

"That Pilate made a report I do not deny. It is probable he did, and it is possible that it may be discovered, but the alleged 'report' published is certainly not the genuine article, for :

"In the second place, Pilate is made to speak of things that happened after his procuratorship expired (1) He speaks of 'Christians'—a name that was not used until years after his death. (2) He speaks of Dionysius the Areopagite's saying at the time of the Crucifixion. Now, in this statement there are two impossibilities : (a) how could Pilate know what Dionysius said at the Crucifixion, since that philosopher was in Egypt at the time? Did they have "long distance telephones" in the Apostolic age? (b) His title 'the Areopagite,' was not suitable until he was a member of the 'Areopagus' in Athens, which honor was not conferred upon him until long after the Crucifixion.

"In the third place, Pilate reports to the Emperor that his secretary, Manilius, was the grandson of the chief of the conspirators in the time of Cataline. It is difficult to understand why this superfluous information, which had no bearing on the case in hand, should have been embodied in an official report. What did Tiberius care about the antecedents of a servant of his procurator? And if he did care he had his own records to inform him. It looks as if the forger put in this bit of local color to give, as Pooh Bah says, 'an air of verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unattractive narrative.' Let us analyze it. The conspiracy of Cataline was in B.C. 63, and a 'chief' conspirator must have been at least 30 years of age, to command any respect. The Crucifixion, according to the consensus of Biblical chronologists, was in A.D. 30; hence we have (30 plus 63 plus 29) 122 years from the birth of Manilius *grandpere* to the secretaryship of his grandson. Let us say Manilius III. was only 20 years of age, in A.D. 30; then we have (122 minus 20) 102 years for two generations, or an average of 51 years for each! In a warm climate like Italy, where the toga virilis was assumed at 14 years of age at this time, this is simply absurd.

"In the fourth place, Pilate says that the crucifixion was about the time of the ides of March; that is, on March 15. Now it is a well-established fact that the Jews did not celebrate their Passover (at which festival Christ was crucified) before the vernal equinox, which fell, by the Roman calendar, at this time, on March 25. Still perhaps it may not be fair to press this point too literally. The Church fathers who profess to quote from the acts of Pilate are quite unanimous in saying that in that document the Crucifixion was declared to be on March 25. Let us give the new 'report' the benefit of the doubt and assume that March 25 was the date intended. Now, unless we are prepared to throw overboard all we know about the Hebrew calendar of this period, March 25 could not possibly have been the date of the Crucifixion in any possible year in which scholars have placed that event. For if the Hebrew calendar was, as is supposed, lunar, and if the crucifixion was on the 14th day of the first lunar month (as is universally believed), and on a Friday (as the Gospels unmistakably declare), then it is certain that the 14th day of the first Hebrew month could not have fallen on a Friday, and on March 25, in any year from 26 to 36 A.D., during which Pilate ruled, and during which period alone was the Crucifixion possible.

"From this evidence it is clear that this 'report' is only another example of the many 'pious frauds' with which the Christian world was deluged during the first 300 years of its existence.

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