Some Difficult Passages in the First Chapter of 2 Corinthians.

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I. 2 *Corinthians* i. 6.

THE difficulty in this verse is one of reading, the variations being both somewhat complicated and difficult to pass upon. For purposes of lucid statement the verse should be divided into three clauses, thus: (1) εἴτε δὲ θλιβόμεθα, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν παρακλήσεως [καὶ σωτηρίας]; (2) εἴτε παρακαλούμεθα, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν παρακλήσεως [καὶ σωτηρίας]; (3) τῆς ἐνεργουμένης ἐν ὑπομονῇ τῶν αὐτῶν παθημάτων ὧν καὶ ἡμεῖς πάσχομεν, καὶ ἡ ἐλπὶς ἡμῶν βεβαία ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. The main question concerns the arrangement of these clauses. It is observed that clauses (1) and (2) are parallel statements, while clause (3) is an adjunct; and the variation which we are discussing concerns the position of this adjoined clause. Some MSS. attach it to the first member of the parallel, clause (1); others to the second member, clause (2). According to Tischendorf's statement, the former position is that assigned to it in B D E F G K L al^{80} d. e. f. g. Gothic, White's edition of the Harclean Syriac, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Damascenus; while the latter position is given it in ℵ A C M P 3^{sil}, 23. 31. 49. 51. 57. 67. 73. 80. (37). r. am. fu. harl. flor. tol*., Schaaf's edition of the Peshito, the Coptic, the Arm. (the Æth.), Antioch. Ambrst. (Ephr. Hier.). Genealogically speaking, the former group is suspicious, and appears to witness only to a "Western" corruption. By internal evidence of groups, the latter group is pointed to as by far the stronger. So that we can scarcely doubt that the weight of external evidence is distinctly in favor of the arrangement which places clause (3) after clause (2) rather than after clause (1). Meyer has discussed the transcriptional problem with some fulness and his usual acumen, with the result of throwing the weight of the transcriptional evidence in the same scale with the external. He supposes that clause (2) was first omitted entirely, by homœoteleuton, and then erroneously restored after clause (3), thus producing the

reading of B D E F G K L etc. Whatever weight may be laid upon this transcriptional finding, it is certain that the intrinsic internal evidence supports it. For thereby an obvious parallelism is preserved and the adjoined clause (3) is brought in in such a manner as to add immensely to the richness of the language, — whereas it would be almost intolerably heavy were it interposed between the parallels. The full weight of this consideration, however, can scarcely be felt before we consider the genuineness of the καὶ σωτηρίας, which appears sometimes at the end of the first clause, sometimes at the end of the second, and sometimes at the end of both.

The evidence that would place καὶ σωτηρίας at the end of the second clause, is practically the same as that which has been discredited in the main reading which we have already considered. Apparently only 37 and the Latin fu* add it to this clause, when placed before clause (3); and only 46 and White's Harclean (by an asterisk) suggest omission of it from clause (2), among the witnesses for the prepositing of (3) to (2). In these circumstances we can scarcely refuse to follow the array that is right in placing the clauses, also in omitting this pair of words.

Whether or not καὶ σωτηρίας should be read in clause (1) presents a much neater question. Tischendorf quotes for their presence there, ℵ A C D E F G K L M P etc., and for their omission only B. 17. 176 (137), (Euthal^{cod}). Genealogically, there is no reason, however, why the former array, here too, may not be only "Western," and the true reading stand in the few documents arrayed for omission. B when non-Western as it here apparently is, because separated from the typically Western documents — and when not standing alone, and therefore probably preserving an inheritance, — is all the more worthy of consideration in Paul's epistles, because the non-Western reading is more apt to be lost in them than in most of the rest of the N. T. On external grounds, I should be strongly inclined to suspect καὶ σωτηρίας here too. And internal considerations appear to come with some additional arguments to the support of this suspicion. It is transcriptionally difficult to account for the phenomena of the evidence regarding καὶ σωτηρίας on the supposition of its genuineness at this point. If it originally stood at the end of clause (1), it should have been omitted along with clause (2) by homœoteleuton, and on reinsertion it should have stood before, not after it, — at the end of clause (3). This seems to have been felt as a difficulty by Meyer, who supposes still another step in correcting the text, after the omission of clause (2), by which the καὶ σωτηρίας was inserted variously.

It is far easier to presume that καὶ σωτηρίας was at first no part of the text, and was added on the margin, as a pious and strengthening supplement, by some scribe who desiderated something here of eternal import; and that it was afterwards taken innocently up into the text at various seemingly appropriate points.

