

*THE INTEGRITY OF II. CORINTHIANS.*

IN the April and July issue of the *Irish Church Quarterly* Canon Kennedy, of Dublin, writer of the well-known book on "*Second and Third Corinthians*," states again the view set forth in that book at greater length, which in my recent commentary on Second Corinthians I stated my reasons for declining to adopt. It is a pleasure to me to acknowledge the courteous tone of this as of all the criticisms of my book which I have seen, and if I still hold the view that the Epistle stands in our Bible as Paul wrote it, I am not ungrateful to Professor Kennedy for the careful study he has devoted to the subject, from which I have learned much, and for the opportunity his articles afford me of examining afresh an interesting subject.

Professor Kennedy, the reader will remember, understands by the '*Second Corinthians*' of his title the last four chapters of the Canonical Epistle, and by '*Third Corinthians*' the nine chapters which there stand first. He finds in the chapters x.-xiii., the letter of which Paul speaks in chapters ii. and vii., which he says he wrote with tears, and which he says moved the Corinthians to grief and repentance and the desire to make amends (vii. 8-12). He further considers that of the two pieces which have been joined together to make our Second Corinthians, neither is complete; the beginning of his *Second Corinthians* is wanting, and the conclusion of his *Third Corinthians*. To prove this thesis it is evidently necessary to point out in the first nine chapters references to or echoes of passages in the last four, which are said to have been written earlier. The Apostle must be shown to have in his mind in i.-ix. things which he said in x.-xiii. The instance of this which Professor Kennedy brings forward most prominently in the articles before us is connected with the

Apostle's threat of a disciplinary visit to Corinth. This threat is made in chapter xiii. 1, 2, 10, and is said to be withdrawn in ii. 1-4.

"Let us come back," it is said, p. 129, "to the undisputed historical fact that in these earlier chapters Paul did withdraw the threat which he had previously made at the close of the painful visit, and that he had in the seventh chapter given us a glowing account of a reconciliation which had taken place between the date of the painful visit, and the date of the affectionate assurance given in this letter to the Corinthians, telling them that the threat would not be carried out, and that there would be no more painful visits. If it is possible to suppose that this assurance might be in its turn withdrawn, and the original threat repeated in all its severity, it is still an impossible and inconceivable supposition that the writer can have forgotten that he had cancelled it, and could be oblivious of the fact that he was now about to send this cordial assurance, made on so momentous occasion, in the very same letter of which he was now dictating the closing part to his amanuensis."

Professor Kennedy and the present writer start from the same ground. They agree that Paul paid a visit to Corinth after 1 Corinthians was written, before 2 Corinthians; and they agree that the threat said in II. xiii. 2 to be repeated in writing was originally uttered orally at the close of that visit, which ended painfully for both sides. Their difference is about the letter mentioned ii. 2 sqq. and vii. 12. Professor Kennedy holds that letter to be not lost but in our hands in chapters x.-xiii., and finds proof of this in what he regards as the withdrawal at ii. 1 of the threat made in xiii. 2. But is there, in chapter ii. anything that can be called the withdrawal of a threat, any intimation that there should be no more painful visits? I cannot see that there

is, and I think the words thus construed have an altogether different point. The Apostle says ii. 1, that he had made up his mind that he would not come to Corinth again *ἐν λύπῃ*. Dr. Kennedy is at pains to show that the words *ἐν λύπῃ* answer exactly to the words in xiii. 10, *ἀποτόμως χρήσωμαι*, "use severity," and are to be regarded as a euphemism for severity. This is not at all obvious. The word *λύπη* and its verb are used eight times in the six verses ii. 2-7, and severity will not translate it in more than two of the eight times. It is contrasted with *εὐφραίνων με*, that makes me glad, in verse 2, and in verse 3, with *χαρά*, joy. It is Paul's own feelings that are in question, the alternative for him of a pleasant or an unpleasant visit, of the Corinthians giving him pleasure or distress. And what he says in the first verse of the chapter is that he made up his mind not to pay the Corinthians another visit likely to cause him so much pain as the last had done. The words in the natural sense convey nothing about the withdrawal of a threat. They are spoken to explain why he had not come to Corinth at the time when he led the people there to expect him. He did not come because his last visit had been so unpleasant; the Corinthians will understand this, and will wish that he should be happy, not distressed, when he comes to them. And so he wrote instead of coming. There is no withdrawing of a threat, only an explanation why he had not come himself but sent a letter.

