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## *LUKE'S NARRATIVE OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS.*

In the former part of this article the proof has been published, definite and conclusive, that Quirinius must have been governing the Syrian province and commanding the Syrian legions for part, at least, of the time between 10 and 7 B.C.; and a probability has been established that he was in Syria and in close relations with Pisidian Antioch in the year 9–8 B.C. This results purely from contemporary epigraphic evidence compared with the account given by Tacitus of the career of Quirinius. The evidence of Luke plays no part in the proof of date, except in one respect, which must be clearly distinguished.

If we had only the non-Christian evidence to go upon, no one would for a moment hesitate to assert that Quirinius governed Syria from 11 to 9 or 8 B.C., and that he was succeeded by Sentius Saturninus 9 or 8 to 6 B.C. Adding the testimony of Luke ii. 1–3, I have argued that, probably but not necessarily, Saturninus during the first year of his government was charged with part of the Syrian administration alongside of Quirinius, who was still commanding the Syrian legions.[1]

The combined evidence of Tertullian and Josephus proves that Saturninus was actually governing Syria during 8 B.C., when the first census was held. Taking the extra-Lucan

[1] We must assume that the governor's term of office began about July 1: that is attested as regards the proconsuls who governed senatorial provinces, and is natural and probable for imperatorial *legati*. The journey to and from the province would then fall in the summer; it is unthinkable that the journey, often very long and slow, should have been fixed for the season of storm and cold.

evidence alone, we should then have to infer that Quirinius was no longer governor of Syria at the actual time when Jesus was born, although he had been governor until a few weeks or months before that event.

Even this result places Luke's narrative on a very different level of credibility from that on which it is estimated by the fashionable theory. It would leave no room for the assertion that he confounded the census and valuation of Palestine by Quirinius in A.D. 6–7 with an event that happened under Herod. At the worst any possible error on his part would amount only to the moderate extent that he supposed Quirinius to have governed a few weeks or months longer than the actual term of his office. But there is no need to conclude that Luke was guilty of any error, even if we make Saturninus the successor of Quirinius. What is it exactly that Luke says? Let us be sure that we have this exactly and clearly in our minds when we are considering whether he is right or wrong. Let us not say that he is wrong in making a statement, if he does not make that statement.

Luke does not say that Quirinius was governor at the time when Jesus was born, i.e., in the latter part of the year. He only mentions, in a sort of historical footnote, as it were: "this was the first census, when Quirinius was governing Syria." The census was intended to include all who were born before the end of 9 B.C., and could not, therefore, take place until the year was finished; but it was the census for 9 B.C., and, if Quirinius governed till midsummer 8 B.C., Luke's words are justified completely, while the authority from whom Tertullian derived his statement is also in another view correct. The one is speaking in general terms of the census as an incident of Roman rule, the other speaks of the actual birthday of the Saviour. We must observe precisely what it is that each writer states, and not blame Luke

for inexactitude without need or justification. Above all we must not be misled by modern analogy. We in modern time make the census for one fixed and universal moment, catching our migratory population at the given instant, as if by an instantaneous photograph. The Romans tried to cope in another way with the difficulty of numbering people who might be far from home, viz., by bringing them at some time during the enrolment-year to their proper and original home; and they permitted them to come for enrolment at any time during the year.[1] On this rule there is much more to say in Section II. below.

Now that Luke's accuracy in every other detail has been so triumphantly vindicated, and that in this one detail the extent of possible error is so small, surely it would be right to take the most favourable view. If, on the one hand, Quirinius was followed as governor by Saturninus, then we must infer (as is perfectly easy and permissible) that Quirinius governed Syria during part of the enrolment-year, 8 B.C., that then his term of office came to an end about 1 July, and that Saturninus governed during the rest. That supposition agrees with all the testimony, and brings to a focus all the best evidence. If, on the other hand, Quirinius for a special purpose retained his duties on the Syrian frontier after Saturninus came about July 1 in 9 B.C., then the discrepancy between Tertullian and Luke presents no difficulty: there were two governors sharing the duties during the enrolment-year.

## II. The Order to Return to the Original Home.

We come now to the second of the two details in Luke's narrative, which were indicated at the outset as the special

[1] According to Professor Milligan, *Selections from the Greek Papyri* 17, p. 44, the census-papers "were sent in during, and generally towards the end of, the first year of the new census-period," i.e. the papers for A.D. 48 were sent in A.D. 49.

subject of this paper—"All went to enrol themselves, every one to his own city." This universal action must, of course, have been ordered by the Roman government; and Luke must be understood as declaring that such an order was issued in connexion with the first census, in some year earlier than 4 B.C. (when Herod died). The return to the home is a vital point in the narrative. It is on account of this that the census plays any part in Luke's history. This was the reason why the son of parents who resided at Nazareth was born at Bethlehem. Inaccuracy or imagination or fiction in this detail would make the whole story valueless and impertinent as part of the Gospel. This detail, however, has been ridiculed as altogether impossible. It is said to be contrary to Roman method and irreconcilable with a Roman census.