I say "seemingly appropriate points," for I am not sure that any point is really appropriate. Paul is not speaking in this context of salvation, but of affliction and consolation; and the insertion of καὶ σωτηρίας into it at any of the points in which our texts transmit them, appears to me to jar on the simple development of the thought. Paul bursts forth (ver. 3 sq.) into a fervent praise to God for the consolation He has brought him, as always, so also now, in his afflictions, not without a pregnant hint of the value of the experience for the work of his office (ver. 4). And now (ver. 6) he turns to tell the Corinthians that all the riches of his experience is for them: "But whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation, — whether we be consoled, it is for your consolation." I cannot help feeling that the insertion of an "and salvation" after the first clause here (and not also after the second) would introduce a discordant note and break the simple and tender connection. This is still further borne out by the subsequent context; for the Apostle proceeds immediately: "that is efficacious in patient endurance of the same sufferings which we also suffer; and our hope is steadfast in your behalf, in that we know that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also of the consolation." Here simply suffering and consolation continue to be the theme; and not only so, but the connection is such as apparently to imply but a single antecedent. What is it that is efficacious in patient endurance of suffering? What but consolation? But what consolation? That which came through the Apostle's consolation apart from his suffering? or both? Certainly the parallelism between the first two clauses of the verse is far too close to allow us to separate them, and we must expect the τῆς ἐνεργουμένης to take up the common apodosis of the two. But if this be so, it is intolerable to find the two apodoses different. The effect of omitting τῆς σωτηρίας in the first clause is to make the second clause merely repeat (but repeat with added force and tenderness) the apodosis of the first; and then the third clause takes up this common apodosis for further description. The beauty of the result is a strong argument, intrinsically, in support of the suspicion already aroused on external grounds that καὶ σωτηρίας in the first clause also, is an intrusion into the text.

The exact form of text as I should propose to restore it, therefore, would read: εἴτε δὲ θλιβόμεθα, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν παρακλήσεως, εἴτε παρακαλούμεθα, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν παρακλήσεως, τῆς ἐνεργουμένης ἐν ὑπομονῇ κτλ. I have not been curious in looking up the matter, but I am not sure that any editor has printed just this text. Tischendorf viii., Tregelles' margin, and Westcott and Hort read the order of the clauses as I have given them, but retain the first καὶ σωτηρίας. Tregelles and Alford take the order of clauses (1), (3), (2) and retain the καὶ σωτηρίας in both (1) and (2); Westcott and Hort's margin differs from this only in omitting the first καὶ σωτηρίας. Some, thus, read καὶ σωτηρίας twice; others once, variously placed; but none appear to omit it altogether. But I am convinced that externally it is suspicious in both places, and internally, perhaps a little more than suspicious; and I feel sure that few will read the passage without it who will not at least wish that it should prove to have no just claim to be read.

II. 2 *Corinthians* i. 8–10.

The allusion which Paul makes in these verses to some great affliction which he endured in Asia, has presented a standing puzzle to commentators. It has justly seemed to most recent commentators impossible to refer it to the tumult raised by Demetrius and recorded in Acts xix. 23 sq., with which, indeed, it appears to have no single feature in common; but, besides this, there is little known of the evil chances that befell the Apostle in Asia.

It is to be observed that our difficulty arises from the very plainness of the matter itself. The Corinthians to whom the Apostle was writing, knew so well what Paul's great affliction was that they needed to be told nothing about it, and the slightest allusion sufficed. This very fact may be of value to us in identifying it. We must seek for some very severe, some even startling instance of persecution. And, indeed, the description that is here given of it would independently direct us to this conclusion. It was not only an "affliction" (ver 8), but such an one as "burdened the Apostle exceedingly above his power" (ver. 8), and led him "quite to despair even of living" (ver. 8). In it he obtained the answer of death in his consciousness, and deliverance from it could come from no less an one than that God who raiseth the dead (ver. 9). Nay, it is described as itself "death" (ver. 10), and not only so, but, with excess of strength, as "so great a death" (ver. 10). Manifestly, the Apostle has in mind an experience which had passed beyond danger into actuality.

Were he giving us his account of the stoning which he endured at Lystra, and after which he was dragged out of the city for dead, he could not have spoken more strongly.

