

Biblical Criticism and Exposition.

ST. LUKE'S ACCURACY.

Of St. Luke's minute accuracy I proceed to give a well-known instance, which I would preface by a parallel example, illustrative of the apparent contradictions so constantly to be met with in ordinary history. The medals struck for the coronation of Louis XIV, gave a different day from that which all contemporary historians agree in fixing for the date of that event. Of all these writers one only has noticed a circumstance which accounts for this discrepancy; for he alone mentions that the coronation had been appointed to take place on the day given by the medals, which were accordingly prepared, but that circumstance caused a delay till the date assigned by the historians. Nothing can be more simple than this; and yet in a thousand years, had no such explanation been given, antiquarians would have been sadly perplexed in their efforts to reconcile the contradiction.

Let us now turn to the parallel case in the acts of the Apostles. St. Luke, in the thirteenth chapter, gives the title of Proconsul to the Governor of Cyprus. In the division, however, of the Roman Empire by Augustus, this island had been reserved for his own jurisdiction; and consequently its Governor must have borne the rank of Procurator; that of Proconsul being appropriated to those who ruled the provinces, which the Emperor had ceded to the senate. The title here assigned by St. Luke to Sergius Paulus, had for a long time perplexed commentators, who knew not how to reconcile the statement of the Sacred historian with the assumed facts of the case. Some coins, however, were found, bearing the effigy of the

Emperor Claudius, and in the centre of the reverse occurs the word *Kuprion*, while the surrounding legend gives the title in question of Proconsul to an individual who must have been the immediate successor or predecessor of Sergius Paulus.

In addition to this evidence, a passage has been pointed out in the writings of Dio Cassius, who mentions that Augustus, subsequently to his original settlement, had changed Cyprus and Gallia Narbonensis into Senatorial provinces; the historian adding, as with the design of establishing St. Luke's accuracy, "And so it came to pass that Proconsuls began to be sent to these nations also." Had the writings of Dio Cassius perished amid the wreck of ancient literature and the coins alluded to never been found, we should unquestionably have seen this hypothetical blunder of the inspired historian foremost among the array of cases adduced by such writers as Struss.

Is not the Christian apologist, therefore, fully justified in deprecating the precipitance of criticism? Has he not ample grounds for maintaining that difficulties, such as those which we have considered, arise from our ignorance of the whole of the case; and that we have good reason to expect they eventually will disappear as similar evidence accumulates.

PROF. LEE.

THE EARNEST STRIFE.

LUKE XIII 24.—"Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

How is this sentiment to be reconciled with those passages which declare that if we seek we shall find? The usual