There are not many cases in which a definite fact, recorded by an ancient author professing to write history, has been regarded with such almost universal incredulity among modern scholars as this statement of Luke's. For my own part, I must plead guilty to having shared to some extent the same error as others in regard to it. Even while defending the historical character and perfect trustworthiness of Luke's narrative, I admitted that this detail was not in keeping with Roman method, which was "to count the population according to their actual residence," and which would be rendered useless by "any disturbance of the existing distribution of population." [1] I sought to explain the return to the original home as an example of the influence of native Oriental custom on the practical administration of the Roman rule in the East. This was the right direction in which to look; but I was unconsciously touching a far bigger and more important subject than I thought. I supposed that in this case the influence of native custom was an excep-

[1] *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?* p. 106.

tional thing, due to some peculiar features of the case; I looked for these features in the strained relations of King Herod to the Imperial government on the one hand and to his Jewish subjects on the other; and I conjectured that he tried to make the unpleasant necessity of the census less offensive to the Jews by giving it a Hebrew appearance, as if it were a tribal and antique national business.

As is now clear, this hypothesis, although correct so far as the general principle was concerned, was wholly wrong in the way that it applied the principle to this particular case. The right method is marked out along the line which Mitteis first opened up in his epoch-making work on "Imperial Law and National Law,"[1] though he does not, so far as I recollect, make the application to the facts recorded here by Luke. The Roman rule was in practice conducted very differently in the East and in the West. In the West it had to do with barbarous tribes, among whom there existed little positive law: and the western law, when put in force among western peoples, needed comparatively little adaptation to the special character of a western people. In Greece and the East the Roman rule was applied to people with a very ancient civilisation, with national customs and elaborate legal forms fixed by the usage of countless generations; and, above all, the Romans were here in contact with peoples so proud as the Greeks and so antagonistic in spirit as the Semites and other Orientals. Government could not safely be carried on in such countries without very careful adaptation to the character of the people. The Romans never intentionally destroyed an existing civilisation within the Empire (perhaps with the solitary exception of the Carthaginian): they used it, and built upon and around it.

[1] Mitteis' *Reichsrecht und Volksrecht*, 1891, which I did not see until my book had been published. It disclosed for the first time a new point of view, from which all matters in the Eastern provinces ought to be always contemplated.

Even in the barbarian West there can be no doubt that, while Rome imposed her own law and custom upon those provinces, she was not wholly unmindful of native custom and character. In the Three Gauls she adapted her rule to the tribal system. In southern Britain and in Narbonensian Gaul the tribal system was destroyed. This difference of treatment, due to difference in native character and circumstances, was probably accompanied by difference in the degree to which pure Roman law was administered in these neighbouring yet diverse countries.

Thus, for example, if I may diverge for the moment to a side illustration, it is quite false method to assume (as many recent writers in Germany and England have done) that St. Paul and his correspondents were familiar with the pure Roman law. The Apostle could never have seen this administered, either in Tarsus or in Palestine: Tarsus and Antioch were free cities, in which the Roman law was not applied, and Palestine was governed according to Jewish law. Even in ordinary provincial cities, like Iconium or Derbe or Perga, the Roman law was (as Mitteis has shown) strongly affected by the hereditary law and custom of the Greek East. Paul in his letters was not writing to people who knew the pure Roman law; and in his legal figures he has in mind the law that was familiar to his correspondents. In Pisidian Antioch the colonists were Roman citizens, and here Paul, perhaps for the first time, experienced the strictly Roman law in a city of the East. Paul's legal references are usually to facts and ideas, such as adoption and will-making, that were common to the Graeco-Asiatic and the Roman custom; but he has a few which are not expressed in harmony with pure Roman law;[1] and it is as a whole unjustifiable to illustrate his legal allusions by quoting from the pure

[1] Examples are given in *Historical Commentary on Galatians*, pp. 349–374 and 385–391.

Roman law of the Republican period. Illustrations from Imperial rescripts, even of later time, are much more pertinent, because, although issued later, the rescripts usually were to a great extent a systematising and authorising of current administrative custom in the East.

In the East, therefore, we have always to think more about Graeco-Asiatic law as developed by Imperial policy than about the strict Roman law. It was the former that the readers and hearers of Paul or of Luke knew; and to that law Paul went for his illustrations and his metaphors.

If that was the case with the general rules of law, much more must it have been true that Roman practical administrative devices were suited to the Eastern peoples, and were as a rule only the modifications of pre-Roman local custom. The Roman census system was simply an adaptation of earlier Ptolemaic custom in Egypt; and it was not justifiable to expect (as we did) that it should be purely Western in character and method.

No evidence has survived about the method of the census in Augustan times; but in the second century the Prefect of Egypt issued an edict, evidently as a regular custom at the approach of the census, ordering every one to return to his own home in anticipation of the enrolment.[1] Similarly the magistrates of Mesembria in Thrace summoned the whole population to come into the town to be enrolled according to the law of the city and according to the custom.[2]

These are examples, the only two attested by the scanty evidence, of what must have been a general custom in the East. The administrative order was issued by the proper authority, viz., by the elected magistrates in a free European

[1] *Papyri Brit. Museum*, III., no. 904; also Milligan, *Selections*, no 28, p. 72 f. The edict is of A.D. 104.