There had been a threat, by the Apostle present, at the end of his painful visit. And it was a threat of such a nature that it could not be withdrawn. It lay with the Corinthians, not with the Apostle, to make the fulfilment of it unnecessary. The threat was an assurance that when he came to Corinth he would exercise strict discipline against those who were evil livers or who were defying the Apostle's authority. They would feel the weight of his hand, they

should be put in their right place. Such a threat could not be withdrawn, any more than a commandment of the decalogue. Until the Apostle despaired of his position, and was ready to part with all his influence, and to be in reality the poor and strengthless creature his adversaries declared him, that threat must stand.

The words, therefore, on which Dr. Kennedy finds this, his principal instance of reference in 2 Corinthians i.-ix. to statements found in x.-xiii. do not bear the meaning he imputes to them. His first paper is mainly devoted to this instance of the relation as he conceives it of the two parts of the Epistle; and if it were thought substantial, his clear and spirited words quoted above would be justified. But the idea of the Apostle's withdrawing his threat is inconceivable, and if we accept the Epistle as it stands it is no more than natural that, finding himself on the eve of landing at Corinth, he should define his position by repeating it. It stands behind all the affectionate pleading of the first nine chapters, and their joyful assurance that the Corinthians are now his friends. His determination is not changed that discipline shall prevail and his principles and doctrine be accepted at Corinth.

The other cases adduced to show the posteriority of the first nine chapters to the last four, are perhaps of less importance. Not much weight can be laid on the fact that the verb *θαρρῶ* is used in chapter x. 1 to express defiance, *θαρρῶ εἰς ὑμᾶς*, "I am bold towards, or against you," and in vii. 16 to express complaisance, *θαρρῶ ἐν ὑμῖν*. "I am bold because of you," or the similar change of meaning of *πεποιθήσις* in x. 2 and i. 15. Every one uses words in different senses, according as he is speaking of different themes and in different moods. That *καυχᾶσθαι* and its nouns should be used differently in the two parts of the Epistle is also not to be wondered at. In the first nine chapters it is

associated with compliments to the Corinthians, as Dr. Kennedy very justly points out; there the Corinthians are his boast, they are to know it. In the latter part of the Epistle the Apostle is dealing with his own claims, and the word *καυχᾶσθαι* is the natural, almost the technical, term for him to use. In chapter v. 12, 13 it may be remarked it also occurs with reference to the comparison of Paul's claims with those of other missionaries. No argument can justly be based on such observations for inverting the sequence of the Epistle.

As to the spirit and temper of the last four chapters, and the question whether they answer to the description given by Paul of the letter he wrote with tears, and out of great distress and anxiety of heart, my critic and I must, I suppose, continue to differ. There are pathetic touches in these chapters it is true, as there are even in Galatians, but as a whole they are a warpiece, like Galatians, and must have filled the writer with satisfaction at having so completely expressed himself. My view of the relation to each other of the two parts of 2 Corinthians, quoted by Professor Kennedy, is that the same fire burns in both parts of the Epistle, but that in the earlier the fire is kept down, and not allowed to burst into flame, while in the latter part it does so. It was natural, I said, to suppose that the part in which feeling is suppressed, and only betrays itself in a series of hints and quotations of what is said about Paul at Corinth, is anterior to the part in which he allows it free vent. If the two sections of the Epistle are inverted, this must of course be changed, and Professor Kennedy changes it not unskillfully. "There is no lack of fire," he says, "in either section, but it is of a very different kind. In the one section it is the fire of indignation manifesting itself in scorching reproaches; in the other it is the fire of exulting joy and love, fusing the old reproaches in its glowing heat,