I think, however, that we may learn from the way in which this account is introduced, more than the mere fact that the Corinthians already knew of the occurrence that is mentioned. The Apostle not only so speaks of it as to evince that not the fact of his affliction in Asia but the extremity to which he was brought by it, is the point of his communication. If I am not mistaken, the implication goes further and suggests a certain amount of what may be called self-correction by the Apostle. It looks as if he had himself told the Corinthians of the fact here adverted to, but in such a manner as to pain them by an evident unwillingness on his part to speak freely of his own sufferings, — in so matter-of-fact a way, in a word, as to suggest that they would not be interested in more than the bare fact, and would care little for the effect on the Apostle's feelings. We know that this was just the spirit in which 1 Corinthians was written (2 Cor. ii. 3 sq.) ; and if we can believe that the Apostle mentioned this affliction in that letter, we can easily understand, on the one hand, that he would have mentioned it there without more than brief and incidental reference to his own distress, and, on the other, that after the Corinthians had been awakened to a truer sense of the enormity of their conduct, which had forced their father in Christ to withhold the cry for sympathy with which he must have longed to address them, he would hasten tenderly to make known to them the greatness of the affliction that he had endured on this dreadful occasion. With this possibility in view, it is instructive to observe how the Apostle opens the subject. As the γὰρ (ver. 8) advises us, this section is introduced, after Paul's expression of confidence that the Corinthians, whom he sees to have fallen into like sufferings with his, will obtain a like consolation, in order that he may point out from his own experience that the consolations of God are great enough to cover the greatest sufferings conceivable. The context, then, is a tender one. And he begins with the tender address, "brethren" (ver. 8) ; and, speaking thus tenderly, he declares that "he does not wish them to be ignorant concerning the affliction which befell him in Asia, that it was unbearably great." Is it not clear that the heart of the Apostle is here moved, and that he is about to tell his readers of the amount of his sufferings on an occasion which has already as a matter of mere fact been spoken of between them ?

If the subtle implications of Paul's words have been soundly read in the foregoing remarks, our task in identifying the persecution here alluded to ought to be somewhat facilitated. Our first step should be to search 1 Corinthians in order to discover whether some severe affliction in Asia may not there be somewhat incidentally mentioned, such as will account for the tone and statements of our present passage. On undertaking this search, our eyes fall at once upon the startling cry of the Apostle in 1 Cor. xv. 32: "If after the manner of men I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me?"—if, that is, the dead are not raised; in which he seems to make known to the Corinthians, in a purely incidental way, the bare fact that he had been called upon to undergo a martyrdom out of which only that God who raises the dead could bring him alive. It is no doubt common among commentators to explain this allusion away, as if a figurative beast-fight only were meant. But this seems not only unnecessary but impossible, when only the passage itself is considered. For, to go no further, in what way was Paul's conflict with men more a beast-fight "at Ephesus" than elsewhere? The whole implication of the passage is, that the demands of the Christian life are such that, if in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable. If, then, the dead are not raised, the whole Christian system is a gigantic and hideous error,—its preaching a lie (xv. 14, 15), its faith a vanity (xv. 16–28), its ritual a farce (xv. 29), and its life a useless sacrifice (xv. 30–34). In order to bring this last assertion into clear light, Paul appeals not only to the general danger and trial of the life that he literally "suffered" for Christ's sake (xv. 30–31; cf. 2 Cor. iv. 7 sq.), but adduces one striking concrete case of these sufferings, chosen just on account of its extremity and in order to carry the lesson home (xv. 32). Not only did he stand in jeopardy every hour, but he died daily; and that this may be taken literally, witnesses this casting to the beasts that had come to him in Ephesus. Not only, then, does the limitation "at Ephesus" seem to exclude the figurative interpretation, but the course of thought appears to demand a literal understanding of the words. Nor is this all. If we assume that this beast-fight did literally occur, it supplies an explanation of some otherwise obscure hints in the epistle to the Galatians (vi. 17; vi. 11), and as well furnishes us with precisely the occurrence that is needed to make the allusion in our present passage plain.

It need hardly be said that the lack of any account of this fighting with the beasts, in the book of Acts, does not disprove its literal occur-

