

Marmaric War, but this usage does not look like a late one, and if he employed it it is likely that he took it from much earlier authors. In an important study of Nonnus' language that will soon appear, Dr Giuseppe Giangrande has amply demonstrated that Nonnus did not take the liberties with Greek words that some have incautiously ascribed to him.

The address to the Horai, appropriate when a *καίρος* is in question (see Robert, pp. 15 f.), must be preceded by a full stop, so that οὐ cannot be relative to anything in the preceding sentence; nor is Wilhelm's notion that it is relative to the following Πουσαίνιον at all probable. We must read οὐ and point the sentence as a question; it will then mean, 'Did not the moment that relieved Pausanias of his priesthood prove to be one of hard drinking?' If we keep ἔσχεν the words could bear this sense; but ἔσχεν would be very curious, and I feel little doubt that it has been incised by mistake for ἔσκεν. For instances of such confusion, see J. M. R. Cormack in *B.S.A.* LVIII (1963), 21, n. 3; in this case the mistake would have been made easier by the occurrence of the χ of χάλις just before. In the third line of the verses the πρ has been duplicated, and that may not be the writer's only error. The middle παυσάμενος is less natural than the active παύσας would have been. But the use of the middle in such cases in the last part of the pentameter is a mannerism of the epigram-style, and in this case the poet will have wished to introduce the pun already underlined in the prose introduction (cf. Plato, *Sympos.* 185 c Πουσαίνιου δὲ παυσάμενου) and so to insist on the importance of the fact that the eponymous priest's name was of good omen (cf. Robert, p. 13). Placing a full stop after διέπων, I would read the last sentence as follows:

Ἵραι φίλαι, οὐ χάλις ἔσκεν Πουσαίνιον ἱερῆ καίρος ὁ παυσάμενο[ς];

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD

HUGH LLOYD-JONES

THE SLAVE AND FREEDMAN 'CURSUS' IN THE IMPERIAL ADMINISTRATION¹

The word *cursus* may seem to be keeping strange company with slaves and freedmen. It does not refer here to the *cursus publicus*, but to the system of promotion in the sub-equestrian regions of the Imperial administration. *Cursus* implies movement, advancement, promotion. No bureaucracy can function efficiently without order and opportunity in its lower as well as its higher ranks. If a *cursus* did not exist it would have been necessary to invent one. It is necessary to affirm this of the lower ranks of the Roman bureaucracy in the early empire precisely because it has so often been denied or ignored. The impression gained from reading many works on the Imperial administration is that of fervid equestrian movement from post to post and province

¹ I am particularly indebted to Professor A. H. M. Jones and Dr M. I. Finley for their helpful criticism and advice. References are to *C.J.L.* unless stated otherwise.

to province at the top, with a static substratum of Imperial slaves and freedmen providing stability and continuity below.¹ Such an account is to some extent true. But that it is not true enough is largely the fault of the evidence.

I. THE SOURCES

Among the literary authorities, it would perhaps be naïve to expect the consular historians, such as Tacitus and Cassius Dio, to admit slaves and freedmen regularly into their pages, unless to provide spectacular examples of vice or non-virtue.² Pallas, Narcissus, Callistus and other notorious top freedmen are so untypical of the ordinary freedman personnel in the administration, both in their influence and affluence, that they will not concern us here, except that their careers do raise the questions of how and from what beginnings they rose to eminence.³ Nor shall I be concerned with Tacitus. Neither Tacitus nor Pallas are likely to suffer from lack of attention. The key words in this discussion, such as *tabularius*, *dispensator*, *vicarius*, with a single exception, simply do not occur in Tacitus, nor does he ever seem to use the word *procurator* of freedmen.⁴ *Dispensator*, it is true, is used in connection with Galba's unsavoury murder,⁵ but thereafter the word disappears. Information of value is found in the work of the senatorial Frontinus, *de aquae ductu urbis Romae*, but it is from writers of equestrian status, Suetonius and the elder Pliny, working inside the administration and not concerned with the 'dignity of history', that we get most of the meagre literary information relevant to this subject.

The epigraphic evidence relating to the *Familia Caesaris* is a different matter. It has inspired in scholars a despair as complete as it has been justified. From the inscriptions no fewer than four thousand individual slaves and freedmen of the emperor can be identified. While nearly all give some information, however exiguous, about wives, family relationships, ages, etc., over half of them mention occupations and official posts held. Most of these inscriptions are sepulchral and necessarily brief, and the treatment of them is basically statistical.

To begin with, two general points of method in the use of the inscriptions need to be made, as they are fundamental to any reconstruction of the slave and freedman hierarchy. In the first place, there is a difference between the manner of recording an equestrian career, where all the posts from that of, say, *praefectus cohortis*, held in the twenties, are recorded, and a freedman career, where in the clerical and sub-clerical grades only the highest post actually reached by the end of a career (e.g. *tabularius*,

¹ For this, the accepted view, it is sufficient to mention among many others: Hirschfeld, *Verwaltungsbeamten (Vw.)*, pp. 429, 459; W. Liebenam, *Verwaltungsgeschichte des römischen Kaiserreichs*, I (Jena, 1886), p. 14; Rostovtzeff, *Dir. Epig.* III, 137; Vaglieri, *Dir. Epig.* I, 80.

² The literary picture of the *Familia Caesaris* between Claudius and Trajan is depressingly consistent; cf. among other passages, Pliny, *Panegy.* 88, plerique principes cum essent civium domini, libertorum erant servi; horum consiliis, horum nutu regebantur. . . ; Martial, IX, 79. 1 ff., Oderat ante ducum famulos turbamque priorem | et Palatinum Roma supercilium. . .

³ On Pallas, see recently S. I. Oost, *A.J.Ph.* LXXIX (1958), 113 ff. The career of Claudius Etruscus' father, although curiously parallel to that of Pallas in several respects, was more normal and less discoloured by the literary authorities; cf. in general, Statius, *Silvae*, III, 3, and, for the early stages of his *cursus*, esp. ll. 63-4, laeta dehinc series variisque ex ordine curis | auctus honos.

⁴ See D. Stockton, *Historia*, x (1961), 116 ff., esp. 119 n. 11.

⁵ *Hist.* I, 49.

a commentariis, dispensator) is recorded. This is not to be interpreted as meaning that the slaves and freedmen spent their lives in a single post on a single grade. The first point on the promotion ladder which was normally mentioned as the beginning of a *cursum* in the equestrian sense was that of *proximus* or even *procurator*. But as these grades were not normally reached before the age of 40, those who did gain senior posts must have served as *Caesaris servi* in their twenties, and as *Augusti liberti* in their thirties, in at least two of the junior and intermediate clerical or other posts. There is little evidence of short-circuiting in freedman careers, and not much of early manumission for those in administrative positions. The normal age of manumission for an Imperial slave was 30 or soon after—in fact the minimum age prescribed by the *lex Aelia Sentia*.¹ For those in the administration this implies at least ten years' service in a junior slave grade or grades.

The second general point concerns the use of age-figures in the inscriptions, especially the figures recording age at death. If a given post is regularly one of senior standing, it should be exceptional, and it is, to find an occupant who died in his twenties or even thirties and had therefore been appointed to it at an even earlier age. Thus of eight freedmen *procuratores*² whose age at death is known, the youngest is 55, and the average is in the seventies. More significant still are the age-at-death figures for *dispensatores*.³ Of six known from Rome and Italy, five died between the ages of 30 and 37; the other died after having been married for 11 years, which could also mean a reasonably early death in the thirties. From the provinces the ages are 37, 54, 57, and one with the Legion *III Augusta* who died allegedly aged 110. Thus 7/10 *dispensatores* whose age-figures are known died in their thirties, including all examples from Rome and Italy. Their mortality rate was not predictably higher than that of other officials—they handled and disbursed large sums of money. They all had to remain slaves beyond the normal age for manumission because of their special financial responsibilities—both a lucrative and a desirable sacrifice of freedom for which there was considerable competition. But they did not remain either slaves or *dispensatores* indefinitely. In the central offices in Rome their manumission was mainly a means of promotion, opening the way to the higher freedman posts, and the age-figures show that in Rome this had normally taken place by their fortieth year.⁴ At the other end, the fact that none died in their twenties is significant, as it is

¹ It was in the emperor's interest to extract good service from his slaves during their early working life, and in the interest of the *fiscus libertatis et peculiorum* to have manumission purchased by Imperial slaves from their *peculia*, which, presumably, could not have been done before the legal age (see A. H. M. Jones, *J.R.S.* xxxix (1949), 43 f.). The *iustae causae manumissionis* for slaves under 30 years of age *apud consilium*, listed by Gaius (I, 19; cf. 39) and Ulpian (*Reg.* III, 1), such as blood or foster relationship, or intention to marry, could scarcely apply to *servi Caesaris*. Nor would informal manumission and the concept of *Latinitas* have much place. The one mention is late (*C. Th.* IV, 12. 3).