[2] Cagnat, *Inscr. Graec. ad res. R. pertinentes*, i. 769, from Dumont and Homolle, p. 460, No. 111[a]. Quoted by Rostowzew, *Stud. z. Gesch. d. röm. Kolonats*, p. 305.

city, in subject Egypt by the Prefect, who was viceroy and lord over a population of servants; but the authority for this method comes from the Emperor, Augustus or his successor for the time being.

Such was the custom of the census at a later period after Luke was dead. It is clear that, if he was inventing this general order, he like a prophet described exactly what was going to be the method at a later time. Such an idea is absurd! It is beyond doubt or dispute that he was describing the method of the periodic census, as he knew it in regular practice.

In the Ptolemaic period similar papers, couched in remarkably similar terms, used to be issued for the census in Egypt. There can be no doubt that Augustus maintained the old custom of the country and extended it generally over the East. Probably the return to the home was a device older than Augustus.

Joseph and Mary obeyed the administrative order, and went to their own proper home at Bethlehem: in Nazareth they were only resident aliens and could not be counted there.

Accordingly Rostowzew [1] infers without any hesitation from Luke that "already in the beginning of the Imperial period all people, whether inhabitants of cities or of villages, were summoned to return to their proper domicile (ἰδία) for the census exactly as was customary in Egypt." He considers Luke's words a sufficient proof that this was the universal Augustan rule.

Now, what is the character and the meaning of this regulation about holding the census only at the home? It is diametrically opposed to our modern ideas of a census (as has been stated above). It is destructive of many of the purposes for which a census is valued in modern administra-

[1] *Studien z. Gesch. d. röm. Kolonats*, p. 305.

tion. It tends to prevent free settlement, to impede trade, and to put fetters on intercourse through the country. Why should Rome impose such a condition in the East? For the strengthening of the Empire it was urgently required that national distinctions should be obliterated in the wider patriotism of the universal citizenship; and many of Augustus's measures show that he was aiming at a progressive unification of the whole Roman world through the weakening of the merely national or tribal unions and the encouragement of oecumenical patriotism and sense of common and universal brotherhood. Yet here the Augustan census is, according to Luke, accompanied by a thoroughly retrogressive regulation which seems to mean that every one ought to stay at home, that no one can acquire the right to be away from home for more than a few years, and that all must be counted at their own proper home at every census, as if they were bound to that home and could only be temporary sojourners everywhere else.

Such a regulation was opposed to the general tendency and to the best side of the Augustan system; and we all had some apparent ground to rest on, when we pronounced the regulation to be non-Roman. But we wrongly assumed that the Augustan system was completed, and that all parts of it carried out the same general principles. On the contrary, the Imperial system was incomplete, hesitating, often partaking of the nature of compromise; and so far from rejecting as non-Roman the bond of attachment to the original domicile, both Augustus and his successors seem to have used this principle wherever it seemed convenient for them.

Mr. Zulueta, in a remarkable essay, published in Vinogradoff's *Oxford Studies*, 1909, p. 42,[1] states well the purpose and nature of this principle (*die Lehre von der ἰδία*, as it is

[1] Zulueta, *De Patrociniis Vicorum*. Each of the two Essays in the volume has its separate paging.

called in German); and I quote his words, which seem almost like a commentary on Luke, though it may be taken as certain that the learned writer of this Essay on the later Roman law had in his mind no thought of explaining or defending St. Luke.

He points out that, while the Imperial policy rarely, and only in critical times, made any use of the old Oriental principle of the *corvée*, according to which the population might be called upon to perform forced labour for the public service, yet

> "The government held in reserve a more far-reaching principle, which was asserted whenever political or economic troubles threatened to bring the industry of the country to a standstill. This was the principle that every man had a [personal attachment to the home and soil of his birth] (*ἰδία*), a place of origin in which he had his proper sphere of activity and to which he could be held in the public interest. [There is] a remarkable series of texts testifying to the operation of the rule of *ἰδία* from the Plotemaic period onwards.[1] We may quote as typical the edict of the prefect of A.D. 154 (B.G.U. 372), which concludes with the following threat": 'if any person . . . is found straying on alien land, he shall be arrested and brought before me as no longer merely suspect but actually a confessed malefactor'; and the "general duty is to devote oneself to agriculture on one's proper soil. Precisely similar terms are found in the royal ordinance of 118 B.C. . . . In A.D. 415 a new idea was added, viz., the

[1] He quotes in illustration: OGIS 90, 19 f.; P Taur. VIII. 13 f., 19 f.; P. Tebt. I. 5, 7 (118 B.C.). P. Oxy. II. 251–3; OGIS 669, 34; P. Lond. II. 260, 120 (all cent. I.); BGU 372 (A.D. 154), 15 I. 475, 902, 903; P. Fröhner (W. in *Festchrift Hirschfeld*); P. Gen. 19; P. Tebt. II. 327, 439 (all cent. II.); BGU 159; P. Gen. 16.

protection of the interest of a *dominus* in his tenants or labourers by means of local servitude."

