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*sumpta morte misericordiam eius praevenisset*¹². Ironically, as I have shown elsewhere¹³, this case too led to misunderstandings of the type which left popular opinion the more suspicious of the emperor's intentions.

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¹² *Ann.* III. 50, 3.

¹³ The Trial of Clutorius Priscus, *Greece and Rome* 16 1969, 14 ff.

TACITUS, SUETONIUS AND THE TEMPLE OF JANUS

Considering the difference of form and of purpose between the historical works of Tacitus and the biographies of Suetonius, there are surprisingly few clear contradictions between the two. Conflicting interpretations of facts may occur, and one writer may admit the existence of alternative accounts while the other refers only to one; but there are hardly any places where fundamentally opposing assertions of matters of fact are to be found.

One of the most puzzling of these (although it has given rise to very little discussion among modern scholars¹) is the question of Nero's closing of the temple of Janus in celebration of the achievement of peace with Parthia after the protracted campaigns of Corbulo in Armenia. Suetonius is prohibited by his usual concentration on the individual subject of his *Lives* from dealing with foreign wars, unless conducted by the emperor himself. He refers to the eastern problem during Nero's reign only obliquely (*N.* 39, 1), where the capitulation of Caesennius Paetus is described, in a version which Tacitus is aware of but does not accept (*Ann.* xv. 15, 2), among the disasters of the reign. Paetus is not named, nor is Corbulo, here or elsewhere. Under the

¹ No suggestion of any sort of problem is to be found in H. SCHILLER, *Geschichte des römischen Kaiserreichs unter ... Nero* (1872), p. 204, n. 1 (though with some hesitation about the date); B. W. HENDERSON, *Life and principate of the emperor Nero* (1905), p. 191 (referring to A. D. 64); E. HOHL in *P-W*, Suppl. III (1918), p. 387; A. MOMIGLIANO in *C. A. H.* X (1934), p. 734; L. HOMO in *GLOTZ's Histoire Générale, Histoire Romaine III* (1941), p. 300; H. H. SCULLARD, *From the Gracchi to Nero*² (1959), p. 326; E. T. SALMON, *History of the Roman world from 30 B. C. to A. D. 138* (1965), p. 194 (omitting all mention of Nero's closure, but remarkably mentioning Vespasian's on p. 211); A. GARZETTI, *From Tiberius to the Antonines* (trans. J. R. FOSTER, 1974), p. 170. Discussions of part of the problem by M. GRANT, C. H. V. SUTHERLAND and B. H. WARMINGTON will be mentioned below. T. D. BARNES, discussing the fragments of Tacitus' *Histories* in *Cl. Phil.* 72 (1977), p. 229, has nothing on the problem.

rubric of Spectacles, however, which starts at *N.* 11, Suetonius devotes a full chapter (13) to the reception of Tiridates in Rome, which we know took place in the early summer of A. D. 66, as the culmination of the emperor's great public shows. In an unusually long and coherent narrative, he describes how, after a delay caused by bad weather, Nero received Tiridates on the rostra in the Forum and crowned him king of Armenia. Further ceremonies followed in the theatre; and the paragraph concludes:

ob quae imperator consalutatus, laurea in Capitolium lata, Ianum Geminum clausit, tamquam nullo (for the MSS. *tam nullo quam*) *residuo bello.*

The greater part of this narrative is confirmed and supplemented by Cassius Dio (I xiii. 1, 2 – 7, 2), with additional details of Tiridates' journey to Rome, by way of the Balkans, Picenum and Naples; of the words spoken by Tiridates in supplication to Nero (translated into Latin and read out to the people by a *praetorius vir*, according to Suetonius) and the emperor's reply; of the decoration of the theatre with gold and purple; and of the lavish gift of money to Tiridates for the rebuilding of the ruined city Artaxata. Dio's text as we now have it does not mention the formal marks of celebration (the title *imperator*, the laurel wreath, or the temple of Janus), perhaps as lacking in meaning either to Dio's Greek readers in the third century or, more probably, to those of Xiphilinus who epitomized Dio at Constantinople in the eleventh century. But essentially the Latin and Greek accounts are the same; and it is a safe inference that both are derived from the lost histories of the elder Pliny, who seems to have devoted about one book to each year of the period², and whose extant *Natural Histories* contain numerous details of Nero's extravagance in exactly the same terms as Suetonius gives them. In particular, Pliny records the covering of the theatre with gold for the reception of Tiridates (*N. H.* xxxiii. 54), just as in Dio I xiii. 6, 1, and the use of a *velum* covered with stars (*ib.* xix. 24), as in Dio *ib.* 2. This sort of detail appears to have occupied a considerable part of Pliny's historical work, as is indicated by Tacitus (*Ann.* xiii. 13, 1), who complains of those who devote their annals to particulars of buildings, particularly of Nero's wooden amphitheatre (precisely as in *N. H.* xvi. 200), rather than to *res illustres*. The narrative in our two extant sources is entirely plausible and circumstantial; and it is unfortunate that we are unable to read what Tacitus made of Tiridates' visit, because the *Annals* break off in the early part of A. D. 66.