² III, 1312; VI, 8512, 9019, 33136; VIII, 12880; X, 1740, 6785, cf. 6093; XIV, 176. A further three died having been married for 44, 21 and 10 years respectively (III, 287 = 6776; VI, 8432; X, 6571; cf. XIII, 1800). The figures for years of married life are not always useful as low figures may represent late or second marriages. High figures show middle or old age, as a minimum of 18–20 years needs to be added for males.

³ VI, 8687, 8839, 33775; X, 1731, 7588; *E.E.* VIII, 720; III, 7102; VIII, 1028, 3289, 12892.

⁴ The restorations in III, 7130, *M. Ulpius Aug. lib. | Repenti[nus qui dis]pensa[vit in provin]cia Asia [annis trigin]ta . . .*, especially the number *triginta* in full, are highly conjectural.

likely that this would have been noticed on the tombstone of one who had been appointed *dispensator* at such an early age, and creates the presumption that none were appointed at that age, and that 30 was the normal age at appointment.

The age-at-death figures do not provide an instrument of excessive refinement, but one which can be used with varying effectiveness for different grades and different localities. But it is clear that the age and the promotion structure must correspond. A further point emerges. The age-figures for Rome and the provinces, particularly Carthage, are sometimes at variance. Those who were still slaves and still of junior grade at the age of 40 or over—in other words, the unsuccessful—are in almost all cases found in Carthage. This reflects the higher status of the capital, and in the provincial administrative centres a comparative lack of opportunity for advancement, especially from the lowest grades. To offset this, however, there is evidence of considerable mobility from one centre to another for the senior clerical and higher grades.

II. THE SUB-CLERICAL GRADES

To return to the hierarchy.¹ What were the posts which gave access to the promotion scale, and how were they recruited? In the first place, one can rule out the sub-clerical workers—the non-clerical, non-financial, non-professional; for example, the *pedisequi*, *custodes*, *nomenclatores*, *tabellarii*, and most of the often-quoted specialists who served on the purely domestic staff of the Palace. A gap, or occupational discontinuity, opened between the sub-clerical and the clerical staff of the administration and it was rare indeed for anyone to jump it. The age-figures suggest this, typical being those for the *pedisequi*, a dozen of whom died at ages evenly spread from 20 to 70. They are all slaves, and the high proportion—more than half—aged over 40 indicates an occupation unskilled and unremunerative, without prospects but perhaps not excessively strenuous, and congenial to the unambitious. One exception to the rule is instructive. A certain Eutyclus, as a slave, was *pedisequus a vinis*—sub-clerical. He is found later as T. Aelius Aug. lib. Eutyclus, still in the same department, as *adiutor a vinis*,² that is, in his thirties and after manumission he rose to the bottom rung on the clerical ladder, a grade usually occupied at the beginning of their careers while still slaves by those fortunate enough to be professional civil servants all their lives.³

Similarly sub-clerical are the *tabellarii*. They are slaves and remained so during their service from the age of 20 to that of 40, as the strikingly consistent age-figures show.⁴ However, unless one supposes the mortality rate of Imperial postmen to have been extraordinarily high, especially during the first fifteen years of service on the

¹ For the junior personnel of the Imperial civil service the best discussion is that of A. H. M. Jones, 'The Roman Civil Service (Clerical and Sub-clerical Grades)', *J.R.S.* xxxix (1949), 38 ff., reprinted in *Studies in Roman Government and Law* (1960), pp. 151 ff.

² vi, 9091, 8527; cf. Hirschfeld, *Vw.* p. 459 n. 4.

³ Cf. *J.L.S.* 1794, Erasinus Caes. n. ser. adiutor a vinis.

⁴ Apart from two *optiones*, freedmen who died aged 61 and 55, all the other *tabellarii* for whom we have age-data are slaves; their ages at death are: 45 (ex tabellar.), 40, 35, 30, 28, 28, 25, 25, 25, 20—and one Florus Aug. ser. tabellarius from Carthage (viii, 12908), who must surely have retired some time before he died at the age of 82.

Roman roads, those who survived to the age of 40–45 must have gone to other occupations. Their new jobs were not clerical. A few were manumitted and promoted to supervisory rank—that of *praepositus tabellariorum*. Rank and file *tabellarii* changed to a less strenuous occupation and became, for example, *pedisequi*, as one inscription suggests.¹ Socially, if the status of their wives is any indication, *tabellarii* were of low standing—most of their wives are slaves, in contrast with the wives of the holders of clerical posts.

There is no question of recognized grades of promotion at this level of competence in the sub-clerical and domestic Palace service, except for the *praepositi*. The title *praepositus* is rarely found in the clerical and administrative service and never constituted a regular grade there in the early empire.² *Praepositus*, with its strong military associations, rather illustrates the military lines along which the great slave *familiae* were normally organized in Rome. Not the smallest among these was the *familia* of the Imperial Palace with its middle-aged *praepositus structorum* (married 25 years), *praepositus pictorum* (d. 50), *praepositus vestis triumphalis* (married 45 years), and others. Nor is the military flavour of the subordinates of the *praepositi* surprising—we find two *optiones tabellariorum* (d. 61, 55), a *decurio unctorum* (d. 71), *decurio lecticariorum* (d. 60), etc., all somewhat elderly at death and probably not appointed before the age of 40–45.

The lives of the slaves and freedmen in the Palace service would be basically similar to those of countless other slaves and freedmen of noble houses familiar from the literary sources of the first and second centuries A.D. Their importance depended on the particular posts they held, especially the *a cubiculo*, *tricliniarchi*, *praegustatores*, and others,³ and on their personal contact with and influence over particular emperors—and in the early empire several emperors were susceptible to such influence.

I shall not dwell longer on this personnel. The *tabellarii* were without doubt a necessary cog in the administrative machine, but most of the others in the jungle that was the Palace service seem to have been somewhat less than indispensable to the efficient running of the Roman empire. The burden of this fell on the civil servants from the junior clerical slave officers, through the freedmen *a commentariis* and *tabularii*, the senior freedmen *proximi*, *procuratores* and heads of departments, up to the equestrian procurators themselves.

The equestrians had an established salary and promotion structure. This reached downwards to the freedmen and slaves. HS 40,000 is attested as the salary for *proximi* in the early third century,⁴ but for the rest salary as a source of income is scarcely mentioned.⁵ The number of equestrian posts was economically few, although

¹ X, 1741, Suc(c)es(s)us Augustorum tabellarius. . . pedisecus in (d)ie vitae suae.

² An exception is VI, 8528, Hermeros Aug. lib. praepositus tabular. rationis castrensis. Other examples are from the late second or early third centuries, and in all cases except one (*A.E.* 1935, 20) refer to officials in charge of *stationes* for the collection of the *portoria*: V, 5090, 7643; XIII, 5244; *A.E.* 1919, 21; 1934, 234. Under the Severi it became increasingly common for Imperial freedmen and slaves in the provinces to use the term of their equestrian procurator, e.g. II, 1085; III, 251; X, 7584; *J.G.R.R.* 1, 623.

³ Cf. E. Fairon, 'L'organisation du palais impérial à Rome', *Musée Belge*, IV (1900), 5 ff.

⁴ VI, 8619.

⁵ Cf. Hirschfeld, *Vw.* p. 463.

adequate for the purpose.¹ The substructure, too, must have borne some relation to the superstructure—no extravagant crowds, and not understaffed to the point of inefficiency. Thus we are considering a service where opportunities for promotion were dependent on influence, merit and service—no doubt in that order—and where the element of competition for available places was not unduly wasteful of talent and was stimulating for the ambitious.

It is not easy to reduce a whole bureaucratic system, or even part of one, to one or two patterns; there is always the risk of dangerous over-simplification. It is possible to discern, however, two main sequences of posts which led up to the senior freedman *cursus*, the procuratorships. The one leads through posts held entirely by slaves and almost exclusively financial. The other is a mixed slave–freedman sequence leading to senior clerical and administrative posts.