In the census there was a special need, and the taking of the census had to encounter many difficulties. To make a census accurate enough to serve as a basis of administration is no easy matter; a successful census is a triumph of skilful government and good method. It was an accepted Roman principle to permit, and even to encourage, free intercourse through the Empire, and thus to foster a feeling of Imperial unity. Yet the existence of a floating population and of many travellers made the census difficult. How and where should the migratory population be counted? These immigrants and travellers could not be numbered as they stood at any single moment, which is the modern way. The staff of administration was totally inadequate in Roman time for such a vast undertaking: even the most elementary acquaintance with Roman Imperial facts teaches any student that government was carried on with an extremely small staff, and as a matter of fact we know well that the staff was hardly capable of coping with the ordinary duties of government. For example, the maintenance of public order and security and the suppression of brigandage on the public roads were far from thorough and satisfactory. For an extraordinary effort like the census the Imperial civil service was quite ineffective; the census (like the guarding of public security) had to be largely carried out as a branch of military duty; and the only possibility of doing the work at all was to distribute it over the whole year, and to order the household returns to be sent in by each householder at some time during the year.

To meet this difficulty the government, in Mr. Zulueta's words, asserted the far-reaching principle of the proper home or ἰδία, an old Oriental fact. Every man must return to his proper home or ἰδία for the census. This we see in Egypt,

in Thrace, and in Palestine (according to Luke), as appears from the references quoted above. To judge from Luke it was perhaps not only the householder but also his family, that must return to the ἰδία, though one cannot from the single case confidently presume the universal rule. There may have been particular and private reasons operative in that case: as a matter of fact, Luke asserts in i. 39 that Mary maintained close relations with her home in the hill-country of Judaea, at or not far from Bethlehem. We have not, so far as I can see, enough of evidence at present to judge; but on the whole the probability is that *all* were ordered to return to the proper home, not merely the male householder, but the family, so that the enumeration should be really a Household-enrolment.

The principle of the ἰδία is based deep in human nature, not merely in the East, but also in the West. There is a tendency to distrust the stranger and the wanderer. Experience shows that only too often he has emancipated himself from the controlling power of his original surroundings and society, without substituting any other sufficient guidance in his life. Such is the danger. The overcoming of the danger produces a higher standard of thought and morality; but that is not the invariable result, and least commonly so in stagnant and backward society.

It is too much to expect that the Imperial government should have refused to descend to the employment of such a principle. Even in modern life, and in the most progressive societies, this tendency manifests itself in various ways, often disguised. In the great international railway-station of Buda-Pesth it refuses to recognize any international language, and orders that every inscription on every door and office shall be in Magyar alone. It makes the English disbelieve every German official utterance, and the German distrust every English official statement, as devices of an enemy.

In the unprogressive countries, such as Turkey, the tendency rules supreme. The stranger is disliked as a danger: a partial exception is made in favour of Europeans as being different in nature, but they are only tolerated, not liked. Other strangers are probably hostile. One frequently hears the principle invoked. You pass on the road in Turkey two or three Circassians, and you know that there is no Circassian village within twenty hours' distance. The inference is at once drawn that these strangers can be after no good so far from home. The police arrest them, if they dare. The traveller flees from them, if he can. The principle justifies itself in most cases, because the reasoning founded on it proves true. Only if the stranger goes direct to a guest-house or a khan, is it admitted that he may perhaps be honest, although appearances are rather against him.

Education overcomes this tendency; and through the growing power of education dislike and distrust of the stranger grows rarer and weaker, and disguises itself under the form of patriotism or otherwise. But in countries which, like the Roman Empire, are degenerating from a higher plane of civilisation, the operation of the tendency grows wider and deeper as the years pass. It had been always strong in the Eastern provinces. Its history can be studied in them for centuries before Roman legions had been seen there. It was connected with the story of conquest and the domination of victorious races in the regions which they subdued. The land was treated as estates, of which the conquerors were lords, and which the older population tilled as subjects of the new masters. The presence of the old population was necessary. They had the agricultural tradition, and without them the land would have relapsed into desert, as the water which generally had to be artificially supplied ceased to flow through channels which were not properly maintained, and as other subsidiary operations were neg-

lected. The new lords were soldiers and not agriculturists.

There was, however, at first only a tendency to remain, and not a tie to bind the cultivator to the soil. Neither custom nor positive law had at that time transformed the tendency into a thoroughly binding tie. The convenience of government and the advantage of the landlord gradually strengthened the tie.[1]

The tie to the soil was created and strengthened by the needs of the case and by the custom of the country. Under the legal-minded Romans the tie was stereotyped, and afterwards became a matter of formal law. The lord of the estate established a legal right to have the benefit of the work of the cultivators on his hand. If the cultivators left the estate and went elsewhere, the landlord suffered financial loss. When there were abundant cultivators, the loss caused by the departure of some was little felt; but when cultivators were few, as was in later times the case, agriculture suffered, the loss was serious, and attempts were made by law to guard the interest of the landlords in the labour of the people on his land.

In A.D. 415 Imperial law recognised formally this right of the landowner to the work of his cultivators.[2] They must remain on the soil to cultivate it, lest the owner should lose the value of his property. That is the earliest and as yet hardly complete recognition in express legal enactment of what had long existed in embryo, viz., the bond of custom that fastened the cultivator to the soil and deprived him of his natural freedom to leave his home. The cultivator, once nominally free, who had been in a sense joint owner of the land, degenerated gradually into a serf bound to the soil (*adscriptus glebae*), and the bond was rivetted by the enact-

[1] On this gradual growth of the tie, see Mr. Zulueta's paper, already quoted. Fustel de Coulanges and Mommsen were the pioneers in the study of this rapidly growing branch of history.