For the official events of what Dio refers to as 'the Golden Day', there is documentary confirmation of Suetonius' assertions, to make up for the

² Cf. *Hermes* 92 (1964), pp. 471 – 472, A. J. Ph. 85 (1964), p. 345.

silence of Dio. The fragmentary *Acta* of the Arval brethren (28. ii. c. 5) report from a date in either May or June of this year a sacrifice *ob laurum imperatoris Neronis*. Not only does this refer to the *laurea in Capitolium lata* of Suetonius³, but it is especially important as being the first clear evidence for Nero's use of the title *imperator* as a *praenomen*, as Augustus had used it from about 38 B. C. (SYME, R. R., pp. 112 – 113) and as it was to be continued by Otho and subsequently by Vespasian and his sons⁴. The same title, as *Imp. Nero. Claud. Caesar Aug. Germ.* appears on coins of 66 – 67, securely dated by *tr. p. xiii*; and it is evident that this is the eleventh imperial salutation, distinguished from the previous ten, which had been marked only by the title *imp.* at the end of the emperor's name⁵. This, the only such salutation mentioned by Suetonius in the *Lives* (apart from such initial salutations as *Cl.* 10, 2, *N.* 8, *Otho* 6, 3), was clearly intended to be more significant than previous uses of the title by his predecessors and himself; and this was hardly in order to emphasize the emperor's supremacy vis-à-vis such generals as Corbulo⁶ so much as to indicate that Nero had accomplished the equivalent of a personal triumph in the proper sense, as his costume on the occasion and the dedication of the laurel to Jupiter both implied, but for a diplomatic rather than a military victory.

So far there can be no doubt of the validity of Suetonius' source and his accuracy in reporting the material. The final item in the sentence, the closing of the temple of Janus, seems equally well attested, this time by abundant numismatic evidence. From the year 64 – 65 (SMALLWOOD, no. 53), there are numerous coins bearing the legend *PACE P. R. TERRA MARIQ. PARTA IANUM CLUSIT S. C.*, with a picture of the temple with the door closed. The type is repeated in the following year; and in 66 – 7 there is a significant change in the imperial titulature, on this as on other issues for the rest of the reign⁷, with *IMP.* now preceding the emperor's names instead of following,

³ It is not clear whether at this date the laying of a laurel wreath on the knees of Jupiter's statue was necessarily connected with the normal triumph. Pliny (*N. H.* xv. 133) mentions it without reference to the triumph, perhaps having this occasion in mind. Certainly during the following generations it can be contrasted with the triumph, as in Suet. *Dom.* 6, 1, Plin. *Pan.* 8, 2, Mart. vii. 6, 7, viii. 15, 5 – 6. It may be part of the procedure of sending laurel-wreathed despatches, as in Dio. lxi. 19, 1.

⁴ So M. GRANT, *From imperium to auctoritas* (1946), pp. 440 – 441, preferring to regard Nero's use of the word as a prefix rather than as a second *praenomen*; ROSENBERG in P-W. ix. 1149 – 1150.

⁵ So P. I. R.² iii, p. 38. The dating is most securely determined by C. I. L. xi. 1331, with *trib. pot. xiii, imp. xi, cos. iiiii*, and with the prefixed *imp.* before the name. For the numismatic evidence, see n. 7 inf.

⁶ As claimed by D. MCFAYDEN, *History of the title Imperator* (1920), pp. 58 – 59.

⁷ So Coins of Roman Empire in British Museum i (1965), pp. 215 ff., for *imp. Nero* with *trib. pot. xiii*. There is no reliable evidence for any issue with *trib. pot. xiii*, to cover Nero's last year from December 67 to June 68.

exactly as in the records of the Arvals. But this confirmation of what Suetonius tells us goes too far for comfort. It is clear from the biographer's narrative that the temple was closed only in the early summer of A. D. 66, at the same time as the assumption of the praenomen *imp*. If this is accurate, why did Nero issue coins two whole years earlier?

