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Recent Literature, on Orientius *Le poème d' Orientius, édition critique avec un facsimile, étude philologique et littéraire, traduction par 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.

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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.

What he says is dull enough. His *Com-monorium* is a poem of just over a thousand elegiacs, embodying in smooth classical diction a series of exhortations to upright, Christian living. These exhortations are ordinary platitudes, neatly worded, but devoid of originality in manner or matter, devoid also of notable allusions to current events, wholly general in character, and suitable to any commonplace congregation in any commonplace age.

But the age in which they were written was not commonplace. It was a period of change, crisis, and calamity. The great raid of 407 had just stamped into pieces the Roman administration in Gaul. Amid tumult and disaster, the dominion of the land was passing to the barbarians. Here was material enough for moralist or preacher. Yet it all mattered so little to Orientius that he barely mentions it. To the catastrophes of his age, *labentis funera mundi*, he gives twenty verses out of 1036, and even these twenty are only brought in to illustrate one aspect of the uncertainty of life. They are immediately followed by the reflexion that peace too has its dangers. And they stand alone. You may search in vain through the rest of the poem for any hint of troubles or barbarians. To his own eventful age the poet appears almost wholly indifferent.

This indifference has not been always recognized by the critics of Orientius. Prof. Dill (who, by the way, puts the poet a generation later in his text than he does in his notes) contrasts 'the hopeful optimism of Orosius' with 'the horror and grief' of Orientius at what seemed to him 'the death agony of the Roman world.' Similarly Prof. Bellanger,

On peut présenter Orientius comme un des témoins de l'écroulement du monde romain. Nous entendons chez lui l'écho des plaintes provoquées par les calamités qui bouleversaient alors l'empire.

But horror and grief which efface themselves for 1016 out of 1036 verses seem a little thin, and though Orientius is unquestionably a witness to the overthrow of Roman Gaul, his testimony is uncommonly brief and void of detail. He plainly viewed the event with comparative unconcern. This unconcern is just the interesting feature in him.

Its cause must not be sought in any such ordinary thing as piety or dullness. Orientius, unless I am mistaken, was both pious and dull. But his unconcern, his neglect of

the signs of the times, recurs in quite dissimilar writers of the same epoch. Turn, for instance, to the elegiacs of Rutilius Namatianus. He knew the barbarians by personal experience. He had seen the sack of Rome: his estates in Gaul had been pillaged: his journey thither was hampered by the prevailing insecurity. Perhaps he says more of these troubles than Orientius. Yet even he says wonderfully little, and he was no Christian bishop, but a pagan and man of the world.

This attitude was not absurd. As we now see, the fifth century brought a new era to the lands of the Western Empire. But in the growth of the new era, much changed very slowly and much of the old survived. The barbarians themselves admired the Latin civilization and copied numerous details in the Roman administrative system. Like Greece, imperial Rome in her own way *ferum victorem cepit*. In the fifth century, therefore, those that had a shred of optimism considered—and very pardonably considered—their troubles as passing plagues, and the barbarians as only in part a serious menace to their ancient Empire. The invaders (they imagined) would disappear, like Brennus of old, or would become romanized, like their own provincial forefathers. With such thoughts they were not likely to harp incessantly on the evils of the age. The pessimist might do that: not so the man of average cheerfulness, whether Christian bishop or pagan layman.

The writers of Gaul were perhaps more likely to take this attitude than those of other lands. Gaul, or at least southern Gaul, was now well romanized, and in the fifth century, as indeed in earlier ages, it was a home of literary and rhetorical culture, and of minor poets. There was little enough life and progress in this culture. Like the Gaulish potters, the Gaulish poets simply copied classical models, and their friends did not praise them for originality or independence but for their likeness to Horace and Virgil, to Pindar or Sophocles. If I may borrow a phrase from a distinguished Irishman they formed a fossil society, feeding on its own traditions. Neither Orientius nor Rutilius, so far as we know, belonged to the inner cliques of this literary society. But in their wholesale dependence on classical models they illustrate its principles. And it is in the true spirit of such a society that in their various degrees they so interestingly ignore the true character of their age.