The first begins with the *vicarii* and leads through the *vicariani* to the post of *dispensator*, and then after manumission, at the age of 40 or shortly after, to the grade of *tabularius* in more or less important departments. Some *dispensatores*, but perhaps not the *vicariani*, rose to become *procuratores*. I have discussed this sequence fully elsewhere in a forthcoming article.²

III. ADIUTORES

The starting-point for the second regular sequence—the clerical posts—is the *adiutores*. *Adiutor* is basically a generic term meaning ‘assistant’, and is used for a wide variety of posts in the civil and military administration.³ It is always further defined, sometimes by a noun in the genitive (e.g. *tabulariorum*, *praefecti*, *principis*, *procuratoris*, etc.), sometimes by the name of an administrative or domestic office (e.g. *a rationibus*, *a cognitionibus*, *ab admissione*, *a vinis*, *a lagona*, etc.). The problem is to sort these out according to rank in the administrative hierarchy. But before we can make any progress we must dispose of the seniority and regular status of the *adiutores procuratoris* because of their disturbing effect on the status of the rest.

The examples are as follows: Carpus Aug. lib. Pallantianus adiutor Claudi Athenodori praef. annonae (VI, 8470; cf. 143). The mention of Claudius Athenodorus by name indicates that this is not a regular official title or rank but rather a personal appointment, perhaps due to personal influence as Carpus is a former slave of Pallas, the *a rationibus*.⁴ Similarly in III, 431 = *I.L.S.* 1449, from Ephesus, the phraseology, Hermes Aug. lib. adiutor eius (i.e. procuratoris ad dioecsin Alexandr. . .), does not have an official look and probably indicates a personal assistant rather than someone who is necessarily of senior grade. Another instance from the provinces with the

¹ See esp. H. G. Pflaum, *Les Procurateurs Équestres sous le Haut-Empire romain* (Paris, 1950), pp. 29 ff.

² ‘*Vicarius* and *vicarianus* in the *Familia Caesaris*’, *J.R.S.* LIV (1964).

³ The best collection of material is still Vaglieri, *Dir. Epig.* I, 81 ff. s.v. *adiutor*.

⁴ *P.I.R.*², c 794. Carpus could not have been Pallas’ freedman (as M. T. Griffin, *J.R.S.* LII (1962), 105), but was probably manumitted by Nero. He could have passed into the *Familia Caesaris* before or after the manumission of Pallas, but as Pallas was manumitted by Antonia Minor between A.D. 31 and 37 (see Oost, *A.J.Ph.* LXXIX (1958), 114), a date between his retirement in 55 and his death in 62 is more likely. See also Hirschfeld, *Vw.* p. 241 n. 3.

same phraseology is *C.I.G.* II, 1813b = *I.L.S.* 8849, from Nicopolis in Epirus: Μνηστήρ Σεβ. ἀπελ. βοηθός αὐτοῦ (i.e. ἐπιτρόπου Σεβ.). Also from the provinces come Parthenius Aug. lib. a(diutor) p(rocuratoris) (III, 14192.15 = *I.G.R.R.* IV, 1317—Tyanollus, Asia), and two from the early third century with the title *adiutor procuratorum* (*I.G.R.R.* IV, 1651—Philadelphia, Asia; VII, 62—near Bath; cf. VI, 738 (A.D. 198–209) Nicephorus Augg. lib. adiut. procc.). In VI, 10083, habe Marce, dulcis a(nima), adiut. proc. summi chor(agi). Marcus piissimo patri (fec.), one suspects an Imperial slave,¹ as does Dessau for Fortunatus Pompeianus in *I.L.S.* 1771 = VI, 8950, where he and Optatus Aug. lib. are linked as *adiutores proc. rationis ornamentorum*. If these two are *adiutores proc.* concurrently, the likelihood of either of them being senior deputy procurators is diminished.² From the same departments come M. Ulpus Aug. lib. Menophilus *adiutor proc. ab ornamentis* (VI, 4228)—the only one of these *adiutores* for whom we have an age-figure; he died at the age of 35—and . . . tianus Aug. lib. *adiutor proc. sum(mi) choragi* (XIV, 1877). In VI, 10234, the *lex collegii Aesculapi et Hygiae*. A.D. 153 (lines 2–3), Salvia C.f. Marcellina ob memoriam Fl. Apolloni proc. Aug., qui fuit a pinothecis, et Capitonis Aug. l. adiutoris eius, mariti sui piissimi, donum dedit collegio Aesculapi, the double dedication by Marcellina to Apollonius and to Capito, her husband, indicates a personal rather than a purely official bond between the two latter.

In most of these examples, with the exception of the *adiutores procuratorum*, who are from the third century, the personal name of the procurator is introduced into the title of the *adiutor* or the personal connection is otherwise stressed. This is unprofessional, as it were, and most uncharacteristic of regular official nomenclature. The *adiutores procuratoris*, who are found sporadically from the time of Claudius to the third century, are Imperial freedmen, and perhaps sometimes slaves, acting as personal assistants and probably personal appointees of officials who have the title *procurator*, whether equestrian or freedman. Apart from Carpus Aug. lib. Pallantianus, an early and perhaps special case, none of the *adiutores procuratoris* strictly so called are connected with a major administrative department. They assist some provincial procurators or heads of minor departments in Rome. They probably held their appointment during the term of office of their superior. Their status varies according to that of the person whom they assist.³ Lastly, there is no indication of an *adiutor procuratoris* having himself advanced to the procuratorial grade or even to that of *proximus*. This would be surprising if they were regular officials of relatively senior rank and suggests that they were not in fact career administrators at all. They are therefore comparable

¹ Cf. *Dis. Epig.* I, 83.

² This inscription, VI, 8950, is instructive. It was erected to Servatus Caes. n. ser. *contrascriptor rationis summi choragi*, who lived 34 years, by his friends Fortunatus Pompeianus and Optatus Aug. lib. *adiutores proc. rationis ornamentorum*, Irenaeus Caes. v. m. *adiutor tabulariorum*, Isidorus Primitivi Aug. disp. *vicar(ius) rationis eiusdem* (sc. *rationis ornamentorum*), and by Helius *vicarius eius* (sc. Servati). The post of *contrascriptor* is held by slaves and is similar to but less important than that of *dispensator*. The friends of Servatus, including two different kinds of *adiutores* in juxtaposition, are all of similar or lower standing—*adiutores proc.*, *adiutor tabular.*, *dispensatoris vicarius*, and his own *vicarius*.

³ An indication of favour is the manumission of M. Ulpus Aug. lib. Menophilus *adiut. proc. ab ornamentis* before his father, P. Aelius Aug. lib. Menophilus (VI, 4228).

with those *adiutores* of equestrian status whom Pflaum has been promising to discuss in a *mémoire* on the sub-procurators.¹

The equestrian *adiutores*² are all *sexagenarii* and the range of their posts is restricted. There are four *adiutores ad census* (nos. 2, 4, 9, 11), three *adiutores praef. annonae* (nos. 1, 2, 7), three *adiutores curatoris alvei Tiberis et cloacarum* (nos. 6, 8, 10), and two *adiutores curatoris operum publicorum* (nos. 3, 5). There is only one instance of an *adiutor procuratoris* (no. 1), which is also the earliest. Most of these posts involve assisting *curatores* or provincial governors, who are of senatorial and perhaps consular rank. They do not form part of the normal equestrian *cursus*, just as the freedmen *adiutores procuratoris* stand outside the regular freedman administrative service. In all the cases where the superior official is an equestrian, and in some cases where he is of senatorial rank, his personal name appears in the inscription linked with that of the *adiutor* (nos. 1, 2, 3, 7), indicating that these are personal appointments due in the first instance to the initiative of the superior. This style is exceptional and should be compared with that used by the freedmen *adiutores procuratoris*. Besides this, several of these equestrian *adiutores* were specially favoured in their subsequent careers or held exceptional posts (nos. 5, 7, 9). Thus the equestrian *adiutores*, like the freedmen *adiutores procuratoris*, owe their position, as their title and nomenclature frequently indicate, to the privilege of designating subordinates held or assumed by their superiors.

