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**Loiseau's *Annals of Tacitus Tacite. Les Annales.*
Traduction Nouvelle par L. Loiseau. Paris: Gamier
Frères, 1905. Pp. xii + 698. Price 3 fr.**

F. T. R.

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LOISEAU'S ANNALS OF TACITUS.

Tacite. Les Annales. Traduction Nouvelle par L. LOISEAU. Paris: Garnier Frères, 1905. Pp. xii + 698. Price 3 fr.

As M. Hild says in his preface to this painstaking work, 'Maintenir à Tacite, dans un idiome moderne, sa véritable physionomie est une des tâches les plus ardues que puisse s'imposer un auteur.' We would even go a step further and pronounce it impossible. Of course it may be said of any task, *Solvitur ambulando*, and some day the world may be astonished by a completely successful version of Tacitus' *Annals* or *Histories*. But at present we know of nothing near this mark; and indeed, if ingenuity and care succeeded in reproducing Tacitus' style to-day in French or English, readers of either country would pronounce the book too harsh for use. Tacitus could leave out the little connecting-words with which modern languages link clauses and sentences together; he could omit even the copula—a licence now unknown. He often wrote his descriptions and his judgments (not of course his carefully thought-out epigrams) at a white heat of passion. This heat cannot be re-kindled, or, if kindled, could not be kept up, by a translator who spends many critical years in touching-up his version. It is not true of the translator that *facit indignatio versum*: a very different set of considerations and feelings dictates his choice of words, his turns of phrase. Moreover, even where no gloomy fury breaks through, even where no epigram offers difficulties of its own, the Latin of Tacitus is too close-packed for imitation. We could hardly follow sentences built like his in their tight compactness. We have to unfold what he enfolded, and set forth the connection of the thoughts which he merely jammed together. Then, when we have done this, as the genius of our language requires, it is no longer Tacitus who appears on our sheets of paper. We

can give the matter, the sense of what he says; we can make it possible for a reader who knows no Latin, to use Tacitus (if he thinks it safe) as historical evidence; but Tacitus, *quid* Tacitus, is beyond his reach.

We are not surprised, therefore, to find that M. Loiseau has not succeeded better than his forerunners. His French style is smooth, rounded, well filled-out; but these merits exclude the surprises, the jolts, and the peculiar thrills of the real Tacitean manner. M. Loiseau has however the benefit of the latest corrections of the Latin text, and he has perhaps achieved more accuracy than most other translators. He also helps the reader by 'un nombre considérable de notes archéologiques et historiques.'

We must not however imply that he has made every point. In A. 1. 50 we have the technical term *limes* used, but M. Loiseau seems (from his translation and from the absence of a note) hardly to realize what it means. In 2. 14 the passage *si ratio adsit*, and the rest, is rendered 'si l'on veut raisonner, on verra que les forêts et les défilés étroits peuvent offrir autant d'avantages.' Not only is this perhaps unduly expanded, but *si ratio adsit* is surely misunderstood, or at least mis-expressed. It means, not so much 'if you will think it out,' as 'if judgment, or common sense, be brought to bear' (on handling the weapons). A little lower, *utcumque* hardly gets its full force; 'en tous cas, leur première ligne seule est armée de lances.' The point is that only the first line carries spears, and those are not very good ones: the arming has been done as best it may.

But we must not leave the book without a concluding word of well-deserved praise. No trouble has been spared over it; when it fails, it is generally where full success could not be looked for.

F. T. R.

RECENT LITERATURE ON ORIENTIUS.

Le poème d'Orientius, édition critique avec un facsimile, étude philologique et littéraire, traduction par LOUIS BELLANGER. (Paris and Toulouse, 1903). 8vo. Pp. lv + 351.

Recherches sur Saint Orens, évêque d'Auch. Par LOUIS BELLANGER, (Auch, 1903). 8vo. Pp. 22.

The Commonitorium of Orientius. A Lecture by R. ELLIS (Oxford, 1903).

Les derniers travaux sur Saint Orens. Par LOUIS GUÉRARD (Auch, 1904). 8vo. Pp. 34.

ORIENTIUS is an interesting writer, not for what he says but for what he does not say.