[2] Zulueta, *loc. cit.*, p. 42 f.

ment which recognised the claim of the landlord to the agricultural service of the cultivators.

Here we have a historical and social force running through the centuries. Luke is perhaps the earliest historian who takes notice of it as a factor in human history. The significance of the tendency had not been observed when he wrote. Administrators used it, but did not discuss its nature. No one knew what it would become, and probably no one thought of it as a power that was remaking human society for the worse in the Mediterranean world. Luke notices it only because it produced the regulation that led Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem in order to facilitate the taking of an imperial census.

A feature like this cannot be invented. How should a mere inventor divine the future law of history, and attach to it the fate of the puppets whose motions he was devising? A true and great historian may have the divine gift of insight into the laws that govern human history; but this gift belongs only to those who love and study the truth, and not to inventors of airy fiction.[1]

### III. Some Objections to the Narrative of Luke.

In a very judicious and impartial article in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* on *Quirinius*, Professor P. Gardner points out some difficulties that remain unexplained, even if the correctness of the general view taken in my book on the subject be admitted.

> (I) "Why should a census in Judaea be dated by the irrelevant fact of a campaign being fought by Quirinius in Cilicia? (II) Even if an enrolment by tribes was carried out, would this be likely to involve a journey of

[1] The subject is treated from a different side in a paper by the present writer on the *Method of Research in Ancient History*, in the *Contemporary Review*, March 1912.

all Jews to the native town of their family? (III) How could the presence of Mary be required at Bethlehem, when it was a settled principle in all ancient law to treat the male head of a family as responsible for all its members? In Palestine especially it is difficult to imagine such a proceeding as the summoning of women to appear before an officer for enrolment.[1] (IV) Josephus tells us that the census of Quirinius in 6–7 A.D. was a great innovation causing alarm and revolt: it is therefore not easy to think that a similar census can have been held twelve or fourteen years earlier and passed off with so little friction that Josephus does not mention it. It is true that Professor Ramsay discriminates in character the earlier census which he supposes from the Roman census of Quirinius of 6 A.D.; but it is doubtful how far this view is maintainable, especially as Luke uses the same word (ἀπογραφή) to designate the known census of Quirinius (Acts v. 37, 6 A.D.) from the supposed earlier census.

"Thus there can be no doubt that the supposition of errors of fact in Luke would from the purely historical point of view remove very great difficulties."

A candid and dispassionate criticism such as Professor Gardner gives is always useful and welcome. In considering and meeting the arguments which are thus stated, we understand more clearly the bearings of the position which we are maintaining. A brief reply to each of his arguments will suffice.

(I) It is a misunderstanding to say that on our hypothesis Luke would be dating the census in Judaea by the

[1] I omit at this point an objection, as it relates to the text of Luke, and to the relation of Mary to Joseph as being (according to the received text) not the wife of Joseph but only betrothed to him. This objection raises a side of the question with which it is not my purpose to deal.

campaign in Cilicia. Quirinius must have had a *provincia* or sphere of duty, and the best Roman authorities are agreed, as already mentioned,[1] that Quirinius in the Cilician war was necessarily acting as viceroy (*legatus*) of the Emperor in the province *Syria et Cilicia* and commander of the Syrian armies. There were no other Roman legions in the continent of Asia except the Syrian. In the fullest and strictest sense Quirinius was ἡγεμών of Syria during the Homonadensian war. Professor Gardner is inclined to think that ἡγεμονεύοντος is not quite the exact term; but it is the strict and correct term for the power exercised by the representative of the Emperor, whether viceroy or merely procurator. He suggests ἀνθυπατεύοντος as an alternative; but that term, if applied to Syria, where no proconsul ever ruled in Imperial time, would have been one of those inaccuracies in detail which stamp a document as untrustworthy and unhistorical.

In passing, we may observe that, on the hypothesis of two simultaneous legates in Syria, Quirinius and Saturninus, the dating by the latter (followed by Tertullian) suggests a Palestinian or Syrian source: on the other hand, the dating by Quirinius suggests a western authority, familiar with the aspect which the farther East wore to a Greek of the Aegean world.[2]

(II) Professor Gardner's second argument refers to the first form of my hypothesis, which is confessedly inadequate. As the hypothesis has now been developed into an admitted universal rule, of which we possess contemporary and original evidence, the argument ceases to have any force or relevance. People were summoned to return to their proper domicile; and the Oriental point of view was to consider that a

[1] See EXPOSITOR, November, p. 399.

[2] The mention of Quirinius rather than Saturninus would be very natural on Dr Rendall's theory that Luke was a native of Pisidian Antioch, where Quirinius was familiar and his colleague was wholly unimportant.

person who departed from his domicile to an alien town was a suspicious and probably ill-doing character.