In the second place we must dispose of the notion that those with titles such as *adiutor a rationibus*, *adiutor ab epistulis*, etc., are the *first* assistants of the *head* of the department in question, *the a rationibus*, etc. Here one well-known example and the authority of Mommsen have had a disproportionate influence. This is Septimianus, alias Septumanus, *adiutor* of Cosmus Aug. lib., *a rationibus* under M. Aurelius and L. Verus. Septimianus is mentioned in two documents which clearly show his role as the intermediary through whom requests, or at least some requests, made to the *a rationibus* are passed and decisions communicated to the petitioners. In IX, 2438 (iii), a letter from Septimianus to Cosmus, Septimianus explains the trouble which he has

¹ *Proc. Équest.* pp. 49, 75; *Carrières Procuratoriennes (C.P.)*, p. 105 *et passim*.

² I have contented myself with giving some examples and indicating some similarities between these two groups of *adiutores*. (Needless to say, I am indebted to Pflaum throughout; cf. *C.P.* p. 1264, Index s.v. *adiutor*; *Proc. Équest.* pp. 196 f.) (1) M. Te. . . , *adiutor Cassi Mariani*, *proc. Aug. provinc. Narb.* item Aureli Flacci, *provinc. Belg.* item Castrici Saturnini, *provinc. Africae* item Metti Rufi, *praef. annon.* (*C.P.* no. 52); (2) Sex. Attius Suburanus Aemilianus, *adiutor Vibi Crispi*, *leg. Aug. pro pr. in censibus accipiendis Hispaniae citerioris*, *adiut. Iuli Ursi praef. annonae*, *eiusdem in praefect. Aegypti* (*C.P.* no. 56); (3) L. Vibius Lentulus βοηθός Α. Πομπηίου Ουόπεισκου Κατελλίου Κέλερος ἐπιμελητοῦ ὀδῶν ναῶν ἱερῶν τόπων τε δημοσίων (*C.P.* no. 66); (4) L. Dudistus Novanus, *adiutor ad census provinc. Lugudunensis* (*C.P.* no. 82); (5) L. Volusius Maecianus, *adiutor o(perum) p(ublicorum)* (*C.P.* no. 141); (6) L. Vibius Apronianus, *adiutor albei Tiberis et cloacarum* (*C.P.* no. 160 *bis*); (7) Sex. Iulius Possessor, *adiutor Ulpji Saturnini praef. annon. ad oleum Afrum et Hispanum recensendum item solamina transferenda item vecturas naviculariis exsolvendas* (*C.P.* no. 185); (8) Q. Petronius Melior, *adiutor curatoris alvei Tiberis et cloacarum* (*C.P.* no. 201); (9) Ti. Claudius Zeno Ulpianus, *adiut(or) ad cens(us)* (*C.P.* no. 228); (10) Herennius Ser. . . , [*adiut. cur.*] *alvei Tiberis [et cloacarum]* (*C.P.* no. 267); (11) M. Aemilius . . . , [*adiutor ad*] *cens[us]* (*C.P.* no. 282 *bis*). Cf. also Pliny, *Ep.* VII, 31, (Claudius Pollio) . . . a Corellio nostro ex liberalitate imperatoris Nervae emendis dividendisque agris *adiutor adsumptus* (*C.P.* no. 54).

been having with the magistrates of Saepinum and Bovianum, who have been interfering with the rights of passage of the emperor's flocks; he specifies the complaints of the *conductores*, indicates what steps he has taken (*necesse habuimus etiam atque etiam scribere, quietius agerent, ne res dominica detrimentum pateretur*), the response of the magistrates (*et cum in eadem contumacia perseverent, dicentes non curaturos se, neque si tu eis scripseris haut fieri rem*), and suggests to Cosmus that he secure the intervention of the *praefecti praetorio*, Bassaeus Rufus and Macrinus Vindex. This Cosmus does in a letter in which he refers to Septimianus as 'collibertus et adiutor meus' (*ibid.* ii). The date is c. A.D. 168, to which is dated the other inscription, VI, 455, concerning worship of the Lares by a *collegium* in Rome. The relevant passage, as restored by Mommsen, runs: Cosmus a rationibus Augg. [ob curam sacrarum] imaginu[m litter]is ad Septumanum adiutorem s[uum datis probavit]. Septimianus is clearly not of very junior status, but his affinities are much closer with the miscellaneous group of *adiutores procuratoris* discussed above (cf. the personal mode of reference, *collibertus et adiutor meus*, which is characteristic of this group) than with those who have the title of *adiutor a rationibus*. Moreover, the position of Cosmus himself needs some consideration.¹ He may not be *the a rationibus*. The magistrates of Saepinum and Bovianum are contumacious and show a lack of respect for the authority of Cosmus that would be as surprising, if he were *the* head of the Imperial financial administration, as the matter in question appears to be unimportant. It is hard to believe that in A.D. 168—VI, 455 is dated to September 168—a freedman could occupy the highest and apparently only trecenarian equestrian post in the administration, especially if the bureaucracy had a momentum and tradition of its own, relatively independent of the whims of particular emperors.² Cosmus' reference to his own freedman status (*collibertus*) is as surprising as it would seem inappropriate, despite the laconic statement in the *Historia Augusta* (*S.H.A. Marc.* 15), *multum sane potuerunt liberti sub Marco et Vero*—an undeservedly overworked eight words. Moreover, if Pflaum is right,³ it was precisely at this time—between October 166 and February 169—that L. Aurelius Nicomedes was chosen as the first occupant of the post of *procurator summarum rationum*, the second senior equestrian official in the financial administration, a *ducenarius*. A former freedman of L. Verus, he had been raised to equestrian status before assuming high office in the administration. If Cosmus were really the head of the *a rationibus*, he would surely have been similarly honoured, if only for the sake of consistency, as the father of Claudius Etruscus had, indeed, been honoured while *a rationibus* by Vespasian. M. Bassaeus Rufus, *praefectus praetorio* in 168, is himself found as *procurator a rationibus* just two or three years before, in 165.⁴ Cosmus is in fact likely to be the senior *freedman* in the central finance department, the subordinate of its equestrian head, in the same way as equestrian

¹ *P.I.R.*² C 1535.

² The other freedman *a rationibus* after Hadrian is T. Aurelius Aug. lib. Aphrodisius (XIV, 2104), manumitted by Antoninus Pius before the latter's adoption by Hadrian. He has the title—exceptional for a freedman—*proc. Aug. a rationibus*. Cf. Friedländer, *Sittengeschichte*¹⁰, IV, 28. Another possible case is T. Aelius Aug. lib. Proculus a rat. (XIV, 5309.23, 28).

³ *C.P.* p. 395; cf. Hirschfeld, *Vw.* pp. 32 f., 35.

⁴ Pflaum, *C.P.* pp. 391, 1019.

procurators were placed above the senior freedmen procurators in each of the provincial financial departments.¹ Freedmen, as a rule, remained in a given post longer than did the equestrians; Cosmus had probably only recently served under Bassaeus Rufus as his deputy in the *a rationibus*, which may help to explain his readiness to approach the praetorian prefects directly for assistance.

The case of Septimianus might seem good *prima facie* evidence that these *adiutores a rationibus*, etc., are quite senior in status. But the age-figures are decisive against this. They are as follows: *adiutor a rationibus* (d. 19), *adiutor a cognitionibus* (d. 18), both slaves; T. Aelius Crispinus Aug. lib. *adiutor a rationibus* (d. 22), Faustus Aug. lib. *adiutor ab epist. Lat.* (d. 19), P. Aelius Aug. lib. Agathemerus *adiutor ab epist. Lat.* who is described as *iuvenis*, T. Aelius Felix Aug. lib. *adiutor ab annonae* (d. 32).² There are other examples of slave *adiutores* in this group, for example Hilarus Aug. vern. *adiutor a rationibus*, Pallans Caes. n. ser. *adiutor a rationibus*, who are likely to be under 30.³ But apart from the fact that slaves are found at all with these titles—in fact 6/12 *adiutores a rationibus* are *servi*, whereas 9/9 *tabularii a rationibus* are *liberti*⁴—it is significant that only 1/5 of those for whom we have age-figures is over 30—and that one only 32—and 3/5 are under 20, including, surprisingly, one freedman. These cannot be administrative or senior clerical positions. There are several freedmen *adiutores* from Rome for whom age-data are lacking.⁵ There is no reason to suppose that any of these had been manumitted under the age of 30, but in view of the fact that 4/5 age-figures of freedmen and slaves with these titles are under 30, it cannot be assumed without further evidence that the freedmen are all or any of them senior officials, second or third in command of the various departments from which they come. It should also be noted that none of the posts of *adiutor* included in this group was held by an *eques*.⁶

It is probable, therefore, that the *adiutores* of the group discussed above, both slaves and freedmen, are of junior rank in the administration. The words *a rationibus*, *ab epistulis*, etc., in their titles refer not to the head of the department in question but to the department itself in general. This nomenclature is characteristic of the *adiutores* of the central administration in Rome. All the thirty-four examples are from Rome, except for three, two of whom are for some reason in Greece.⁷ The third, VIII, 12613, from Carthage, is instructive. It reads: d.m.s. | Victori et Urbicae | Aug. ser. parentibus | piissimis, Iucundus | Aug. lib. adiut. a cognitionibus, *quo usque spatium permisit*, renovavit. Iucundus, who was resident in Rome, arranged for the restoration of his parents' tomb in Carthage.⁸ His parents had remained slaves, but Iucundus had bettered himself by leaving Carthage for Rome and is unable or unwilling to make a journey back. These positions in Rome are held in the first place by slaves at the

¹ See below, pp. 85 f.