This, I fear, is not altogether the reason why recent scholars have interested themselves

in Orientius. That is Mr. Ellis' doing. His edition of the poet, issued in the Vienna Corpus in 1888, first called modern attention to him. More recently M. Bellanger, professor at the Lycée of Auch, has taken up the study of the ancient bishop of that town, and round his volume quite a little literature has arisen. It is indeed a most excellent volume, not so much (perhaps) in matters of textual criticism, for here Mr. Ellis naturally left little to be done, but in general explanation and collection of material which might elucidate the *Common-*

itorium and the poet's life. I do not desire to criticize it in detail. That has been adequately done by reviewers in England and Ireland and France and Germany. I will only add my praise to theirs. For the rest, I fear that my view of Orientius differs too widely from that of M. Bellanger and indeed of Mr. Ellis. They regard Orientius as interesting for what he says. To me, as I have tried to explain, the chief interest of his poem lies in what he omits.

F. HAVERFIELD.

BUSOLT'S GREEK HISTORY.

Griechische Geschichte. Von Dr. GEORG BUSOLT. Band III. Teil I.: Die Pentekontaetie. Pp. xxii+592. M. 10. 1897. Teil II.: Der Peloponnesische Krieg. Pp. xxxv+1049. M. 18. Gotha: F. A. Perthes, 1904.

THE first part of Dr. Busolt's third volume has already been incidentally alluded to in these pages; by the present writer, for instance, in his notice of Hill's *Sources for Greek History* (*C.R.* 1898, p. 451). Indeed, although it has only now come to hand for reviewing, in company with the second part, it must long ago have become familiar to English scholars, and praise and blame are alike belated. Let us turn to the second part, which tells in continuous narrative the whole story of the Peloponnesian war. It is needless to say that the book is a valuable commentary on Thucydides, and that on the whole its author's judgments are sound and weighty. The 167 pages specially devoted to *Sources*, and the references given in foot notes throughout the book, form the best Bibliography of the subject that exists, and should be in the hands of all who deal with it. Dr. Busolt is at his best in dealing with Chronology and Statistics, and we notice full and excellent discussions on such points as the strength of the Athenian forces (p. 878 *seq.*), and the exact limits of harvest time as determining the Peloponnesian invasions (p. 907 *seq.*). None the less the book does not wholly satisfy. It would be unfair indeed to criticise it for want of life and vividness. Dr. Busolt has meant it to be a record of facts, and nothing more. In this connection I should only suggest in passing

that the printing of particularly important sentences in the body of the narrative in much bolder type than the rest is out of keeping with the dry light in which the narrative is presented to us. When after three pages of ordinary type, for instance, we suddenly are confronted with *Das Scheitern der Verhandlungen war wesentlich Kleons Werk*, we get an impression of theatricality and sensationalism which is of course not at all what the author meant, but is none the less somewhat comical. One is reminded of that unfortunate death-scene in Daudet's *Jack*, which—for indeed there is no accounting for tastes—gave Georges Sands such a 'serrement de cœur' that she was unable to work for three days. 'Jack—c'est moi—Je suis là.' Pas un mouvement. La mère eut un cri d'épouvante. 'Mort?' 'Non'—dit le vieux Rivals d'une voix farouche 'Non . . . Délivré!!' It would be less suggestive of la voix farouche if paragraph-headings, or some such simple device, could be adopted instead.

This is by the way. A book can only be fairly judged from the standpoint of the object which it sets out to achieve. Dr. Busolt's *History* is meant to be thorough, exhaustive, exact. Does it from this point of view come up to the highest standard?

Modern researches into even such a limited period as that of the Peloponnesian war are, it is needless to say, voluminous. To go into full detail over every small point discussed in the controversies of recent years would have demanded even more than the thousand pages which Dr. Busolt has given us. Grote devoted two and a half volumes to this part of the subject, and,