," published at Limoges one year later (1776). Even the motto in both works is identical: "Ni Ferme ni régie: l'une et l'autre font la perte des Etats." The present work contains the same text as the "L'Ami du Peuple" (upto page 84, and then the pages 256-269) and contains in addition much detailed information about the taxes. It was probably deemed to complex or technical and was published again in 1776 as "L'Ami du Peuple François" this time omitting the detailed information about the taxes. The work suggests Turgot to abolish the tax system in use as it is unjust and odious, of relatively little profit to the king but very profitable for the taxfarmers and hard-pressing on the population. The work describes in detail the various taxes in existence, their effects, the cruel practises of the taxfarmers, the uneven division of the taxes and the disastrous effects. It is told in the form of a story: the anonymous author recounts the story of his father and his family and how they were, little by little, driven to complete ruin. His father, responsible for the collecting of taxes in his village, is thrown in jail and his possessions confiscated by the taxfarmers because of his inability to raise the requested taxes from the other taxable inhabitants of his village.

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