² VI, 8424, 8635, 8417, 8613, 8612, 33730.

³ VI, 5305, 8423.

⁴ Cf. Rostovtzeff, *Dir. Epig.* III, 134 f.

⁵ E.g. *I.L.S.* 1507 (*adiutor fisci Asiatici*), 1531 (*adiutor a codicillis*), 1680 (*adiutor a cognitionibus*), 1688 (*adiutor ab actis*), 1692 (*adiutor ab admissione*), 1697 (*adiutor a cognit.*).

⁶ A. M. Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire* (Heffer reprint, 1958), p. 225, quotes Dessau, *I.L.S.* 1452, . . . *ilius . . . ab epistulis [Latinis adiutor]*, but Mommsen's restoration had already been rejected by Hirschfeld (*Vw.* p. 32 n. 4), Domaszewski (*Rangordnung*, p. 220), and recently by Pflaum (*C.P.* pp. 445 ff.) and Townend (*Historia*, x (1961), 378).

⁷ III, 6107; *A.E.* 1950, 171.

⁸ Cf. Mommsen, *C.I.L.* VIII, p. 1336 n. 5.

beginning of their civil service career at about the age of 20, and lead after manumission (rarely before it, and often not coinciding with it) to the rank of *tabularius* or *a commentariis*, usually in the same department. Thereafter their mobility greatly increased. Some may have preferred a slightly earlier promotion—to the rank of *dispensator*. But this usually meant transfer to a different department, and to the provinces, and would be at the cost of deferring manumission.

A third group of *adiutores* are the *adiutores tabulariorum* and their indistinguishable equivalents, the *adiutores a commentariis*. This nomenclature is characteristic of the provincial centres, especially Carthage, but a few are found in minor departments in Rome. The age-figures here show more variation than in the previous groups. Of twenty-nine cases, eleven died under 30, a further nine between 30 and 40, and the remaining nine were aged over 40 at death. The significant fact is the proportion who died while still in their twenties (38 per cent). This and the fact that 23/29 are slaves point to about 20 as the normal age for taking up these posts. They are initially slave posts. But in Carthage, and presumably in the other provincial centres, those beginning at the bottom of the clerical scale seem to be at a disadvantage compared with their equivalents in the high-prestige central bureaus in Rome. In Carthage, manumission and promotion tended to come later. It may be that the senior clerical posts of *tabularii* were often filled by transfer from Rome, as one who died in Africa testifies, *indignans hic data morte*;¹ or maybe there lurks here undetected a further provincial refinement in the *adiutor* grade. It is hard to tell.

It must be concluded that the rank of *adiutor* was junior clerical. This applies to both the *adiutores tabulariorum* and *adiutores a commentariis* as well as to the *adiutores a rationibus*, *adiutores ab epistulis*, etc. Status variations within this basic grade depended on the location of the office where the position was held (especially Rome), and on the prestige of the particular department (especially the *a rationibus*). The important central departments in Rome tended to develop a distinctive nomenclature of their own. After manumission, with or without further service in the junior position, the *adiutor* proceeded to the freedman grades of *tabularius* and *a commentariis*. A notable omission from the ranking nomenclature is the grade of 'adiutor dispensatoris'. Assistants were needed for *dispensatores* as much as for *tabularii* or *a commentariis*. The explanation is that in the *Familia Caesaris* the assistant *dispensatores* are in fact called *vicarii*.

The higher grades in the mixed slave–freedman sequence, the *tabularii* and *a commentariis*, can be dealt with briefly. The age-figures of 17 *tabularii* show a minimum age at death of 28 (and one of the two, very exceptionally, is a slave). Appointment normally followed soon after manumission at the age of 30. Despite some prolonged careers outside Rome without change or promotion, in Rome itself the chance of further promotion to procuratorial rank, about the age of 40, appears to have been fairly good—again assuming that *tabularii* did not die from occupational or other hazards before that age. It is not possible to distinguish with much confidence between *tabularii* and the *a commentariis*. The grades of *tabularius*, *a commentariis* and *dispensator* are roughly equivalent, allowing for local variations and positions of special

¹ VIII, 21008.

responsibility found mostly among the *tabularii*, with such titles as *princeps tabulariorum* and *tabularius provinciae*.¹ These positions were normally held between the ages of 30 and 40–45, the first two by freedmen, the last by slaves. Paradoxically, the *dispensator* had not only exceptional status for a slave but also the best chance of acquiring wealth as opposed to earning it.² But in the running for senior posts and higher salaries the *tabularii* must be considered the best placed.

IV. PROXIMI

Two aspects of the senior freedman *cursus* need to be discussed—first, the post of *proximus*; the other, the titles *a rationibus*, *ab epistulis*, and the like.

The *proximi*³ are quite distinct both in official rank and function from the miscellaneous *adiutores procuratoris*. The only *proximus*⁴ for whom we have an age-figure is T. Aelius Titianus, who died aged 42. Several of the others advanced from the rank of *proximus* to the procuratorial grades, such as Aurelius Alexander, *proximus ab epistulis Latinis*, who later appears as M. Aur. Alexander Aug. lib. *ab epistulis Graecis*;⁵ M. Aurelius Marcio,⁶ *proximus rationum*, becomes *proc. prov. Britanniae*, *proc. summi choragi*, *proc. Frygiae*; M. Aurelius Aug. lib. . . ., *proximus a memoria*, becomes *proc. fisci Asiatici*, and then *proc. h(ereditatum)* in Gaul; Bassus Aug. lib.,⁷ *proximus ab epistulis Graecis*, rises to become *proc. tractus Carthaginiensis*. The title *melloproximus*,⁸ i.e. next in rank to the *proximus*, occurs only once in the early Imperial period—M. Aurelius Aug. lib. Isidorus, *melloproximus a rationibus*. On the counts of both age and subsequent career, therefore, the relatively senior rank of the *proximi* is clear.

Moreover, their position is a strictly official one. In no case is the superior official,

¹ E.g. II, 485, 486, 3235, 4181; III, 980, 1993, 3964, 7955; V, 7253; VI, 8446, 8579; X, 7584. There was also an ἀρχιταβλάριος Αἰγύπτου (*J.L.S.* 8846); cf. Hirschfeld, *Vw.* p. 362.

² For the wealth of *dispensatores*: VI, 5197 (Muscius Scurranus); Pliny, *N.H.* VII, 129; and see Mommsen, *Staatsr.* II, 839 n. 2; P. A. Brunt, *Historia*, X (1961), 222 f. Otho (Suet. *Otho*, 5) exacted from one of his slaves HS 1,000,000 *pro impetrata dispensatione*, which merely shows an alarming state of affairs in the civil service during an alarming year. But Vespasian (Suet. *Vesp.* 23) did virtually the same thing, with no sum specified.

³ The most recent (1957) and fullest discussion of *proximi* in the early empire is by Ensslin, P-W, XXIII, 1034 f. See also Hirschfeld, *Vw.* pp. 335 (and n. 3), 441.

