

## LUKE'S NARRATIVE OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

THE controversy regarding the trustworthiness of Luke's account (ii. 1-3) of the historical circumstances that preceded and accompanied the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, has been much advanced by discoveries which have been made since the present writer's book, *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?* was published. The evidence bears mainly on two details: (1) the connexion of Quirinius with the first census in 8 B.C.; we can now prove by indisputable contemporary evidence that Quirinius was governing Syria about the time of this first census; (2) the order that all should return to their own home for the purpose of the census. Some of the results reached in that book are now firmly established, viz., that there was a system of periodical enrolments in the Roman Empire, at least in the Eastern provinces, the first of which took place in 9-8 B.C., and that the intention of Augustus in instituting this system must have been to make it applicable to the whole Empire and not merely to those provinces in which its existence is proved. We have no writers who describe such institutions in the Roman Empire, and evidence about the periodic census is scanty and, so to say, accidental. Only the chance that in the dry soil of Egypt some of the actual census papers have been preserved here and there has shown what the system was, and how it was arranged.

On the other hand, the hypothesis which was advanced to account for the order that people should return to their own original home, or place of origin, in order to be counted there, proves to be wrong. That regulation, which for-

merly seemed to be so extraordinary and so unlike the Roman custom, now turns out really to have been customary in the Roman East.

It will therefore be advisable, in the interest of clearness, to put in their proper form the questions which are under discussion. Their real nature is not always rightly understood ; and hence the discussion has sometimes been conducted on wrong principles. The character of Luke's narrative, as one may now say, has not been properly estimated by historical criticism ; and an attempt will be made to put it in its true light.

The date 6 B.C., which has in its favour no positive evidence, and only very slight general presumptions, was a part of the above-mentioned hypothesis ; and now it must be set aside. The evidence, scanty indeed, but coherent and unequivocal, is that 8 B.C. was the year in which Luke's account places the birth of Jesus.

That the time of the year was autumn, towards October, as maintained in my book, remains highly probable. Any other time of year seems definitely excluded ; and Colonel Mackinlay has with great plausibility suggested that the movement of the people towards Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles was utilised for the return to their own home. The movement to the place of origin would generally be towards the south, and largely towards the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, for the dispersion had been mainly from Jerusalem and the immediately adjoining parts of Palestine. Hence a very large number of Jews, in going to Jerusalem, would be brought close to their original domicile ; and there were few who would not at least be brought nearer. As to exceptions, it must be remembered that the census was not made on the same day for the whole population (as in modern census-taking) ; and that the enrolment might be made for the individual householder rather earlier or later. Joseph

and Mary, going to Bethlehem, naturally conjoined this journey with one to Jerusalem for the Feast; and we may assume that in general this season was found to be convenient.

The latter part of the reign of Augustus, in fact, the whole period from about 15 B.C. to the beginning of the reign of Tiberius in 14 A.D., is almost completely hidden from our knowledge.<sup>1</sup> No historian illumines it. Suetonius and Velleius hardly mention anything in it except some dynastic matters. There was nothing else, from their point of view, worthy of mention; there reigned an almost unbroken peace except for some frontier wars, and the bureaucratic system of Augustus worked so efficiently, on the whole, that there was nothing striking to record except the German war and the tragic defeat of Varus. Had a formal history of Augustus's reign been preserved by a writer like Tacitus, he would probably have lamented the want of great events, and would have mentioned little except dynastic gossip during that period. It did not occur to the ancient historians that it was a worthy task to record—what we in modern times most desire—an account of the bureaucracy, a study of the provinces, details about the improvements whereby Augustus made the provinces contented and happy, and through which he deserved—if man could deserve—to be idolised by the nations whom he had found in slavery and misery and had made, to a certain degree, free and progressive.

A glance into any account of the history of Augustus,

<sup>1</sup> As an illustration of its obscurity take the following. A certain Favonius is known, from an inscription found last year, to have held the very highest offices of state in the last years of the reign of Augustus; but except from that single stone found in Phrygia, he seems to be utterly unknown, unless the conjecture be admitted that Favonius is an otherwise unrecorded cognomen, attached to the name of some known historical figure.

written according to the old-fashioned type usual forty years ago, will show the obscurity of this period. Take Smith's *Dictionary of Ancient Biography*. To Augustus are given fourteen columns and a half, of which eight or ten short sentences exhaust this period, and these are dynastic or touch on German frontier wars. One would not say that this is good history or right method; but it is the old-fashioned style of history, and it is the sort of knowledge by whose standard the New Testament has been judged too often in the past fifty years and at the present day.