(III) Suspicion of this kind would be at least as strong in the case of a woman as of a man; and at least as strong in Semitic as in western lands. It is not within our scope to discuss the special features of this case and the unusual relationship between Joseph and Mary (on which Professor Gardner bases in part his argument). We are treating only of the general principles and broader facts. There is, moreover, no need to think that the wife must necessarily "appear before an officer for enrolment." We know too little about details to speak on such a point. The head of the household made the return for the household; but the household was perhaps in his company and not far distant.

(IV) It is certain that much disorder was caused at the second census (A.D. 6–7), but we have explained this as due in part to the valuation of property in the land which was now being formally taken over as part of the province Syria. It is further not certain that the census of B.C. 9–8 was unaccompanied by disorder, even although Josephus mentions none. It is not a sound argument that Josephus must have mentioned every riot and every sedition that occurred in Palestine under Roman rule; in fact it is practically certain that he omitted some or many disturbances. Both the first and every census was an *ἀπογραφή*. Luke calls the first *πρώτη ἀπογραφή*, and the second *ἡ ἀ.*, "the (great) enrolment" (which was true).

The final criticism, however, remains. The truth of the historical surroundings in which Luke's narrative places the birth of Jesus does not prove that the supreme facts, which give human and divine value to the birth, are true. It may be,—in fact it must be—admitted as true that "the first enrolment" took place in 8 B.C., that Quirinius was governing Syria during at least the first half of the year,

and that the general order was issued in Syria for all to return to their own homes in preparation for the enrolment. Yet this does not prove that Mary was the mother of Christ, as Luke describes Him, and as John and Paul saw Him and believed in Him.

The surrounding facts are matter of history, and can be discussed and proved by historical evidence. The essential facts of the narrative are not susceptible of discussion on historical principles, and do not condescend to be tested by historical evidence. That truth exists and moves on a higher plane of insight. It is known through the absolute insight into the heart of human life and divine nature. It comes to, or is granted to, or is forced upon, a man as the completion of his experience and the crown of his life and the remaking of his nature. It proves itself to the soul of man. When he sees it, he knows that it is the one truth—the one ultimate truth,—of the world of half-truths, a world of preparation by which he is being moulded and fashioned and hammered into a condition in which he can receive the truth. This knowledge cannot be proved by word and argument. It is not in word, but in power. It does not spring from any more fundamental principle. It is the fountain from which all other so-called principles flow. It is the guarantee of all other truth. There is nothing true without God, and there is nothing true except the Divine in the infinite variety of His manifestation.

This, however, is not the question which was put to me, and which it has been my object to answer. The question was put to me in the course of criticism and controversy. A distinguished and esteemed scholar, who has now passed from among us, in a brief criticism of my book *St. Paul the Traveller*, referred with some scorn to the belief which I have there stated and defended, that Luke was

a great and trustworthy historian, possessed of the true historical insight, which enabled him to recognise the important facts and to exhibit them in proper perspective. He considered that he gave a sufficient and complete refutation of my position by asking what I would make of the historical assertions contained in Luke's Gospel ii. 1–3. This argument seemed to him final: no word further was needed: no self-respecting scholar could for a moment maintain that this little narrative was credible.

Seventeen years have elapsed since I read the challenge. It has taken all that time to complete the answer. The progress of discovery has given the answer; and I have no share in it except that I recognised the soul of a real historian in the two books of Luke's history, and was on the outlook for the unifying principle which should give life to the isolated and apparently unconnected historical details as they were discovered. They all bear upon the supreme fact of the coming of Christ into His world.

At first I could not see how to begin to answer the question and the problem placed before me. Then after three years I read the proof given almost simultaneously by three scholars, two German and one English,[1] that there existed in Egypt during the second century after Christ a system of periodic "Enrolments by Household," and that the period was fourteen years. I perceived at once that such a system in the Roman province must proceed from the great originator of Roman method in Egypt, the true founder of bureaucratic government, viz., Augustus. I counted the years and found that the cycle was counted from B.C. 23, the date in which the fabric of the Imperial constitution was completed, and the year one of Augustus'

[1] Dr. Kenyon had the precedence, I think, by a few days or weeks; but the work of all three was independent. The Germans were Wilcken and Viereck.

reign was placed by himself. The first census-year on that system was 9 B.C.; all children born during that year had to be reckoned in the census, therefore the actual counting took place during the following year 8 B.C. This, then, was the year of Luke's "first enrolment"; and the meaning of the word "first" in Luke now became clear. The edict of Augustus established the census-system not merely for Egypt, but for the whole Empire: it was a decree that all the Roman world should be subjected to enrolment. No one can imagine that the mere issue of the decree was sufficient to ensure that the census-system was henceforth carried out regularly and permanently through all the Roman provinces. The resources and the organisation of the Imperial bureaucracy were insufficient for such a gigantic task: and Luke does not say that the decree was universally effective. All that he says or implies is only that the decree was issued, and that it was put into force in Palestine, which carries with it the Syrian province as a whole.[1] There are, also, traces of its execution in some other Eastern provinces, where systematic method in administration had been practised before Roman time, and when the census could be more easily made.