⁴ (1) M. Ulpius Aug. lib. Zopyrus, *prox. ab admissione* (VI, 8701); (2) T. Aelius Aug. lib. Titianus, *prox. a libr(is) sacerdotal(ibus)* (VI, 8878); (3) M. Aurelius Aug. lib. Isidorus, *melloproximus a rationibus* (VI, 8425); (4) Aurelius Alexander (Aug. lib.), *prox. ab epist. Lat.* (XIV, 2815 = XV, 7832); (5) M. Aurelius Aug. liber. Marcio, *prox. rationum* (III, 348); (6) M. Aurelius Aug. lib. . . ., *prox. a memoria* (XIII, 1800); (7) (L. Septimius) Antonius (Aug.) lib., *prox. a libellis* (VI, 180); (8) (M. Aurelius?) Ianuarius (Aug.) lib., *prox. officii memoriae* (VI, 8619); (9) Bassus Aug. lib., *prox. ab epistulis Graecis* (VI, 8608); (10) Terpsilaus Aug. lib., *prox. a studiis* (VI, 8637); (11) Hilarianus Aug. l., *prox. a rat(ionibus)* (*A.E.* 1954, 65); (12) Tertolus Aug. lib., *prox. rational(ium)* (X, 6092). Junior officials, not included in the present discussion, are: M. Ulpius Nicephorus Aug. lib., *prox. comm(entariorum) ann(onae)* (X, 1792), who died aged 18; Soter Aug. lib., *prox. tabular(iorum) rationis patrim(onii)* (VI, 8508); cf. P-W, XXIII, 1034. There are also two freedmen sub-procurators: M. Ulpius Aerasmus Aug. lib., *subprocurator domus Augustianae* (VI, 8640), who died aged 32; Hypaticus Augustorum lib., *subproc.* XX. . . (II, 487).

⁵ VI, 8606; cf. P-W, II, 2433 (Aurelius, 35). He is not to be identified with the p(rae)p(ositus) tabell(ariorum) stat. XX her. of the same name in VI, 8445 (as by Friedländer, *Sitteng.*¹⁰ IV, 41), who belongs to a sub-clerical grade.

⁶ *P.I.R.*² A 1551.

⁷ See below, pp. 85 f.

⁸ P-W, XV, 558; Hirschfeld, *Vw.* p. 460 n. 2.

procurator or head of department mentioned at all, let alone alluded to by his personal name as is normally the case with the *adiutores procuratoris*. The official nature of these appointments is shown clearly by the salary and promotion procedure mentioned in two rescripts of an emperor of the early third century to Ianuarius (Aug.) lib.—VI, 8619: [quoniam functus es per annos...] ministerio officii memoriae... iustum arbitratum sum [adaequare te] ceteris proximis qui in aliis stationibus quadragena millia n. [accipiunt]. Cf. *ibid.* (b): quoniam... fides et modestia... [et commendatio] magistri tui hortantur ut te ad splendidam voluptatum statio[nem] promoveam, defero tibi officium] colliberti tui... The salary is thus fixed at HS 40,000, below that of the lowest procuratorial grade, the *sexagenarii*, but undoubtedly well above that of the *tabularii* and the other clerical grades. The position of *proximus* was always held by freedmen and is in fact the first point on the promotion ladder which was normally mentioned in the *cursus* of those freedmen who reached the highest grades. Thus, while the *proximi* before they reached the age of 40 or thereabouts must have filled the intermediate and junior posts below that of *proximus*, these are not mentioned. This is not to be taken to mean that *tabularii*, *a commentariis* and *dispensatores*, with the exception of some *tabularii a rationibus*,¹ did not ever reach the senior ranks. What is surprising is the small number of freedmen *procuratores* who seem to have served as *proximi*, and the fact that those who did were regularly transferred to another department for their first procuratorship. The number of posts of the rank of *proximus* must have been small. Moreover, they were almost entirely confined to the large administrative departments centred in Rome: *a rationibus* (4), *ab epistulis* (2), *a memoria* (2), *a libellis* (1), *ab admissione* (1), and (the exception) *a libris sacerdotalibus* (1).²

Another fact emerges from the chronological distribution of the *proximi*. All those whose dates are known (8/12) are from the reign of Trajan or later; indeed six of these eight are from the reign of M. Aurelius or later. These limits can be further narrowed, as the date at which M. Ulpius Aug. lib. Zopyrus was *proximus*, if he held that position in his forties at least ten years after his manumission, could easily be during the reign of Hadrian. Further still, the *proximi* from the large central bureaus are all Aurelii or later. Of the four undated *proximi*, who all belong to important departments, Terpsilaus and the fragmentary inscription of Hilarianus give no hint of date; but two without *nomen*, Bassus and Tertiolus, have been assigned to the Claudian and Flavian period respectively solely on grounds of family nomenclature³—Tertiolus' son is Flavius Fuscianus, and Bassus' son is Claudius Comon. But these grounds are quite insufficient to support a firm dating. The mother of Fuscianus is Flavia Irene, and besides the possibility that she had already been married to Hermeros Aug. lib.⁴, there are very many examples of children of *Augusti liberti* deriving their *nomen* from their mother and not their father.⁵ In fact, where mother and father have

¹ Cf. Rostovtzeff, *Dir. Epig.* III, 137; Hirschfeld, *Vw.* pp. 32, 429 n. 6.

² Cf. P-W, xxiii, 1035.

³ Hirschfeld, *Vw.* pp. 34 n. 2, 320 n. 1; Friedländer, *Sitteng.*¹⁶ IV, 39; Pflaum, *Proc. Équest.* p. 318; Ensslin, P-W, xxiii, 1034.

⁴ VI, 8614; cf. X, 6092 n.

⁵ Some examples from the early second century: VI, 23716, Pacuviae Speratae uxori M. Ulpii Aug. lib. Argaei quae vix. cum eo ann. xxxvii. Fecerunt Pacuvi duo Hygia et Proculus matri...; 15317, Ti. Claudio Vitalioni filio... P. Aelius Aug. lib. Ianuarius pater et Claudiae Successae

different *nomina*, the figures show that only about 40 per cent of children in the *Familia Caesaris* take the *nomen* of the father. Even that is a surprisingly high proportion, as normally only those children born after the manumission of the father would be expected to take his *nomen* when it was different from that of the mother. Indeed there are so many examples of children in the *Familia Caesaris* whose *nomen* differs from that of *both* mother and father, even when these differ, that an *inferred nomen* of a father—inferred, that is, from the *nomen* of his children—is on its own very unreliable as a dating criterion.

The other inscription is vi, 8608, Basso Aug. lib. prox. ab epistulis Graecis, protractus Carthaginiensis, Fabia Q.f. Priscilla marito piissimo, item Claudius Comon patri bene merenti fecerunt. Again it is unsafe to assume—as has always been done to my knowledge—the *nomen* of the father, and hence the date of the inscription, solely from the *nomen* of the son (Claudius, without *praenomen*), which in this case differs from that of the mother (Fabia). Adoption of the son into another family or a previous marriage of the mother with an *ingenuus* is as likely to be the explanation of the different *nomina* of mother and son as that the son was born after the manumission of the father and so took his father's *nomen* and not his mother's. Some examples from the middle and late second century make this clear: vi, 10648, T. Aelio Aug. lib. Astio et Flaviae Deuterae, Claudia Voluptas parentibus fecit; 8077, M. Aur. Aug. lib. Miccalo fil(io) . . . et Fabiae Zone coniugi et sibi L. Fl(avio) Miccalus comparavit et L. Fl(avio) Proculo lib.; xiv, 1386, L. Nae(b)ius C(h)rysogonus fecit sibi et Clodiae Victoriae coniugi . . . et M. Aurelio Augg. lib. Vitalioni et M. Aurelio Augg. lib. Peculiari filis suis.¹

There are other features about these two allegedly first-century *proximi* which have been obscured by the family names. Tertiolus is *proximus rational(ium)*. The term *rationalium* has distinctly late second- and third-century associations.² Tertiolus Aug. lib. is surely from that period. The other, Bassus, was *proximus ab epistulis Graecis*. The title *ab epistulis Graecis* otherwise dates from Trajan–Hadrian,³ and, as Townend has recently argued,⁴ may not have been permanently established at the equestrian level till the reign of M. Aurelius. Hirschfeld⁵ has to assume that this *proximus ab epistulis Graecis* was head of a section of a department and not deputy to the *ab epistulis Graecis*. The formal division of the department and the division of functions within the new department which the titles *ab epistulis Graecis* and *proximus* imply belong naturally to a more fully developed stage of administrative organization than was

coniugi . . . cum qua vix. ann. xxxi . . . et Ti. Claudio Aug. l. Censorino filio; 20579, Iuliae Nice P. Aelius Aug. lib. Mansuetus coniugi . . . et T. Iulius Pontianus f(ilius) . . . ; *A.E.* 1923, 76, Claudiae Methe coniugi . . . fec. Aelius Aug. lib. Hermes praepositus pistorum et Chrysanthus fil. sibi et Claud(iae) Euchari f(iiliae) . . .