The extract from Luke ii. 1-3 plunges us right into the midst of provincial administration with its minute details, the "enrolment" of the provinces, the first enrolment of a series<sup>1</sup> implying that there followed systematic enrolments at intervals, the action of a member of the bureaucracy, the implication that many other members of the bureaucracy must have co-operated in such a vast administrative work, which was begun by an order of the governor calling back every individual to his own city.

This gives a very striking picture of a splendid piece of governmental work. It tells of a bold law for the whole Empire, instituting a series of enrolments, a regular census-system. Taking into account what machinery is required to take a census, to tabulate and use its results, to make this a universal system for the Empire, and to take the Imperial census at intervals, the historian is struck with admiration of the Augustan idea. The statesman who thought of making such a system universal knew that wise government depended on the collection, classification and

<sup>1</sup> I have been criticised for maintaining that Luke distinguished in meaning *πρῶτος* from *πρότερος*; but now at least it is difficult to deny that here *πρῶτος* must mean "the first of many"; and I have nothing to retract.

registration of details ; and he must have expected that his bureaucracy would prove equal to the work. If he thought of a system, he must have determined his system by regular recurrence at regular intervals : no other way need or can be thought of. If Augustus could plan out such schemes as this, it is no wonder that his great Imperial foundation lasted so long, and that his bureaucratic system of administration fixed the general type for all modern methods of government. Any one who has a true feeling for history must be thankful to the great historian who has sketched for us in such brief and masterly fashion by a few pregnant words such a skilful picture. He has lit up the obscurity of this dark period, and given us a specimen of Imperial administrative method. The historians of the century that follows the age of Augustus were so occupied with the " great events of history " that they would not mention such humble matters as enrolment and its methods ; and Luke was left to tell the tale alone. Such very slight corroboration as has been recorded by Tacitus intervenes incidentally, and is alluded to in such slight and contemptuous fashion that it gives only the minimum of information, and was not even recognised as corroborative until the whole census-system was cleared up in the gradual progress of research.

Most recent writers on the New Testament, however, have stood placidly and contentedly apart from the modern developments of Roman Imperial history, and have evolved the theory that Luke had invented this incident " all out of his own head " (in the children's phrase),<sup>1</sup> to explain how Jesus could be born in Bethlehem of parents who lived in Nazareth.

<sup>1</sup> His starting-point (as it is supposed) lay in a blunder about Quirinius, who did actually take another census in Judæa (the second of the series). According to this fashionable theory, Luke misplaced the census of 7 A.D. to a date in the reign of Herod who died B.C. 4.

Assume for the moment that this is so. What genius for historical fiction is implied in the invention! Luke had no foundation in fact to go upon; his starting-point was only his blunder about the date of a totally different kind of enrolment made by Quirinius in Palestine in 7 A.D.,<sup>1</sup> when that governor conducted the survey and valuation of the country which was now for the first time being constituted as a province of the Empire. All the rest of his story is, according to the fashionable theory, pure fiction. How comes it that Luke could imagine all that is implied in his picture? How could he invent a vast process which hangs together so well in itself and which puts before us a quite wonderful piece of bureaucratic administration, extremely complicated, requiring the collaboration of a great many officials, and yet all purely fictitious? Still more wonderful is this when we find from recent discovery that every detail in Luke's picture can be paralleled from administrative practice in the Empire at a later period. The historian was not merely a genius, but also a prophet. He foresaw what the subsequent Emperors were going to do; and he imagines Augustus doing it all before the death of Herod in 4 B.C. The scholar who now says that Luke invented the picture which is drawn in ii. 1-3 has to face these alternatives: either he must glorify Luke as a genius in fiction and a prophet in history, or he must confess that his own theory is wrong.

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that, if Quirinius in 7 A.D. was not making a periodic census, his enrolment would not be a model from which Luke could draw the picture given in ii. 1-3. On our view there were combined in the enrolment of that year the valuation and inquisition which were required for Roman administrative purposes in a new province, along with the counting by household (*ἀπογραφή κατ' οἰκίας*) of the periodic census. It was probably the former part that provoked the great disturbances among the Jews as recorded by Josephus. The counting by households necessitated an inquiry into home life that was offensive to the Asiatic mind and society; but inquisition into property with a view to taxation is even more unpopular and detested.

Let us, however, investigate more strictly what is implied in the theory of false invention. The whole procedure, according to the writers of this class, was a fiction: Jesus was born in Nazareth (only a very few go so far as to deny that He was ever born or had any historical existence); and after a legend connecting Him with Bethlehem had grown up, Luke set about inventing historical circumstances and conditions to explain and give plausibility and historical background to the legend. But observe how much this theory implies: it may be doubted whether those who hold it have ever put clearly to themselves or their readers all that they really are contending for. They are really maintaining—

1. That Luke, without possessing any true historical instinct (such as was the heritage of the Greeks, making them seek after and value for its own sake historical truth), yet had a certain morbid craving for a historical setting to his story, and that he invented a historical background after casting about in the past, to search for something suitable; and that finding a census recorded as occurring in A.D. 6-7, he took this and transferred it to a different time. It is not made quite clear whether the contention is that Luke committed this blunder from pure inability and ignorance, fancying that it afforded some explanation, or that he deliberately transferred the census to a wrong time; the commoner view seems to be that he acted through ignorance and incapacity.