and moulding anew the same material into utterances of affection and of cordial praise." I will leave the reader to judge whether the half-spoken complaints of i.-ix, the suppressed sighs at the unjust judgments the Corinthians formed of him and the bitter and merciless way in which they treated him (he is accused of vagueness i. 13, of departing lightly from his engagements i. 17, tyrannical methods i. 24, of changing the message for his own purposes iv. 2, etc.) must be considered to come before or after the direct attack in x.-xiii., on those at Corinth who dealt in such charges against him. It appears to me that when he had once delivered himself fully on the subject he would not return to it again, and exhibit himself as still nursing his grievances. But the question may admit of argument.

Towards the end of his plea for "Second and Third Corinthians" in these articles Professor Kennedy enters on a textual discussion, his aim being to shew that the text of ix. 15-x. 1 is not in order and that a rent must have taken place in the original at this point. No one denies that the transition from the last verse of the ninth chapter to verse 1 of the tenth is awkward. There is no attempt at dovetailing, or mark of transition at all; we pass at once from the subject of the collection, which appears to be dismissed with the doxology, to Paul's declaration of what is to be done to his adversaries when he comes to Corinth, and to his scathing denunciation of them.

The Apostle, it is true, often shows himself careless of the need to explain the sequence of his matter and to point out his transitions. To mention only two out of many instances. There is a sudden break at Romans ix. 1, another at Philippians iii. 1, each of which has occasioned proposals to divide the Epistle at that point into two parts. The Apostle, no doubt, laid down a letter he was writing when a certain subject was concluded; and when he took

it up again to add something on another subject he did not always provide a connecting phrase. Professor Kennedy thinks the Apostle cannot have written the *αὐτός* x. 1 in which he speaks of himself, so close to the *αὐτοῦ* ix. 15 which refers to God; that he would have been inexpressibly shocked if he had read the text as it now stands; and he will not have it said that the Apostle may have written the sections without noticing how badly they fitted. This leads him to a discussion, which I frankly confess that I do not understand, of a variant in ix. 15.

In the critical editions the verse reads: *χάρις τῷ θεῷ ἐπὶ τῇ ἀνεκδιηγῆται αὐτοῦ δωρεᾶ*. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." This reading, we are told (p. 200), "makes the sentence appear to have reached its conclusion, though it leaves us without any explanation as to what is the gift of God for which the writer is giving thanks, and leads us to a conclusion which presents a strange contrast to the sentence which follows it. But there is another reading, *χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἐπὶ τῇ ἀνεκδιηγῆται αὐτοῦ δωρεᾶ*, which, if correct, would shew that the sentence must have been torn off in the middle, and which is thus absolutely inconsistent with the present order of the text of the Epistle, yet which has the support of the Syriac and the Ethiopic, and which has also on its side strong evidence from the quotation of this reading by early writers" (Chrysostom and Euthalius). Now is it the case, as the writer appears to think, that if *δὲ* is part of the text, the sentence cannot be an ejaculation but must have run on, and that the end of it is lost? What then is to be made of the many ejaculations and doxologies of Paul which give us *δὲ* at their beginning? In the last two chapters of Romans there are three of them, xv. 13, 33, xvi. 25. In Thessalonians v. 23 we find another. It is habitual with Paul to wind up a discussion with a sentence beginning with *δὲ*, see 1 Corinthians

passim. The presence or absence of  $\delta\epsilon$  makes no difference to the sense, as the A.V. translators saw, who had  $\delta\epsilon$  in their Greek text, yet did not translate it. Lietzmann, who is a good Grecian, translates the  $\delta\epsilon$  but pays it no further attention, and is one of the strongest upholders of the canonical order of the Epistle. Professor Kennedy certainly owes us some further explanation on this point; if this is all the textual evidence he is able to bring forward he must confess that no objection can be taken to the text as it stands.