As soon as the article by Wilcken came before my eyes, I saw that my critic was delivered into my hands; and while my reply to the criticism was in process of being printed, a succession of discoveries showed that the periodic enrolments were made in Egypt as early as 20–21 A.D.: this was evidently the third enrolment. Since then it has been proved that Augustus was only remodelling a much older Egyptian form of census.

In applying this discovery to Luke I made at first some mistakes, on which I need not waste further time except

[1] A Syrian census is proved by the already quoted inscription: it was perhaps the first census, more probably the second.

to confess them once more. Further discovery has shown the right way.

To Mitteis, Rostowzew, and Zulueta I am indebted for teaching me the importance of the other principle, which elucidates and justifies the narrative of Luke, viz., the attachment to the original home and the use made of this force in the Imperial administration. Rostowzew alone recognised the bearing of this principle on Luke; but Mr. Zulueta has stated it in words that are an unconscious commentary on Luke. It is the merit of Colonel Mackinlay[1] to have first held firmly to the date 8 B.C. for the birth of Jesus, and to have shown how this date clears up the chronology of the life of Christ.

These acknowledgments finish my task.

## IV. The Name of Luke.

The origin of the name Loukas has always presented difficulty and has roused a good deal of discussion. The name belongs to the class of familiar or pet names (in German *Kosenamen*) which are usually shortened from a longer original form. Loukas, however, is a Greek and not a Latin name. In Latin the praenomen Lucius could not produce a *Kosenamen* Loukas; and those scholars who are thinking of the Latin name Lucius cannot recognise any connexion between it and this Greek name Loukas. The difficulty presented itself at quite an early time; and already in the fifth century, as Professor A. Souter says, there is Latin manuscript authority for Lucanus as the full name of the Evangelist, equivalent to the familiar Loukas (after the analogy of Silvanus and Silas).

The right question, however, is not whether the Latin Lucius could be familiarised as Loukas, but whether the Greek Loukios, borrowed from Latin and treated according

[1] *The Magi: how they recognised Christ's Star*: Hodder & Stoughton.

to Greek custom, had as a familiar by-form the dissyllabic Loukas. No proof that Loukas was equivalent to Loukios was known; and hence there came to be among modern scholars a growing strength of opinion that Lucanus was the proper Latin form of the name of the Evangelist.[1] No case was known in which any individual was called indifferently Loukios and Loukas; and without some proof of the equivalence it seemed unsafe to maintain that the fuller Loukios could degenerate into Loukas. But we have not a large store of evidence about the equivalence of full names and the corresponding familiar names among the Greek-speaking peoples. Accordingly, the recent discovery of a considerable number of inscriptions containing names of the *Kosenamen* type presents some interest.

Parts of the south-west and north-west walls of the peribolos, which surrounded the sanctuary of the god of Pisidian Antioch, Men Askaênos, one of the wealthiest and most powerful gods of Asia Minor, are covered with dedicatory inscriptions recording vows to the god. These all belong to the Roman period, and the vast majority of them are the work of Greek-speaking people, who bore Roman names. These dedications were therefore made, as a rule, not by the original Latin-speaking colonists of Antioch, a sort of aristocracy in the town, but by the Greek-speaking population, who sprang from the pre-Roman inhabitants of Antioch. These Greek-speaking inhabitants (*incolae*) were gradually elevated to the Roman citizenship; and it is proved in a paper by Miss Hardie, now Mrs. Hasluck (*Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1912, pp. 144 f.), that there exists among the dedications an overwhelming majority of Roman names. Some are slave-names, others are the names of freedmen (*liberti*) or of

[1] I think that I have somewhere stated this opinion, which I held until June, 1912, when new evidence convinced me of my error.

*incolae*, and a few are probably names of descendants of the original Roman colonists. The dedications are often expressed in the familiar speech, and give some interesting evidence about the Greek usage in respect of Latin names.

Copied by Mr. J. G. C. Anderson, Mr. W. M. Calder and myself in 1912.

In very rough and rude lettering on the south-west wall of the sanctuary of Mên : letters small and hard to read :—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Λουκᾶς* | *Νουμε-* | Loukas Tillios |
| *Τίλλιο-* | *ρία Οὐε-* | Kriton (and) |
| *ς Κριτω-* | *νοῦστ-* | Noumeria Ve- |
| *ν* | *α* | nusta |
| *Μηνὶ* | | to Men |
| *εὐχήν* | | a vow |

This is a joint dedication by L. Tillius Crito and (his wife) Numeria Venusta to the god of the sanctuary. Both bear Latin names (except the Greek cognomen of the husband) : both are *cives*. Yet they are a Greek-speaking family to whom Greek comes more naturally than Latin.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that Loukas Tillios Kriton was a Roman citizen, whose name in Latin must have been Lucius Tillius Crito. In the Greek that was spoken at Antioch Loukios and Loukas were evidently felt to be equivalent ; and Crito writes himself in Greek as Loukas. His third name suggests that he was perhaps a freedman ; but it is (as Mrs. Hasluck says) [1] difficult or even impossible to distinguish the names of freedmen from the names of *incolae* who had received the Roman citizenship and had assumed the full name of the *civis Romanus*.