2. That Luke invented without any authority the statement that Augustus ordered a census or enrolment of the whole Empire to be made; there could (as these writers assume) be no record of such an impossible act, but Luke supposed that the order of Augustus<sup>1</sup> regarding the Pales-

<sup>1</sup> The instructions (*mandata*) given by the Emperor to his *legatus*, whom he sent to Syria in A.D., 6 would of course contain a provision for making the usual valuation, etc., required in constituting the new province. No special edict was needed for this action in a single new province. Out

tinian census (which he misplaced) was likely to have been general. The contention here is that Luke, without any need or any authority, invented the statement. In the former point he is supposed to have been tempted into error by his desire to place the legend in a historical frame, and to have made bad use of a real recorded fact,—the Quirinian census of A.D. 6. That census, of course, was taken on the order of Augustus in his instructions to the Governor of Syria ; but to invent unnecessarily a general edict of Augustus, and thus transform a local process at the organisation of a new Province into an Imperial regulation for the Empire, shows either the grossest ignorance about facts and methods of government, or a calculated and deliberate forgery of historical testimony performed for the purpose of imparting a false air of historicity to a legend. Carelessness in a historian is bad, but such calculated falsehood is much worse.

3. The fashionable theory implies further that Luke invented, not merely one world-wide Augustan census under Herod, but also the idea of a series of enrolments, of which this was the first. Now, why should he do this ? His other inventions were hid in the far-away times of King Herod and might deceive the unwary ; but a series of enrolments was a thing that could be tested by every reader from his own experience.

One feels that this part of the accusation overtaxes one's power of belief. No rational writer could or would go to such an extreme of needless and useless invention. If this is all false it adds nothing to the verisimilitude of the narrative ; and it must have forthwith betrayed its falseness to every reader at the time when Luke's Gospel was written. We cannot admit such an incredible accusation. The theory destroys itself.

of this *mandatum* Luke, according to the fashionable theory, has evolved an edict issued to the whole Empire.

4. The fashionable theory, further, maintained that the idea of every person going to his own home to be enrolled was a pure fiction, and could not possibly have been true: it was a mere device to explain how Jesus could be born in Bethlehem of parents who lived in Nazareth: it was a false explanation of an invented occurrence: Jesus, if born at all, was born in the home of his parents. In my book on this subject I regarded it as certain that this enforced return to the place of origin for the census was non-Roman, but suggested an hypothesis to explain how it came to be a feature of the Palestinian census. My hypothesis was incorrect, for it now appears that the order to return to the original home, though in a sense non-Roman, was really the regular feature of the census in the Eastern provinces, as will be shown in the sequel of this article.

#### I. THE YEAR OF THE FIRST ENROLMENT (UNDER QUIRINIUS.)

Towards the end of the second century, Clement of Alexandria, who was familiar with the facts of Roman administration in the Eastern provinces, speaks as if he had no doubt what Luke meant by the words "first enrolment." He explains them "when first they ordered enrolments to be made."<sup>1</sup> He evidently thought of a system of enrolments, which began in a particular year under Augustus. This general system he knew to exist in his own time; and he takes it on Luke's authority that Jesus was born while the first of the series of enrolments was being made. This must have been in a year, which could be determined by arithmetical computation and by consulting Roman records. Tertullian, as we shall see, went a step further: he consulted the records, and stated the result. These two mutually confirmatory testimonies, which were independent of Luke

<sup>1</sup> *Strom.* i., 21, 147: quoted in *Was Christ Born?* p. 128.

and founded on personal knowledge of Roman facts, have been set aside as groundless and valueless by the adherents of the fashionable theory.

On a fair estimation of Clement's statement, no reasonable scholar can doubt his meaning : Clement was familiar with the census system as it was performed periodically around him throughout his life in Egypt ; he had filled up his own census paper, and had seen his parents and friends do the same ; and he believed that the same periodic system of census was practised in Palestine and had begun, like the Egyptian census, under Augustus and by order of Augustus in 9-8 B.C.