¹ Cf. vi, 15221, Ti. Cl(audius) Primulus et Aelia Aphrodite qu(a)e et Sophe fecerunt sibi et Aurelio Aug. lib. Melisso filio suo; 13206–7, M. Aurelius Rufinus Augg. lib. . . . L. Caesius Urbanus filius.

² Hirschfeld, *Vw.* p. 34; Friedländer, *Sitteng.*¹⁰ iv, 27.

³ vi, 8607, M. Ulpius Aug. lib. Eros. The title *ab epistulis Latinis* is found of Flavian date: vi, 8610, 8611. For the equestrian *ducenarii ad legationes et responsa Graeca* since Claudius, see Pflaum, *C.P.* pp. 34 ff. (Ti. Claudius Balbillus); pp. 41 ff. (C. Stertinius Xenophon); pp. 111 ff. (Dionysius Alexandrinus); *Proc. Équest.* p. 60.

⁴ *Historia*, x (1961), 375 ff.

⁵ *Vw.* p. 320 n. 1.

likely or even possible under Claudius or Nero. Bassus is best placed with the other *proximus ab epistulis* (in this case *Latinis*), Aurelius Alexander, under M. Aurelius or later.

Bassus advanced to the post of *procurator tractus Carthaginiensis*. This title is attested for the reign of Hadrian,¹ and an equestrian *procurator centenarius* was probably in Carthage as early as 69.² Pflaum puts the creation of this equestrian post under Nero if not earlier. This does not exclude a freedman in charge of the Imperial domains administered at that period from Carthage, but the title *procurator* for such a freedman post in the provinces and the term *tractus Carthaginiensis* suggest the second century when they are definitely attested. The freedmen *procuratores provinciae* are all dated to the middle of the second century and later³ which is the period covered by the dated *proximi*. If Bassus' post as *proc. tractus Carthaginiensis* was the equivalent of that of a freedman *proc. provinciae*—freedmen *proc. prov. Africae* are not attested, nor are equestrians with this title after Trajan⁴—then his career would fit naturally with that of M. Aurelius Aug. lib. Marcio who rose from *proximus rationum* to be *proc. prov. Phrygiae* under M. Aurelius or later.

The appearance of the title *proximus* for the official administrative grade of deputy-head of department belongs to the period of Trajan or later. It was mostly confined, as is natural, to the large departments of the central administration whose growth made such additional appointments necessary. When Trajan and Hadrian regularly appointed equestrians to the important *officia Palatina*, hitherto mostly held by freedmen, the need for senior freedmen administrators did not thereby diminish. Rather these changes were an indication of the increasing importance and size of these *officia*, especially the *a rationibus*. Above the senior freedman *a rationibus* was appointed a new *procurator a rationibus* in the same way as that in which equestrian procurators were placed over the senior freedmen procurators in the provinces. By the time of M. Aurelius it was found necessary to increase the number of senior freedmen posts perhaps in proportion to the number of new equestrian procuratorships. Hence the new freedman title of *procurator provinciae*. It is no coincidence that a *proximus* and even a *melloproximus* appear in the *a rationibus* about the same time as, or shortly after, the appointment by M. Aurelius of the first *proc. summarum rationum* as the equestrian deputy-head of the *a rationibus*, or that *proximi ab epistulis Latinis* and *Graecis* appear about the time of the permanent division of the *ab epistulis* at the equestrian level, also under M. Aurelius.⁵ The process of creating more senior freedmen posts in the central administration went on in the latter half of the second century until checked and finally stopped by the sub-procuratorial changes in the equestrian *cursus* begun by Septimius Severus.

¹ VIII, 14763, T. Flavius Gallicus *proc. Aug. prov. Afric. tract. Kart.* See Pflaum, *C.P.* no. 192, pp. 517 ff. For joint equestrian and freedman procurators under Trajan, cf. VIII, 25902 (i) = *F.I.R.A.* 1, 485, Licinio Maximo et Felicio Aug. lib. *procc.* Cf. Tacitus, *Ann.* XIII, 1.

² Tacitus, *Hist.* IV, 50 (Baebius Massa); cf. Pflaum, *C.P.* p. 99; *Proc. Equest.* p. 44.

³ Hirschfeld, *Vw.* pp. 381 n. 4, 380.

⁴ See Pflaum, *C.P.* no. 150 *bis* (Claudius Paternus Clementianus), pp. 354 ff. and esp. p. 978.

⁵ Townend, *op. cit.* p. 379. Equestrian *proximi* are not found in this period.

V. A RATIONIBUS, AB EPISTULIS, ETC.

The roll-call of slave and freedmen dignitaries with these titles is a surprisingly long one. There are 18, possibly 20, a *rationibus*, not counting M. Antonius Pallas and the father of Claudius Etruscus, all but two (possibly three) of whom are from the period before Hadrian. There are 16 *ab epistulis*, all probably before Hadrian, not counting a further four *ab epistulis Latinis* and two *ab epistulis Graecis*. It is obvious from the instances of slaves with these titles that a *rationibus*, *ab epistulis*, etc. cannot refer exclusively to the head of a department. The problem is how to distinguish between, for example, an *a rationibus* and the *a rationibus*.

The lists given in Friedländer,¹ as revised by Hirschfeld and later by Bang, are accompanied by no explicit formulation of the principles for distinguishing between the 'oberste Dirigenten' and the 'Unterbeamten'. It is clear from their age and status that the slaves cannot be senior: Libanus Caesaris vern. *ab epistulis* (d. 16), Victor Caes. vern. *a cognit(ionibus)* (d. 18), Abascantus Aug. *a rat(ionibus) Attic(ianus)*, Apolaustus Caesaris *a rationibus*, Ianuarius Caesaris Aug. *ab epistulis*.² It is unlikely that all these are pre-Claudian, as Hirschfeld suggests for the *ab epistulis*.³

As for the freedmen, it is difficult, if not impossible, to fit them all in between the retirements of Pallas and Narcissus on the one hand, and the reforms of Trajan and Hadrian on the other. If Pallas began his work as the *a rationibus* early in the reign of Claudius, and if he was succeeded in A.D. 55 (as is often assumed, but more probably in A.D. 70) by the father of Claudius Etruscus, who occupied the post till the reign of Domitian,⁴ and if, after the appointment of Vibius Lentulus in the reign of Trajan, the head of the *a rationibus* was thenceforth an equestrian,⁵ where is one to fit in Claudius Abascantus, Claudius Actiacus, Claudius Eros, Claudius Felix (the last two perhaps brothers), the two unnamed Claudii of XI, 4360, Atticus (who was a *rationibus* by A.D. 85), Phaon, Crescens, Diadumenus (all possibly freedmen of Nero), and Flavius Epaphroditus Ephebianus (a *vicarianus*), not to mention the more uncertain cases.⁶ Note that there is only one certain Flavius and no Ulpius.

Similarly with the *ab epistulis*. Narcissus died in A.D. 54. From Statius, *Silvae*, v, 1, we know of Abascantus under Domitian. There is also the equestrian friend of Pliny, Cn. Octavius Titinius Capito,⁷ who was *ab epistulis* from the reign of Domitian to

¹ *Sitteng.*¹⁰ IV, 26 ff.

² VI, 8597, 8631, 8408, 33467, 8596.

³ *Vw.* p. 319. Libanus and Victor are *Caesaris vernae*; cf. *C.Q.* n.s. XIV (1964), 136 ff.

⁴ For his banishment in 82/3, Statius, *Silv.* III, 146 ff. He was still a *rationibus* at the time as another senior official of the *a rationibus* (*ibid.* 161, *curarum socius*) was banished with him. The exile lasted for about seven years, till A.D. 90 (*Silv.* I, 5. 65; Martial, VI, 42). Etruscus' father died late in 92, approaching the end of his 90th year (Martial, VII, 40. 6).

⁵ As suggested, with some probability, by R. H. Lacey, *Equestrian Officials of Trajan and Hadrian* (Princeton, 1917), p. 40. No freedman is known to have held the post under Trajan; and the passage in *S.H.A. Hadr.* 22. 8, (Hadrian) *ab epistulis et a libellis primus equites Romanos habuit*, does not mention the *a rationibus* in connection with Hadrian and therefore implies that Trajan was the first to use *equites* regularly in that post.

⁶ VI, 8411, 8412, 8413; X, 6640 (cf. VI, 8410); III, 14112.2 (cf. Suet. *Ner.* 48. 1, 49. 2; Dio, LXIII, 27. 3); VI, 8414 (cf. Tac. *Hist.* I, 76); VI, 8415 (cf. X, 3347; *I.L.S.* 1474; VI, 33903); VI, 33468.