This single case is sufficient and conclusive. This equivalence was accepted at Antioch; and there can be no

[1] *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1912, p. 145, note 67.

reason for thinking that Antiochian custom differed from that of other Greek-speaking towns of Asia Minor and the Roman East generally: Loukas was a Greek *Kosenamen* of Loukios.

This case does not stand alone. There are several examples among these Antiochian dedications, in which the same individual or family repeats the inscription, usually with some variations. In one of these pairs the same person is mentioned once as Loukios and once as Loukas. The two dedications, which are engraved very near one another, are as follows:

On the sixth buttress from west corner of S.W. wall:—

| | |
|---|---|
| *Μηνὶ* | To Men |
| *εὐχ[ήν* | a vow |
| *Γάμος Ἀβασκάν[τ-* | Gamos (son) of Abas- |
| *ου μὲ [γ]υν[αικός.* | kantos with his wife. |
| *Λούκιος υἱός.* | Lucius son. |
| *Πουμπούλιος υἱός* | Pompilius son. |

On the wall close to the buttress:—

| | |
|---|---|
| *Μηνὶ εὐχήν* | To Men a vow |
| *Γάμος Ἀβάσκάντου* | Gamos son of Abas- |
| *υἱός, καὶ Λουκᾶς καὶ* | kantos, and Loukas, and |
| *Πουμπούμλιος* (*sic*!) | Pompilius |
| *καὶ Εὔδοξος.* | and Eudoxos. |

The second of this pair of dedications was correctly read by our party in 1911, and published by Mrs. Hasluck in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1912, p. 130.[1]

The first we failed to read completely in 1911: part of it is published by Mrs. Hasluck on p. 127.[2] In 1912 we

[1] She gives the name as Gallos, not Gamos; but states in her commentary that Gamos is quite possible. I appended in a footnote to her paper that my reading was unhesitatingly Gamos, and quoted a Bithynian example of this name.

[2] We must all three share the blame for failure, and not Mrs. Hasluck alone. When we first uncovered them in 1911, the letters were filled with

deciphered it entirely, and then found that it is almost a duplicate of the other.

In the second, which is perhaps later than the first, Eudoxos is mentioned, and in the first the wife of the dedicant Gamos. In these dedications the wife is often omitted, and when mentioned is very rarely named.[1] Apart from these differences, the two mention the same family, and exemplify the custom of doublets which was common at this sanctuary. Loukios in the first is the same as Loukas in the second: he was the elder son of the dedicant.

Two witnesses suffice. An accumulation of other examples would not really strengthen the argument. Loukios and Loukas were felt as equivalent names by the Greeks, one familiar and the other formal. It has been pointed out that the two names, the polite and the familiar, are known in the case of several persons mentioned in the New Testament, Apollôs and Apollônios, Priscilla and Prisca, Silas and Silvanus. Of these Apollônios is found only in the Bezan Codex; but its presence there is a sufficient proof. By its form Apollôs is proved to be a *Kosenamen*; and Apollônios is the full name. The same man was called Apollônios in formal and polite speech, Apollôs in familiar usage. It happens that the form Loukios is not attested in any document as the formal name of the Evangelist; but we now have the proof that in Antioch and therefore generally Loukas was known to be the familiar form of Loukios.

There are two possibilities open. On the one hand

soil, of the same colour as the stone, being decomposed from it. The stones were washed clean by rain during the winter of 1911–12: but even in 1912 this and many others of the dedications were extremely difficult, and several of them baffled the oft repeated efforts of Mr. J. G. C. Anderson, Mr. Calder and myself.

[1] The mother is named, when she survives her husband or for some other reason is head of the family. She is rarely named by her husband.

Lucius may have been the *praenomen* of a Roman citizen; and in that case we may regard it as almost certain that the physician Loukios was a freedman, who acquired the full Roman name when he was set free; for the custom of society would make it probable that this physician, who led the life of a companion of Paul, was not born a Roman citizen (as perhaps Silvanus was). Physicians were often freedmen; and freedmen were frequently addressed by their *praenomen*, which marked their rank.[1]

On the other hand the Latin Lucius was often adopted in Greek as an individual name. A Greek might then be called Loukios simply, just as he might be called Demetrios simply. Loukios was in such cases not a *praenomen*, and did not imply Roman citizenship; in fact this usage was a complete proof that the man who was named in full simply Loukios, without *nomen* or *cognomen*,[2] was not a Roman. We may also infer with equal certainty that a person named Loukios simply was not a slave: the Roman name could not be degraded to a slave name in that age. Such a Loukios would be an ordinary Hellene.

No evidence is known sufficient to prove which of these alternatives applied to the Evangelist Luke. The former would suit specially well with the profession of a doctor; but a *libertus* usually remained in some close relationship to his former master, who continued to be his *patronus*. Luke was perfectly free to go about the world in Paul's company, and has no appearance of being in connexion with a patron. Exceptional cases might however occur. Perhaps some unnoticed detail may yet furnish a decisive argument.

W. M. RAMSAY.

[1] See Horace, *Satires*, II. 5, 32: and the commentators thereon; "*Quinte*," *puta, aut* "*Publi*": *gaudent praenomine molles auriculae*.

[2] This does not apply to cases where in casual mention a man is spoken of by his *praenomen* alone. I refer only to cases where the full legal name was Loukios.