Yet so absurd did the idea of a series of enrolments, of which this was the first, appear to modern scholars, that no one seems to have thought of even mentioning it as a possible interpretation of the words of Luke. Various impossible and ungrammatical translations of the Greek, or equally impossible " corrections " of the text, were proposed ; but the simple and necessary meaning is " this was the first census in the year when Quirinius was governor of Syria," which can be understood better if we put it in current English form (assuming for the moment the date) : " this was the first census (8 B.C.)." That is the simple and full meaning. Here modern discovery comes to our aid. It was undreamed of and unimagined twenty years ago, but it is now an established and well-known fact, that a series of periodic enrolments took place in the province of Egypt. We cannot prove that they were world-wide except from Luke ; but we find incidental references to one here and another there, which are most easily and naturally explicable, if all belong to one universal series. We have the practical certainty that Augustus instituted them, and we have specimens of the actual census-papers in Egypt extending from the third (A.D. 20) for more than two centuries. We know also that Au-

gustus imitated and modified to suit his own purposes an institution of old standing in Egypt, and that he arranged it according to a cycle of 15 years (ancient way of computing: 14 years in modern fashion), reckoned from the first year of his fully organised principate 23 B.C. The actual enrolment was intended to include all who were born before the last day of the year; therefore, it was made in the following year. As 9 B.C. was the cycle-year, the counting took place in 8. All that Luke describes in Palestine took place regularly in Egypt certainly, and in other provinces probably or possibly.

But was Quirinius governor of Syria in that year? Tertullian says<sup>1</sup> that Jesus was born when Sentius Saturninus was governor; and we have good evidence that Sentius Saturninus governed Syria in the three years 9-6 B.C. Formerly Tertullian's statement was set aside as absurd and valueless, because no one put the birth of Jesus so early as 8 B.C.; but as soon as Luke's first enrolment of the series is found to coincide with the government of Sentius, Tertullian's statement acquires unsuspected weight. He corroborates Luke as regards the time of the census during Herod's life, but not as regards the name of the governor. He must, therefore, derive from a different source of information independent of Luke, because on one essential point he diverges from him; and, at the very least, his statement proves that there existed different sources of information, which is a very important fact for the historical critic. If he had only the authority of Luke to rest on, it is inconceivable that he could have named Sentius as governor; and it is evident that, if this event had been a mere fiction invented by Luke, there could not be other sources of knowledge about it. There must lie behind these two statements, partly harmonious, partly diverse, some historical reality and some inde-

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Marc.* iv. 19.

pendent tradition. A historical process that is mentioned by only one witness might be an invention ; but a process that is attested by two totally independent authorities cannot be set down by sane criticism as a pure invention.

We must therefore accept what Tertullian says as giving a fixed point in this investigation. He had access to trustworthy records showing that the first Enrolment or Census took place in 8 B.C., and that Saturninus governed Syria in that year. It is not necessary to understand that he got both facts from the same source. Probably he knew from one authority<sup>1</sup> the nature and times of the periodic Enrolments; and he consulted another source for the governor's name. Finally, he depended on Luke's authority alone (or on others who in their turn had learned from Luke) for the fact that Jesus was born at this first census. He doubtless knew that he was differing from Luke regarding the governor's name; but he would not regard the discrepancy as being a matter of any consequence. He stated the facts as he had them; and probably he did not trouble to find a way of reconciling the diverse authorities.

Simply from the severe but intelligent study of the two most definite ancient authorities, any truly rational criticism must infer that the statement of Luke ii. 1-3 is not an invention of his own, concocted stupidly from half-knowledge and from misuse of the fact that Quirinius was connected with another provincial census in A.D. 6-7. Luke must have had from some source or other information about events of that period, and this information was in most respects at least trustworthy and of inestimable value, for it gives a picture of the beginning of that most remarkable institution, the periodical census of the East. This critical

<sup>1</sup> This authority would naturally be the actual system, as Tertullian knew it in his own experience. Clemens Alex. knew it, and speaks of it as a familiar fact in ordinary life.

study of the authorities, however, has not as yet sufficed to explain the divergence between our two authorities regarding the governor of Syria at the time.

As we may reasonably suppose, Tertullian had some strong ground to stand on, when he corrected the record of Luke regarding the governor's name.<sup>1</sup> In all probability his reason was this : he had quite trustworthy Roman record about the year when the first census was taken, 8 B.C., and about the fact that Saturninus was governor of Syria in that year. The record to which Tertullian had access must be accepted as correct for two reasons : (1) We know from Josephus that Saturninus was governor of Syria in 7 B.C., in which year he acted as one of the Roman judges when Herod prosecuted his two sons.<sup>2</sup> The ordinary period of rule in Syria was three years ; and, although it cannot be assumed as certain that Saturninus administered the province for the whole three, yet this must be taken as probable. His successor, Quintilius Varus, governed for at least three years ; the proof is that coins with his name were struck at Antioch, the Syrian seat of government, in the years 25-27 of the Actian era ; the year 25 of that era began at the autumn equinox B.C. 7, and Varus must have come to Syria about July, 6 B.C.<sup>3</sup> He was in power during the disturbances that ensued on the death of Herod (spring of 4 B.C.). Saturninus's rule, therefore, ended about the middle of 6 B.C., when Varus's term of office began.