The break at x. 1 is not absolute; the story set before us in i.-ix. is carried forward in the last chapters. Chapter ix. tells the Corinthians that the Apostle is coming along with envoys from Macedonia to make the final arrangements about the collection; chapter x. tells what he will think it necessary to do when he arrives; how he will put his adversaries in their place, how he will restore discipline, how the true Jesus Christ will come to His rights again at Corinth. The whole Epistle is about this visit, promised (i. 15), then delayed (i. 23) and made impossible by the Corinthians themselves, then made possible again (ii. 14, vii.) by their change of mind after receiving the Apostle's letter and the coming to them of Titus, to be prepared for on their part (vi. 14) by moral strenuousness and by having the collection in readiness (viii. ix.) and to be marked, he finally assures them, by a signal judgment of evildoers and restoration of Pauline doctrine (x.-xiii.). In the face of so evident and close a sequence in the Epistle from first to last it is idle to speak of the "many gross improbabilities resulting from the present order of the two sections." They evidently are in the right order, and while there are difficulties arising from our ignorance of the circumstances they refer to, and the circumstances in which the Apostle wrote them, we are bound to think that the facts as we have sketched them are sure and reliable. And to one holding this con-



viction it matters little that documents were written in old times on frail material and were easily torn and rendered imperfect. What Dr. Kennedy says on this point is all true; there are many instances in ancient literature in which fragments of old works have been removed from their original order and combined with pieces with which they had at first nothing to do. But when one sees clear before one's mind the story our Epistle tells, one is sure that 2 Corinthians is not one of these instances, but that the parts of it belong together and, in the order in which they lie before us, tell a consistent tale.

I have been told by several critics that my book underestimates the evidence for the inversion of the two parts of the Epistle and that the problem does not admit of solution. Dr. Moffatt says so in the *Hibbert Journal*, so does a writer in the *Guardian*, who evidently is well acquainted with the subject as hitherto studied in England, and Professor Kirsopp Lake in the *Review of Theology and Philosophy*. The imperfection of our knowledge is patent, there is many a question raised by the Epistle, the answer to which can only be guessed, and there are many verses in it which perhaps we can never understand. But that the first part of it was written before the last there is what appears to be proof positive in what is said about the envoys sent for the collected money in chapter viii. and chapter xii. respectively. In the former chapter they are introduced circumstantially and elaborately, and all the requisite details stated about each of them. In the later, Titus and the brother are mentioned; the Corinthians are taken to be well acquainted with the claims of each to take charge of the business in question. Surely the elaborate introduction came before the briefer one, not after it. But the story told by the Epistle from first to last is the main evidence that we have it as it was written.

The trouble is not thrown away on either side that is bestowed on an Epistle so dear to the heart of Christians.

ALLAN MENZIES.

*THE STONING OF ST. PAUL AT LYSTRA, AND THE  
EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.*

IN writing to Timothy, St. Paul reminds that Lystrian convert of what had happened when he met him first in his native town. "Thou hast fully known my . . . persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me . . . at Lystra" (2 Tim. iii. 10, 11). It is therefore only to be expected that he would have his sufferings in mind if ever he wrote more generally to the Christians of that district, and St. Luke has plainly recorded that those sufferings took the form of that terrible and unique experience which he still had fresh in his memory when he wrote, "Once was I stoned" (2 Cor. xi. 25). It is now a commonly accepted view that he included the people of Lystra among the recipients of his letter to "the churches of Galatia." Consequently it is quite legitimate to examine that Epistle in order to find language reminiscent of experiences which had befallen him in that neighbourhood. The most familiar passage in this connexion is that in which St. Paul says, "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh (*δι' ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκός*) I preached the Gospel unto you at the first" (Gal. iv. 13). He adds that his physical condition was such as might have provoked their scorn and nullified his preaching, but, owing to their forbearance, it did not have that effect. He gratefully records that, "if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me" (Gal. iv. 15). The varied nature of the theories which depend largely on this passage for their support shows us how little certainty