There seem to be two ways of answering this question. MICHAEL GRANT, in his inaugural lecture at Edinburgh University (University of Edinburgh Journal, vol. xiv, 1946–1949, p. 239), pointed out that not only did Nero unprecedentedly represent a temple of Janus on coinage, but he 'chose for his closure of that temple, the first for a very long time, the year A. D. 66'; and added that the choice of year (and presumably of the date for the whole ceremony of Tiridates' coronation) was determined by the fact that this year was the tercentenary of the first historical closure, by Titus Manlius in 235 B. C., after the first Punic War⁸. This calculation, which GRANT made too late for it to be included in Roman Anniversary Issues (1950), ignores the issues of the two previous years. He returned to the problem in Roman History from Coins (1968), p. 34, with the suggestion that 'on these coins of c. A. D. 64 Nero announces a forthcoming closure', itself postponed to fit in with the tercentenary. The perfect tense of *clusit* is remarkable if the event was not even planned to take place for a further two years; and the anomaly is not much eased by the suggestion of C. H. V. SUTHERLAND, Coinage in Roman imperial policy (1951), p. 166, that Nero was somehow making an 'anticipation of the full ceremony symbolically'. The meaning of this idea seems to have been made explicit by B. H. WARMINGTON, Nero: Reality and Legend (1969), p. 95, that the ceremony was 'perhaps repeated' – presumably an earlier closure in 64 (of which Tacitus says nothing) repeated in the more impressive context of 66. Apart from the fact that an earlier closure would surely have spoiled the impact of the later one, which Nero evidently intended to be as powerful as possible, such hypotheses, as will be shown below, raise more problems than they solve.

The alternative explanation is that Nero was the victim of circumstances. As early as A. D. 63, Corbulo had settled the Armenian question (Tac. *Ann.* xv. 28–31), on the understanding that Tiridates should come to Rome and receive the crown of Armenia as in some sense a vassal of the emperor. It was to be expected that this should occur relatively soon, since trouble on the Euphrates frontier had been going on since the end of 54 (*Ann.* xiii. 6, 9); and the senatorial vote to close the temple of Janus is likely to have taken place as

⁸ The date is derived from Varro *L. L.* v. 165 and Livy i. 19, 3, both giving Titus Manlius as consul at the time of the closure. As Ogilvie points out *ad. loc.*, this is probably a confusion with A. Manlius, consul in 241, when the war was actually brought to a close; but the authority of Varro was no doubt enough to determine the sort of calculations implied by GRANT's theory.

soon as the news of the settlement reached Rome⁹: Tiridates, for his part, did not wish to be hurried. In the last set of negotiations in 63, before Corbulo's final invasion of Armenia, he had made the excuse that he was prevented from making such a journey *sacerdotii religione* (*Ann.* xv. 24, 2) – by his position as a *magus*, which in the event made him travel to Rome by the long and circuitous route by way of Illyricum and down the east coast of Italy through Picenum (Dio lxiii. 7, 1). Once the journey became essential to the settlement, despite fears of personal humiliation (*Ann.* xv. 29, 3), Tiridates still requested *spatium ... quo tantum itineris aditurus fratres ante matremque viseret* (ib. 30, 2). Such a delay may well have put off Tiridates' departure until well on into the summer of 64; and then the great Fire in August will have caused the cancellation of any such visit during that year. 65 started badly for such ceremonial occasions, with the discovery of the Pisonian conspiracy in April (ib. 53, 1) and the protracted executions that followed. If Nero considered pressing Tiridates to make the journey during the summer, the pregnancy and death of Poppaea, apparently in August¹⁰, may have caused a further postponement; though it may indeed have been during this year that Nero realised that a ceremony in 66 would gain significance on account of the tercentenary. However that may be, coins reporting the closure of Janus as a *fait accompli* were minted in two successive years before the coronation actually took place. Nero may have had the discretion to withhold the two issues from circulation until the events of 66 validated the legend; but by that time, whether on account of the tercentenary or from a desire to commemorate the year more signally than its two abortive predecessors, he had conceived the additional idea of underlining his personal role as peacemaker by taking the new form of imperial title.