The idea might suggest itself that both Quirinius and Satur-

<sup>1</sup> The supposition that Tertullian knew a different text of Luke, in which Saturninus, not Quirinius, was named, may in the present state of the evidence be dismissed as contrary to the principles of right criticism.

<sup>2</sup> *Bell. Jud.* I. 27, 2, *Ant.* XVI. ii. 3 (compare XVI. 9, 1 and 10, 8).

<sup>3</sup> The note in my book on the subject, p. 247, must be corrected. The suggestion there made that the Antiochian New Year was in spring cannot be justified. Now as year 26 of this era was running in January 5 B.C. (coins of year 26 mention Augustus as *Cos XII B.C.* 5), 25 of the era ran from 23 September 7 to 22 September 6 B.C. It must, of course, be assumed that the governor entered on office about midsummer.

ninus governed Syria in the year 8, because the change of governor took place during that year. Thus it might in a sense be said with equal truth "in the year that Saturninus was governor," and "in the year that Quirinius was governor." The evidence known is not sufficient to disprove this; it might be true; but we prefer the third hypothesis, which has been advanced already by the present writer: viz., that there were two Augustan *legati* of Syria at the same time during the year 8 B.C., with different spheres of action, Saturninus and Quirinius.<sup>1</sup>

There is another suggestion which might be put forward, that Luke was right in the rest (in which he is confirmed by the authorities that Tertullian used and by the results of modern investigation), but<sup>1</sup> that he was wrong as regards the governor's name, mixing up the famous census by Quirinius in 6-7 A.D.<sup>2</sup> with the first census. This theory I confess that I cannot accept, because the otherwise unnecessary addition "first" shows that the historian is carefully distinguishing that particular census from any later census. Moreover here comes in to our aid the newly discovered monument, which has suggested the present article. We now know that Quirinius was governor of Syria about this time.

In order to understand the import and the value of the evidence to be drawn from the newly-discovered monument, we must look at the career of Quirinius. His career is described by Tacitus, *Annals*, iii., on the occasion of his death, and the brief description is invaluable, because it is given in

<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested by Monsieur R. S. Bour that Quirinius's sphere of duty was specially to conduct the census in Syria with the title *legatus Augusti*, while the other *legatus Augusti* conducted the government of Syria in ordinary matters; but this suggestion is disproved by the fact that Quirinius as governor conducted the war against the Homonades. See *Was Christ Born*, p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> Because (as stated in a previous note) the second census was conjoined with the first valuation of property in the new province, it became more famous and more unpopular than the first.

chronological order, although, as is usual with Tacitus, without statement of actual dates. After his consulship in 12 B.C. Quirinius held the command in the war against the Homonades<sup>1</sup> (who had slain Amyntas, king of the Galatae, in 25 B.C., and thus brought about the formation of his kingdom into the province Galatia). Afterwards he was proconsul of Asia. The next point mentioned in his career is that he accompanied Gaius Cæsar to the East as tutor and adviser to the young prince in 4 A.D. There are thus sixteen years during which fall the war against the Homonades and the proconsulship of Asia. The war against the Homonades was evidently regarded as a serious one, and lasted a considerable time, for the conqueror was rewarded with the triumphal ornaments. The enterprise was regarded as so serious, that, though the offence took place in 25 B.C., the punitive expedition was postponed until some year (not precisely fixed) after 12 B.C. In the years following 25 there was much work of a more urgent kind for the Imperial government; but about 12 B.C. the pressure was relaxed; and attention could be given to the Homonades. The conduct of this difficult campaign was entrusted to Quirinius, who had previously distinguished himself by subduing the Garamantes. The conquest of those desert tribesmen must have been hard, as we may see from the difficulties which have attended the Italian operations in 1911-2 on the outskirts of the Garamantian country. The army at his disposal certainly consisted of the Syrian legions, for there were no others in the East; and therefore Mommsen, Rohden and Dessau are all agreed that the conduct of the war must have been associated with the government of the province Syria.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mommsen places it in 3-2 B.C. In my book on the subject it is placed in 7-6 B.C.; but even that is a little too late. The expedition was not likely to be delayed long after 12 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> That office was consular, and Tacitus says that the Homonadensian war was after Quirinius's consulship (12 B.C.). The government of Syria carried with it the command. See *Prosopographia J.R.*, s.v.

