SUETONIUS' *CLAUDIUS*

D. W. HURLEY (ed.): *Suetonius:* Divus Claudius. Pp. viii + 274, figs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Paper, £14.95. ISBN: 0-521-59676-9.

Donna Hurley continues her services to Suetonian studies with this edition of the *Life of Claudius* in the Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics series, which should win favour with students and scholars. There is a brief introduction to Suetonius, his work, and Claudius' history; the Latin text, based on Ihm's Teubner edition; nearly 200 pages of commentary (for twenty-five pages of text), covering historical and linguistic matters; bibliography; three indices: Latin words, general topics (both historical and syntactical), and personal names; and two stemmatic diagrams.

H.'s treatment of Suetonius is generally conservative and slightly apologetic. In the introduction she situates him as last in the line of historians who narrated the events of Claudius' reign. This may usefully be contrasted with the more positive depiction of the biographer's work as a meditation on imperial rule presented in Catharine Edwards's Oxford World's Classics translation (2000). The Latin text is reliable (but note a rare misprint at 38.1, where *facientes* should be corrected to *facientis*, correctly printed in the notes). Only at 20.1 is the choice of text debatable. H. prints *opera magna potiusque* [*potius quam* MSS] *necessaria quam multa perfecit sed vel praecipua*, regarding the chapter titles for Claudius' public efforts as non-judgemental. However, keeping *potius quam* and deleting the second *quam* gives better sense: the fact that Suetonius needs to offer a selection suggests that the works attempted were indeed many, and the following description of the projects as ones which had been abandoned by previous emperors, now chosen for the emperor's *gloria*, suggests that these were not essential.

The commentary provides detailed historical background and considerable assistance to the student translating the Latin. H. is particularly good at emphasizing the nuances of connective particles, regularly referring to *OLD* entries and sections. Sometimes this borders on the pedagogical, with single English renderings and instructions to translate in a particular manner, rather than explication of the range of meaning of Latin terms. For instance, 28 'tantum . . . acquirere et rapere' is glossed as 'to amass such wealth by plunder', following the hendiadys of Rolfe's Loeb translation. Edwards's 'to appropriate and embezzle', however, suggests a greater shading of legality in the activities of Claudius' freedmen. Still, students approaching Suetonius for the first time will appreciate the assistance.

As always, there will be disagreements over the interpretation of passages. In 1.2, describing Drusus as the first to sail the North Sea, the importance of primacy as a claim to fame might be more strongly underlined. Such an emphasis on creating precedents may also lie behind Claudius' apparently inept assertion that he was the first Claudian to have adopted an outsider into his clan (39.2). In the same passage, the apparition of the German woman who warns Drusus to turn back is explained as speaking Latin as the mouthpiece of *patria* or *Roma*. But *Africa* also speaks Latin to Curtius Rufus (Plin. *Ep*. 7.27.2). 3.2: Livia's preference for written communication with Claudius whenever possible is explained as an epistolary habit in the royal family (cf. Augustus' letter to Livia in 4). Rather, it reflects the aristocratic practice of avoiding speaking to one's inferiors (Tac. *Ann*. 13.23.2). In 15.1 ('decurias rerum actu'), *actu* is rightly explained as dative of purpose, but the unusual dative ending in *-u* (see Aul. Gell. *NA* 4.16.5–9) needs comment. The difficult passage about the juror who is

© Oxford University Press, 2002

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/52.1.22 Published online by Cambridge University Press

accosted by his adversaries is probably rightly explained as involving the introduction of a lawsuit (*interpellatum*, 'sued', *OLD* 6) which Claudius ordered to be settled on the spot. Unfortunately, this explanation is confused by retaining Rolfe's translation, 'challenged' (*OLD* 2), which suggests a different scenario of an interruption regarding the juror's right to be on the rolls. 18.1 'pro opera dignam cuique mercedem': H. claims this is redundant, since 'the proper (*dignam*) reward was obviously one in proportion to a man's labour (*pro opera*)'. But, following hiring practices in the ancient world, employers generally paid on the basis of the completion of a full day's work (*opera*)—cf. *Matt.* 20, the workers in the vineyard. Claudius was probably offering to pay for less than a complete day's efforts. 22: Claudius' action in excluding the workmen and slaves when reciting a prayer of purification ('summotaque operariorum servorumque turba') is not just removing 'freedmen and peregrines' as well as slaves. The exclusion bars the *sordida plebs*, the working population (perhaps the same as the *pullati* excluded by Augustus: Suet. *Aug*. 40), to limit attendance to retainers of the respectable households of Rome. In 25.1, Claudius, after a decision to restore ungrateful freedmen to their masters, responded to a tribunician challenge (Dio 60.28.1): 'negavit se adversus libertos ipsorum ius dicere'. The translation 'he would not hear cases brought against their own freedmen' (so too Edwards) is confusing. Suetonius is elliptical here, but Claudius surely ruled that he would not hear cases involving freedmen and their masters (cf. *OLD ius*, 4, Tac. *Ann*. 13.51, 'adversus publicanos ius dicere'; *OLD ipse*, 6)—that is, where freedmen wished to challenge their ex-owners at law. *Dumtaxat* in 25.3 should not be translated 'at least' in regard to Claudius' protection of the Roman *nomen*, but rather 'apart from' (*OLD* 2). The pamphlet entitled μωρῶν ἐπανάστασις (38.2) need not be a Menippean satire, but perhaps a serious Stoic treatise ('the resurrection of fools', since all non-Stoics were regarded as stupid). The thesis that no one feigns stupidity falls into the same category of paradox as that the wise man never dissembles (Stob. *Ecl*. 2.7.11m = 2 p. 108 Wachsmuth). 41.2: *plurimum* is wrongly taken to refer to Claudius' Roman history; rather, he wrote 'a good deal' (Edwards) even while emperor. These comments, however, should not be seen as detracting from the considerable value of H.'s commentary.

Victoria University of Wellington ARTHUR J. POMEROY

SUETONIUS' *VESPASIAN*

B. W. Jones (ed.): *Suetonius:* Vespasian. Pp. xviii + 142. London: Bristol Classical Press, 2000. Paper, £11.99. ISBN: 1-85399-584-3.

The appearance of Brian Jones's *Vespasian* is a most welcome addition to the growing BCP collection of Commentaries on Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars*; there can be few, if any, scholars active today who have published more extensively, or to better effect, than J. on the Flavians. This work, J.'s second contribution to the series (*Domitian* appeared in 1996), conforms to its general pattern: there is a useful introduction with an account of Suetonius' career, sources, and works, followed by an analysis and critique of the *Vespasian*. The text is essentially that of Ihm's Teubner (1908), with seven textual variants and changes in punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing. One notes with regret that BCP is still quite unable to print Greek intelligibly: witness 23.1 and the corresponding lemmata in the commentary. The commentary itself is brisk,

© Oxford University Press, 2002

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/52.1.22 Published online by Cambridge University Press