However – and this is the real matter in dispute – there is one piece of formidable evidence to suggest that, despite the authority of Suetonius and the coins, the closure of Janus never took place at all. We have completely lost Tacitus' account in what must have been the latter part of *Annals* xvi, so that we can only infer that the work ever went before xvi. 35, where our manuscripts now break off, from Jerome's assertion (*Comm. ad Zach.* iii. 14)

⁹ In *Ann.* xv. 27, 2 Tacitus makes Corbulo assert, in his final warning to Vologaeses in 63, *imperatorii suo immotam ubique pacem et unum id bellum esse*. It was always perilous to assume that such a situation would last indefinitely.

¹⁰ Poppaea's death occurred just after the Neronia in 65 (*Tac. Ann.* xvi. 6, 1), for which the probable date is some time in August, to judge from the appearance of the comet during the first celebration in 60 (ib. xiv. 22, 1, with the Chinese evidence for comets, given particularly by R. S. ROGERS in *T. A. P. A.* lxxxiv (1953), pp. 240 ff.). The incomplete games *ante praestitutam diem*, as Suetonius describes them (*N.* 21, 1–2), must have started before the Fire in mid-July 64, if they are to be placed in that year (so BOLTON in *C. Q.* xlii (1948), pp. 82, ff, although his use of numismatic evidence is corrected by MACDOWELL, ib. *N. S.* viii (1958), pp. 192–194).

that Tacitus *exaravit* the history from the death of Augustus to that of Domitian *triginta voluminibus*¹¹. But the *Histories* were certainly completed, and were read by various scholars during the next few centuries. In particular Orosius, writing about A. D. 420, mentions the first closing of Janus by Augustus in 29 B. C. (*adv. Pag.* vi. 20, 1 and perhaps vii. 2, 16); but, among the misfortunes of the later part of the reign, he says: *ut verbis Corneli Taciti loquar, sene Augusto Ianus patefactus, dum apud extremos terrarum terminos novae gentes saepe ex usu et aliquando cum damno quaeruntur, usque ad Vespasiani duravit imperium* (vii. 3, 7). The quotation may not be exact¹² but the statement must have appeared in the *Histories* in more or less this form, at the point where Tacitus was describing the closure by Vespasian; and Tacitus also mentioned the reopening in the following year (*Oros.* vii. 19, 4). In addition, while describing the actual triumph of Vespasian and his son in A. D. 71, Orosius states, though not this time on the explicit authority of Tacitus, that they closed the temple of Janus *sexto demum ipsi post urbem conditam* (*ibid.* 9, 9). The five previous closures are easy to identify: that by king Numa in the mythical periods before the Republic, that by T. Manlius after the first Punic war (so *Livy* i. 19, 3, *Suet. Aug.* 22, *Oros.* iv. 12, 4), and the three by Augustus in 29 and 25 B. C. and one further year in the last decade of the century. Augustus himself (*R. G.* 13) states categorically *cum prius quam nascerer a condita urbe bis omnino clausum fuisse prodatur memoriae, ter me principe senatus claudendum esse censuit*. In this series Vespasian's is placed sixth; and there is no room for any closure under Nero¹³. The statement must originate in Tacitus, as Orosius asserts. He might, as a Christian, have wished to deprive the arch-persecutor of the credit of establishing world peace; but he would not have gone out of his way to invent a plausible passage of Tacitus to validate his assertion in such a negative way, among a series of evidently genuine citations of the *Histories*.

We have accordingly a positive contradiction between what Tacitus stated in the *Histories* and what Suetonius stated in the *Nero*. One or other must somehow have been in error; and it is important to understand how the error occurred.

The simplest solution is that Suetonius made an honest mistake. This will mean that, despite the repeated issues of Janus coinage, Nero was in the end

¹¹ For inferences concerning the distribution of material, see especially R. SYME. Tacitus (1958), pp. 686–687, including the possibility that *Ann.* xvii–xviii were never written. This would not affect my argument.

¹² In i. 10, 3 Orosius appears to quote *Hist.* v. 3 accurately enough, simply omitting the contentious phrase *utrisque deserti*; and similarly i. 5. 2 and 4 from v. 7. None of his other quotations come from extant parts of the *Histories*; nor does he quote from the *Annals* at all.