The famous Tiburtine fragment offers its evidence at this point. It records part of the career of a high official in the Augustan period, whose name has been lost ; and it was composed after the death of Augustus. The person who is meant conquered some foreign people, and after some interval (during which he was proconsul of Asia), he governed Syria for the second time. This war was a very serious one, for it was marked by two *supplicationes*, implying two distinct victories, and the victorious general was rewarded with the triumphal ornaments ; moreover, the war was in some way associated with the name of a king, if the restoration [re]gem is correct. All this corresponds excellently with the Homonadensian war, in which punishment was inflicted for the death of Amyntas, a client-king ; and in general the fragmentary career suits no known person except Quirinius.<sup>1</sup> Still amid the obscurity that envelops the later part of Augustus's reign, confirmation from local epigraphy is very welcome. We wanted some memorial of Quirinius's presence in the East ; and this has now been found. It is the more useful, because it gives material to determine more exactly the date of the war.

Mommsen placed the first government of Syria by Quirinius in 3-2 B.C., leaving an inexplicably long interval between the offence and the punishment of the Homonades. Moreover every consideration points to the probability that the consulship of Quirinius was the prelude to his command of the Syrian legions for the war.

If Mommsen's date were right, Quirinius's first governorship would not suit Luke any better than his second, for Luke's narrative makes it clear that Quirinius governed Syria before the death of Herod in 4 B.C. For reasons stated in my book on the subject I placed the first government of

<sup>1</sup> Mommsen and (I think) all good modern authorities accept the assignment to Quirinius as certain.

Quirinius in 7-5 B.C., and connected it with the foundation of the five Pisidian colonies and the building of the military road connecting them all with the military centre at Antioch, the Imperial Way (Via Sebaste), about 6 B.C.<sup>1</sup> This connexion may now be accepted as certain.

The new evidence is contained in the following inscription, copied at Antioch in 1912 by Mr. J. G. C. Anderson, of Christ Church, Oxford, and myself :

C. Carista[nio]	To Gaius Caristianus
C. F. Ser. Front[oni]	(Son of Gaius, of Sergian tribe)
	Fronto
Caesiano Iulio,	Caesianus Iulius,
praef(ecto) fabr(um), pon[tif(ici),	chief of engineers, pontifex,
sacerdoti, praefecto	priest, prefect of
P. Sulpici Quirini duumviri,	P. Sulpicius Quirinius duumvir,
praefecto M Servili.	prefect of M. Servilius.
Huic primo omnium	To him first of all men
publiced(ecurionum)d(ecreto)statua	at state expense by decree of the
posita est	decuriones, a statue was
	erected.

I have had the great advantage of stating my views to Professor H. Dessau, of Berlin, who since Mommsen's death stands in the foremost rank as an authority on such matters as are involved in this inscription. I owe to him the restoration *Iulio* in line 3 (which, as he points out, makes the arrangement more symmetrical and the reading more normal than any of my suggestions), and also the identification of Servilius (line 7). In regard to the date between 10 and 7 B.C. and the general bearing of the inscription, he confirms the views which are here stated.<sup>2</sup> Since receiving his letter

<sup>1</sup> The date is given in a milestone which I found in 1886 on the site of Colonia Comana, *C.I.L.* iii, No. 6974: it was afterwards copied by M. Bérard, who completed my text CORN by adding VTO.

<sup>2</sup> I am permitted to quote the words of his letter: *mit der Erklärung und zeitlicher Ansetzung der Inschrift des Caristianus Fronto Caesianus haben Sie zweifellos recht. Nur in ein paar Einzelheiten möchte ich mir erlauben von Ihnen abzuweichen.* Then follow the remarks (which I have adopted) about Julius and Servilius. The three *cognomina* and the use of Julius as degraded to a *cognomen* already at this early period, he defends by quot-

I have tried to fix the date more precisely than I did when writing to him.

Gaius Caristianus Fronto was probably one of the original colonists of Antioch, where, as other inscriptions show, his family played a leading part for more than a century: his grandson or great-grandson rose to senatorial rank, and attained the consulship and perhaps also the proconsulate of Asia. The first statue which was erected in the colony at the expense of the colonial government in accordance with a decree of the decuriones, stood on the basis which bore this inscription. The rest of the career of Caristianus, interesting as it is, need not be discussed here: we notice only the part which brought him in contact with Quirinius.

Quirinius was elected chief magistrate (*duumvir*) of the colony Antioch; and he nominated Caristianus as his *praefectus* to act for him. This sort of honorary magistracy was often offered to the reigning Emperor by *coloniae*; but in such cases the Emperor was elected alone without a colleague. Under the earlier emperors, and especially under Augustus, the same compliment was sometimes paid to other distinguished Romans, chiefly members of the Imperial family. Exceptional cases occur in which the field of choice was wider.<sup>1</sup> This inscription is the most complete example of the wider choice: it mentions two such cases: both Quirinius and Servilius were elected in this way.