⁷ Pflaum, *C.P.* no. 60; cf. Sex. Caesius Propertianus, already under Vitellius (*C.P.* no. 37).

early in the reign of Trajan. We still have to account for the following freedmen *ab epistulis* before Hadrian: Claudius Eudaemon, Claudius Philologus, Claudius Primio; Flavius Epictetus, Flavius Euschemon, (Flavius) Fortunatus and his brother Epaphroditus, Flavius Protogenes; and Glyptus, Ionius, Pistus, and perhaps Clemens, of uncertain date.¹ This does not include the *ab epistulis Latinis* and *ab epistulis Graecis*.² Once again there are no Ulpian, although Glyptus, whose wife is Ulpia Athenais, may be from the reign of Trajan.³ But this time there is a multiplicity of Flavii, who have to be fitted into the early Flavian period when a rapid turnover was least likely.

It is characteristic of the freedman posts that they were normally held for longer periods than equestrian posts. Ten years or so in a single post was common. In fact, the only two freedmen who were certainly in charge of the *a rationibus*, Pallas and the father of Claudius Etruscus, both held office for longer than ten years each, as did Narcissus as *ab epistulis*.

Moreover, there are aspects of the careers and family relationships of some of the above freedmen that make it unlikely that they held high office. This is the case when two brothers or two persons are mentioned in the same inscription both holding the same office, apparently concurrently: Ti. Ti. Claudii Eros et Felix; the two unknown *a rationibus* under Nero; the brothers Epaphroditus and Fortunatus, *ab epistulis* in the Flavian period; also the fact that the two brothers of M. Ulpius Aug. l. Eros, *ab epistulis Graecis*, Epaphroditus and Stachys, are both still *Caesaris n. servi* must cast doubt on the senior status of Eros himself. Among the *ab epistulis*, Flavius Epictetus had previously held the position of *lictor curiatus* as well as that of *a copiis militaribus*; Flavius Euschemon may have been senior *ab epistulis* if he advanced from the procuratorship *ad capitularia Iudaeorum* to be *ab epistulis*, but not if the other way round, as is perhaps implied by the words *qui fuit ab epistulis*; Fortunatus, *ab epistulis*, had been *accensus* to Vespasian, *lictor curiatus*, and *viat(or) honor(atus) dec(uriae) co(n)s(ularis) et pr(aetoriae)*.⁴

For an explanation of the nomenclature of the *a rationibus*, *ab epistulis*, etc., we must refer back to the *adiutores*. In the first place, with the *adiutores*, as has been seen, the terms *a rationibus*, *ab epistulis*, etc., clearly refer to the department in question and do not refer to its head. This conforms to the normal administrative terminology and can be seen in a host of cases in the domestic services, for example *ab argento*, *a veste*, etc., where a special title such as *praepositus* is commonly used to indicate senior status. The use of the name of the function or department to indicate the chief such functionary or head of department no doubt goes back to the domestic terminology of small *familiae* where there was only one slave or freedman for each function. With the growth of the Imperial administration, grades within a department were expressed by such terms as *procurator*, *tabularius*, *adiutor*, and so on, but the distinction between

¹ VI, 860c, 860t, 860j; XIV, 2840; VI, 8604, 1887; XI, 3886; XIV, 3909; XV, 7837a; VI, 8605, 37747.

² VI, 8610, 8611; XI, 1434; VI, 8609. VI, 8607, 8606.

³ However, if, as is likely, the Glyptus Aug. lib. proc. of VI, 3776j = *I.L.S.* 9025 is the same person, Glyptus may well have been of senior standing and the last freedman *ab epistulis*.

⁴ On the status of *lictores*, *accensi* and the other *apparitores* see Mommsen, *Staatsr.* 1, 332 ff. and esp. 355 ff.; Jones, *J.R.S.* XXXIX (1949), 38 ff.

the various grades was only made when the need arose, and was a function of developing organization and complexity. Thus, a *tabularius* was required to supervise the accounts, an *a commentariis* to keep the records, and a *dispensator* to be responsible for the cash in his particular *fiscus*—all specific and obvious duties, and attested from the Claudian period. *Adiutores*, however, are general assistants, the juniors in a department. But *adiutores*—and this is the second point—are not certainly found before the Flavian period for the *a rationibus*, nor before the Trajanic period for the *a libellis* and the *a codicillis*, the Hadrianic period for the *ab epistulis*, and that of Antoninus Pius for the *a cognitionibus*.¹

Everyone employed in an undifferentiated capacity without special ranking in a given department, whether freedman or slave, was simply labelled with the name of the department, for example, *a rationibus*, *ab epistulis*. But this applied to the rapidly growing central bureau of finance only in the Claudian and perhaps early Flavian period. Thereafter the title was reserved for seniors. In the central secretariat, on the other hand, the practice lasted at least during the whole of the first century. The reason for the late appearance of *adiutores* in the large department of the *ab epistulis* is the subdivision or specialization within the department into *Latinis* and *Graecis*, under a single head, which is attested from the Flavian period by Flavius Alexander Aug. lib., *ab epistulis Latinis*, and T. Flavius Aug. l. Thallus, likewise *ab epistulis Latinis*.² This delayed the need for the further rank of *adiutor*, which, when it appears, is found only within the subsections—both examples are in fact from the Latin section and are an indication of its greater size.

The head of department, one supposes, would naturally be distinguished from those beneath him. In the *senatus consultum* referring to his honours Pallas is called *custos principalium opum*.³ The title *procurator* would normally suffice. But this is not found for the freedmen *a rationibus*, etc.—at least not before Hadrian⁴—and sometimes not for the equestrians either. The earliest literary evidence for the use of the titles *a rationibus*, *ab epistulis* and *a libellis* in the sense of head of department is Tacitus, *Ann.* xv, 35, quin immo libertos habere quos ab epistulis et libellis et rationibus appellet, nomina summae curae et medianta, and xvi, 8, tamquam disponderet iam imperii curas, praeficeretque rationibus et libellis et epistulis libertos, referring to charges made against Torquatus Silanus and his nephew of the same name in A.D. 64–5.⁵ That this is good contemporary evidence for the titles of Narcissus and the other heads of departments under Claudius and Nero is confirmed by the inscriptional evidence—if the *Narcissus Aug. l. ab epistulis* on three lead pipes, and the *Abascantus Aug. lib. ab epistulis* in two epitaphs of his freedmen, refer to the well-known persons we think they do.⁶

¹ *Adiutores* (in chronological order): *a rationibus*: vi, 8422, 8417; *A.E.* 1950, 171; vi, 8420, 37743, 8418; (slaves) vi, 8423, 8419, 8421, 8424, 5305, 9033; *ab epistulis*: vi, 8612, 8613; *a libellis*: vi, 33741, 8615; *a cognitionibus*: vi, 8634; viii, 12613; (slave) vi, 8635; *a codicillis*: vi, 8442.

² vi, 8610, 8611.

³ Pliny, *Ep.* viii, 6. Hirschfeld (*Vw.* p. 30 n. 4) says the title *a rationibus* was avoided here as being too plain; the same may be said, no doubt, for Statius, *Silv.* iii, 3, 87, *sanctarum digestus opum*.

⁴ T. Aurelius Aug. lib. Aphrodisius, proc. Aug. *a rationibus* (xiv, 2104); cf. n. 2, p. 82 above.

⁵ Cf. Suet. *Claud.* 28.

⁶ xv, 7500; vi, 8598–9.

We must suppose, therefore, that the titles *a rationibus*, etc., which were no doubt in frequent use in private households of the wealthier sort, were originally extended to all officials within the one department in the Imperial household, from the head down to the lowest slave assistant. It was only later, as the official nomenclature developed in response to the administrative expansion, and especially after the introduction of the term *adiutor* for the lower clerical grades, that the titles *a rationibus*, *ab epistulis*, *a libellis*, etc., were exclusively and specifically attached to the head of department and became what Tacitus describes as 'nomina summae curae'. We may assume that most, if not all, the Imperial freedmen who did achieve real eminence in the *officia Palatina* before Trajan and Hadrian also achieved a mention in the sensitive literary sources of the period. A single epitaph with the simple name of a department, unless confirmed by other evidence, in the first century does not constitute proof that the bearer rose to the responsibilities of a Narcissus or the father of Claudius Etruscus.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

P. R. C. WEAVER