¹³ The omission becomes the more inexplicable if Nero closed the temple twice, as WARMINGTON suggests.

obliged to cancel the plan to close the temple as a climax to his celebration, just as in 10 B. C. Augustus had to cancel his third closure when the Dacians crossed the Danube into the empire (Dio liv. 36, 2). Some time in the summer of 66 the great Jewish revolt broke out in Judaea; although it does not appear that the defeat of Cestius Gallus and the loss of a great part of the Twelfth legion took place before November (Josephus, *B. J.* ii. 555). The suggestion must be that Nero promptly cancelled his long-announced celebration of universal peace; and that despite this Suetonius, observing the legend on the Janus coinage, added to the account he had taken from Pliny a significant detail based on what a modern historian would regard as the most convincing of evidence. It is worth noting that further on in the *Nero* (25, 2) Suetonius certainly refers to another issue of coinage to support his reference to Nero's statues *citharoedico habitu*; although this is not in order to initiate a fresh statement, and we cannot be certain that the reference to coinage was not already in a written source.

In any case, this scrupulousness does not sound like Nero. He must have seen that closing the temple despite the outbreak of what was still a small local rising will have appeared less ridiculous than making repeated issues of coins commemorating something that never happened at all. Moreover, his lack of concern for events in Judaea is demonstrated by his departure for Greece in September of this year (*Act. Arv.* 28, 11c, 29), when the situation was much graver and Jerusalem was already in the hands of the rebels. Nor did he interrupt his tour when Cestius was defeated, but simply sent Vespasian to carry on the war with additional troops (*Jos. B. J.* iii. 3).

Moreover, the form in which Suetonius sets down this last detail of the celebrations concerning Tiridates makes it clear that the sentence was always an integral whole. Suetonius may often compose in a scissors-and-paste manner, joining items from different contexts, and probably from different sources, to build up a single paragraph; but this seems to be his technique for amassing *exempla* to illustrate some vice or virtue: never, I am sure, to construct a continuous narrative sentence, especially when this means that the participular phrases would have come from one context or source and the main verb from another¹⁴. It is as certain as anything can be that Suetonius took over the whole of this sentence, along with the rest of the description of

¹⁴ In the same way, in *N.* 24, 2 the phrase *decedens provincia*, so important for determining whether the Liberation of Greece took place in November 66, at the start of Nero's Greek tour, or 67, at the end, patently comes from a coherent chronological narrative of the whole episode. It can thus hardly be dismissed as a piece of editorial confusion by Suetonius, as it seems to have been, e. g., by MOMIGLIANO, in *C. A. H.* x (1934), p. 735, and by the majority of Italian scholars. Suetonius' firm statement should never have been rejected in favour of the expression in Paus. vii. 17, 3, which is capable of a much more elastic explanation (cf. P. A. GALLIVAN, *Hermes* 101 (1973), pp. 230-234, K. R. BRADLEY, *Latomus* xxxvii (1978) pp. 66-71).

Tiridates' coronation, from Pliny's histories, albeit with necessary omissions and simplifications which explain the absence of many of the details preserved from the same account by Dio. At the same time Pliny, writing in the early years of Vespasian's reign, when the memory of the Jewish war and its horrors was still fresh, ended his account with a clear acknowledgement of the outbreak of that war in his oblique phrase *tamquam nullo residuo bello* – certainly not the sort of language which Suetonius would introduce on his own responsibility¹⁵.

The alternative explanation for the contradiction between our two authorities is that Nero did close the temple, as the coins indicate, even if the destruction of the Twelfth legion meant that it soon had to be opened again; and that, after Nero's death and the troubles of 69, Vespasian, who had fought a hard and bloody war round Jerusalem from 67 to late in 69, when he left Titus to complete the war and set off for Rome to be recognised as emperor by the Senate, refused to admit that there had been any period of real peace in the latter part of Nero's reign. Peace was to be his own gift to the empire; and he followed his own better justified closure of Janus with the dedication of his great temple of Peace. The blotting out of Nero's claim became part of the general policy of damning the memory of the last of the Julio-Claudians, and of the three pretenders who fell during the Year of the Four Emperors¹⁶, with allegations of every sort of enormity including, in Nero's case, incest, sodomy, arson and widespread homicide. Vespasian was wise enough not to challenge direct comparison with Nero by making his own issue of commemorative coins; his policy was simply to encourage the more compliant historians to omit any reference to Janus in connection with Nero's celebrations, and to make the straightforward claim that his own closure was the sixth, in direct sequence after the third closure by Augustus¹⁷.