There must have been some special reason in these two cases. Quirinius was not a man of any special distinction. He was of humble origin,<sup>2</sup> and his career, as sketched by Tacitus,<sup>3</sup> is a good example of the Roman system. No bar impeded the advancement to the highest position in the

ing *C.I.L.*, III. 551, XIV. 3,606 (Inscr. Sel. 921), *C.I.L.* VI. 1,403 (Inscr. Sel. 966), IX. 4,197, and later VIII. 12,442 and III. 15,208 (Inscr. Sel. 1110).

<sup>1</sup> Mommsen, *Staatsrecht*, ii. 814, 828.

<sup>2</sup> *Obscurissima domus*, Tacitus, *Ann.* III. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ann.* III, 48.

state of this low-born soldier from the small Latin town Lanuvium. He is a type of the Latin character, able and energetic, hard and unlovable. But why should he be elected a magistrate of this remote colony in south-eastern Phrygia, or southern Galatia? He had neither Imperial connexion nor outstanding reputation to commend him to the Antiochian *coloni*. But everything is clear when we remember that he conducted the war against the Homonades. Antioch was a fortress intended to restrain the depredations of the mountain tribes; and the Homonades must have been a constant danger to the country which it was Antioch's duty to protect. It was at that time that they elected Quirinius a *duumvir*.

It is not at first sight obvious why M. Servilius was elected to the chief magistracy. He was indeed a noble; <sup>1</sup> but of his career nothing creditable is known, except that he was consul in A.D. 3; he was, however, a favourite of Tiberius. He also must have been in some way brought into relation with the colony; and the obvious probability is that he was governor of Galatia. This would fully account for the compliment. On this view it is tempting and plausible to suppose that he was *duumvir* along with or immediately after Quirinius,<sup>2</sup> and that they had co-operated as governors of the two Eastern provinces Syria and Galatia in the Homonadenian war. He was succeeded by Cornutus Aquila, who still held office 6 B.C., when the construction of the Via Sebaste and the foundation of the Pisidian colonies was going on. Both of them named the same *praefectus*, a proof that Caristanianus was regarded as the most suitable man in Antioch for the position at this dangerous time.

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Ann.* III. 48. I follow Professor Dessau's identification. I had thought of an older M. Servilius, legate of Brutus and Cassius in Asia in 43 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> When the Emperor was elected to an honorary *duumvirate*, he had no colleague. When any other person was thus elected, he had a colleague in the ordinary fashion, as Mommsen thinks (*Staatsrecht*, ii. 328).

While the exact form of the hypothesis about Servilius might be modified by better knowledge, it may be regarded as certain that the inscription is a memorial of the Homonadensian war and the Syrian governorship of Quirinius.

That some personal friendship existed between Servilius and Quirinius is proved by the record of Tacitus, *Ann.* iii. 22. In A.D. 20, when Quirinius brought a charge against his high-born wife Aemilia Lepida<sup>1</sup> after divorcing her, Servilius gave evidence against her. The nature of the accusations show that the witnesses must have been either associates of Lepida, who knew her well (in which case they would not have testified against her),<sup>2</sup> or friends of Quirinius, who had access to his house. Both prosecutor and witness must have been old men at this time.

Now as to the date. It is probable that Quirinius came to Syria in the summer of 11 B.C., immediately after his consulship. He had to prepare for the war, which could not well begin before June in the following year. The mountain country of the Homonades is rugged and lofty, nowhere under 3,500 ft. above the sea, and in great part very much higher.<sup>3</sup> The war was slow, because the tribesmen dwelt in fortified villages (*castella*), and these had to be captured one after another (as Tacitus implies). The campaigns necessarily were short, as winter begins early and lasts late in the Taurus mountains, and snow lies very deep and long. At least two summers must have been spent in this way, and perhaps each was marked with a *supplicatio*. A third year may have been spent in reorganising the conquered country and planning the series of Pisidian colonies.

<sup>1</sup> By a slip her name is given Domitia Lepida in my book on the subject, p. 230, etc.

<sup>2</sup> It was regarded as disgraceful for free citizens to bear witness against a friend, even though he was guilty. Slaves were tortured to make them reveal the secrets of the household to which they belonged.

<sup>3</sup> From 4,000 to 7,000 feet is a fair estimate.

The fact mentioned about the statue of Caristianus, that it was the first erected at state cost in the colony, would in itself suggest an early date. Not many years are likely to have elapsed after the foundation of the colony, before a statue was erected in the city. The connexion of Caristianus with the glorious events of the Homonadensian war gives a good reason for the honour of a statue which the colony paid. Statues at private expense were allowed to be erected more freely.