So far as we can judge, Pliny was not so obsequious to Vespasian as to falsify the record in this way. It is noteworthy that he withheld his histories from publication after they were completed: in A. D. 77, in the preface to his *Natural Histories* (7), he explained that he did not wish to be accused of flattering the Flavians. Such an excuse has always appeared wildly implausible; and the evidence we have for the line taken by Pliny shows rather that he took no pains to present the fashionable view on such topics as the

¹⁵ This type of phrase at the end of a sentence is very rare in Suetonius. *Jul.* 56, 2 is a quotation from Cic. *Brut.* 262; *Aug.* 69, 1 appears to be straight from M. Antonius (N. B. The obscure reference to *Torania mangone*); *N.* 40, 4 is closely integrated into a narrative which seems to come from Pliny.

¹⁶ Cf. *Hermes* 88 (1960), pp. 119-120, A. J. Ph. 85 (1964), pp. 368 – 370.

¹⁷ For Augustus as Vespasian's model, cf. e.g. H. Last in C. A. H. xi, p. 403. It is interesting that but for Orosius we should have no evidence for Vespasian's closure of Janus.

origin of the great Fire¹⁸, the treachery of Caecina (still apparently living unscathed in Rome until his sudden fall in 79), and the noble refusal of Verginius Rufus, even when threatened with a sword by his troops, to usurp the throne, when Vespasian had yielded to exactly the same sort of pressure, according to that zealous apologist, Josephus (*B. J.* iv. 588 – 604)¹⁹. There is in fact no evidence that Pliny's histories were actually published, in any sense, even after the deaths of Vespasian and himself. They are nowhere explicitly quoted, and his nephew, describing his literary output (*Epp.* iii. 5, 6), does not give any description of them among all the seven works, as if it were not one that his correspondent could be expected to take any interest in. But it is clear that a writer who wrote *religiosissime* (*ib.* v. 8, 5) was not likely to pass over a significant element of a great occasion in Rome's diplomatic victory, at which he may well have been present.

For Tacitus, writing the *Histories* in the early part of Trajan's reign and starting his narrative at January 1st, 69, there was no inducement even to study the voluminous records of Nero's reign, apart from the account of the crisis in the spring and early summer of the preceding year. He certainly made use of the last book or books of Pliny and evidently of such other historians as Cluvius Rufus²⁰, who we know was writing not very long after the events described (*Plin. Epp.* ix. 19, 5). From some of these sources he accepted the claims made when Vespasian marked the end of the wars by closing the temple of Janus: that this was only the sixth closure in the whole history of Rome and that the temple had stood open throughout the whole Julio-Claudian period, since it was last reopened by Augustus. Of course, when some ten years later Tacitus turned back to the successors of Augustus in his *Annals* and came in due course to the events of Nero's reign, he studied all the available sources, including the fullest and most systematic, Pliny²¹. It must have been some embarrassment for him to discover a full and entirely circumstantial description of the closing of Janus as an integral part of the reception of Tiridates, flatly contradicting what he had previously stated in his account of Vespasian's celebrations. Whether he stood by his previous version and omitted all reference to Janus in this connection, or accepted historical evidence and hoped that the inconsistency would not be noticed by his readers, we cannot tell²². If Suetonius for his part noticed the clash between the narrative of events in 66

¹⁸ Cf. *Hermes* 88 (1960), pp. 111 – 113.

¹⁹ Cf. *Latomus* 20 (1961), pp. 339 – 340.

²⁰ Cf. *A. J. Ph.* 85 (1964), pp. 337 – 377.

²¹ As cited explicitly in *xiii.* 20, 2, *xv.* 53, 3, and by implication in *xiii.* 31, 1, *xiv.* 2, 2.

²² We have no way of telling whether Pliny himself described the celebrations of the peace or stopped short with military victory (as indicated by *Tac. Hist.* iii. 28, 1, the last certain reference) and the death of Vitellius (cf. *A. J. Ph.* lxxxv (1964), pp. 364 – 367, 374). His own remarks in *N. H.* Pf. 20 give no hint of the terminal date.

and the claims made by Vespasian's historians, his reaction seems to have been to pass over the alleged sixth closure without reference, dismissing all Vespasian's triumphal celebrations in a three-word phrase (*Vesp.* 8, 1) and keeping the temple of Peace for his section on Buildings (ib. 9, 1).

This is accordingly a rare instance of factual discrepancy between the sceptical consular historian and the more gullible biographer, in which the latter proves to have followed the better tradition and, incidentally, to have vindicated the numismatists and what appears to be the unanimous opinion of modern scholars. Tacitus, whose main fault seems to be that he composed his *triginta volumina* in the wrong order, has fallen for Flavian propaganda in a way which would have infuriated him. He is fortunate not to have had his fault laid at his door more often.

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