It is generally assumed that Colonia Caesarea Antiochia was founded immediately after the organisation of the province Galatia ;<sup>1</sup> and this may be regarded as in the highest degree probable. But the five Pisidian colonies were founded together, and at a different time from Antioch, as appears from the names :—

Julia Augusta Prima Fida Comamenorum

Julia Augusta Felix Cremnensium

Julia Augusta Olbasena

Julia Augusta Felix Gemina Lustra<sup>2</sup>

Julia Augusta colonia Parlais.<sup>3</sup>

If, as Mr. Calder<sup>4</sup> thinks, C.I.L., iii. 6843 refers to Drusus who died B.C. 9, this would prove that Antioch was older than the Pisidian colonies.

As Quirinius was much occupied *per Ciliciam*,<sup>5</sup> Saturninus

<sup>1</sup> *Cities of St. Paul*, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> Lustra in Latin on coins and inscriptions (evidently under the influence of popular etymology); Lystra in Greek.

<sup>3</sup> The names of Parlais and Olbasa may probably have been lengthened by other titles. We possess only late coins, in which the titles of these colonies are usually cut short (e.g., at Lystra).

<sup>4</sup> Drusus, who is there mentioned in his second year of office, is probably the stepson of Augustus, who died 9 B.C. He must have been elected to the duumvirate at 11 B.C. or earlier, and held office for two years. But it is equally probable that Drusus was the son of Tiberius and heir to the principate. In *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1912 (not yet paged).

<sup>5</sup> Cilicia was at that time attached to the province of Syria: Rohden and Dessau say that in the war Quirinius was *legatus sine dubio pro pr. Syriae, ad quam Cilicia tum pertinebat* (*Prosop.*, iii. p. 288): so also Mommsen, etc.

was sent to administer the domestic affairs of Syria and Palestine, as Josephus shows. The enrolment must have been to some extent under his charge (and so Tertullian is justified); but Quirinius was in military command, and household enrolments had to the Romans rather a military connexion (and so Luke also is justified).

Thus the command of Quirinius lasted from 11 to 8 B.C., possibly even a year longer; and that of Saturninus from 9 to 6 B.C. Any year about 9 to 7 would be suitable for the duumvirate of Quirinius; the earlier date would imply desire to co-operate by putting the colony under charge of a man chosen by Quirinius; the later date would imply gratitude on the part of Antioch. The former supposition seems perhaps more probable, and the purpose would be most completely attained if Servilius was the second *duumvir*, and both nominated the same *praeфекtus*, thus placing the whole resources of the colony under a single head for effective co-operation in the war.

Thus we find, comparing contemporary documents found in two Roman colonies which were most concerned, indubitable evidence that Quirinius was governing Syria about 10-7 B.C., and probably in the exact years 9-8 B.C., the time of the first enrolment.

That Quirinius in one of his governments of Syria made the census of that province is proved by a famous inscription at Venice, which recorded that Aemilius Secundus, by order of P. Sulpicius Quirinius, governor of Syria, held the census of Apamea, and counted in it a population of 117,000 citizens, also that he was sent by Quirinius to conduct a war against the Ituraei and captured one of their fortified villages. This shows one bond of connexion between military matters and the enumeration of citizens in the census. Another connexion was that to the Romans a leading object in counting the citizens was to calculate future

military strength. It seems now impossible to determine whether Aemilius performed these duties in the first or the second governorship of Quirinius. He does not mention a number, which was usually added when a person was governor for the second time, and the omission might suggest the first governorship; but in this case the context does not call for the specification even if the second administration be meant.

This important inscription was formerly condemned as a forgery, apparently for no other reason than that it mentioned the census of Quirinius and supported Luke; but the discovery not long ago of one half of the long-lost stone proved that the document is genuine.

W. M. RAMSAY.

*REMINISCENCES OF THE PARABLE OF THE  
SOWER CONTAINED IN THE EPISTLE OF ST.  
JAMES.*

IN p. lxii. of my edition of this Epistle I have pointed out the close connexion between it and the Sermon on the Mount, and in pp. lxxxv., to xc. and cci. to cciii., I have touched on the resemblances between the Epistle and the Gospels generally, including that of St. John. In p. lxii. I also said that these resemblances had the appearance of thoughts frequently uttered by the original speaker, and sinking into the mind of an attentive hearer, who afterwards reproduces them in his own manner, along with further developments. This has been shown in a very interesting way with reference to the earliest and best known of the Parables, that of the Sower, by the Rev. A. S. W. Young in a sermon which he has kindly allowed me to make use of. He points out first the thoughts which St. James