rence. We have only to refer to 2 Cor. xi. 23 sq. to learn how few of the daily deaths through which Paul was brought alive the book of Acts gives us accounts of. It is no doubt true that to be cast to the beasts was an extreme case, and it is difficult to understand how Paul came out of it alive; but it is no less difficult to understand how he survived the stoning at Lystra, the shipwrecks, and the repeated cruel scourgings which we know he did endure. Paul himself says that this was a "so great death," and that he owed his deliverance from it to that power which raises the dead. The simple fact seems to be that Paul was "in deaths oft" (2 Cor. xi. 23), and that his endurance amounted to little short of a continuous miracle. One more almost miraculous escape in such a list, amounts to too little to form an objection to its actual occurrence. It is scarcely worth while to add further, that no objection to the actual occurrence of this beast-fight can be drawn from 2 Tim. iii. 11, where Paul adduces as examples of his sufferings "what things befell him at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra." The reason of the specification of these three places is not to be found in any fancied greater severity of Paul's sufferings there than elsewhere, as the objection would assume. Only at Lystra did the persecution proceed to extremes; and from the list in 2 Cor. xi. 23 sq. a much more striking series could be framed from this point of view. The aorist tense of 1 Tim. iii. 10 must not be overlooked, and governs the whole following sentence. Paul adduces the sufferings which he endured at such a time and in such a locality that Timothy could and did have them in mind when he undertook to become a follower of Paul. When he looked upon Paul and his life as the model of the life he should undertake on becoming a Christian, it included the sufferings such as had befallen the Apostle at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, — wherefrom we may infer that the book of Acts is right in placing Timothy's birthplace and home in this region, and his conversion after Paul's visit to these places, but not that Paul never afterwards suffered so severe persecutions as befell him there.

The solemnity with which Paul declares in vers. 9 and 10 of our present passage that his experience in his great trial in Asia had resulted in removing his trust forever from himself and placing it upon that God "who raiseth the dead, who from so great a death delivered us and will deliver," ought not to escape our notice. Clearly, the effect of these sufferings was to add new vividness to Paul's conception of God as the raiser of the dead, to withdraw his one hope from this life and place it in that resurrection-life that was to come. Is it not a point of connection (perhaps even a guide-post

for our direction) that the casting to the beasts of Ephesus is the great instance of his daily dyings that springs into the Apostle's mind when in 1 Cor. xv. he is declaring that if the dead are not raised the Christian life of suffering would be a sad and hideous mistake? It is at least a striking coincidence, which may be significant of much, that in 1 Corinthians, when speaking of the resurrection, Paul thinks of his casting to the beasts at Ephesus; and in 2 Corinthians, written to the same people and not long afterwards, when speaking of a supreme trial that he had to endure in Asia, he thinks of the God that raiseth from the dead.

It would be an interesting subject for inquiry, whether any memory of Paul's beast-fight at Ephesus survived in the primitive church. It is at least noticeable that early apocryphal literature is full of deliverances "from the mouth of the lions"; and if a great, genuine instance of such a deliverance stood out in the memory of men, this circumstance might be partly accounted for. One of the difficulties which stand in the way of such an investigation, is to distinguish between reminiscences of 1 Cor. xv. 32 and remembrance of the fact itself. Let us advert to but a single instance. In the Acts of Paul and Thecla, which is generally esteemed one of our earliest apocryphal acts and to belong to the second century, we have an elaborate account of how Thecla was thrown to the beasts; and it is interesting to observe that the exclamation which rises to the lips of her protectress when the news is brought to her of Thecla's deliverance, is: "Now I believe that the dead are raised; now I believe that my child lives!" Here, too (we might be tempted to think), a deliverance from the arena is classed with resurrection from the dead. But it is clear to any careful reader that the author of the Acts of Paul and Thecla is only drawing from, not illustrating, St. Paul's epistles. The whole book is interwoven with hints taken from them, and indeed is based on a scheme derived from the mention in 2 Tim. iii. 11 of Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. In the account of the beast-fight itself, it is only too clear that the author has 1 Cor. xv. 32 in mind: thence comes the thought of the resurrection, and from it he is continually haunted with a notion of a benefit which ought to result to some that are dead (ver. 29), and of a connection which ought to to brought out with a baptism.

It should be noted, finally, that it seems to result from the plurals in our present passage, that Timothy (cf. 2 Cor. i. 1) in some sense partook in St. Paul's beast-fight. The affliction came upon both of them, and the effects on both were the same. To what extent this

community of suffering went, there seems, however, no sufficient grounds to determine. It is only plain that it belonged in some degree to Timothy, as well as in its full extent to Paul.

III. 2 *Corinthians* i. 15–17.

The development of the thought through these verses presents several difficulties, to avoid which it is necessary to give the closest attention to the connectives and emphases.

In the immediately preceding context the Apostle had acted on the restored relations of mutual confidence between him and the Corinthians, and had opened his heart to them. He had told them of the extremity to which he was brought by the affliction which had befallen him in Asia, and of the abiding effect of that experience on his soul (vers. 8–10), and then had placed at the basis of his confidence in God's continuous deliverance the co-working of the Corinthians themselves in prayer in his behalf (ver. 11). Then he had turned aside to point out to them the obvious fact that this confidence in their continued interest and prayer for him, was itself a convincing proof of his good conscience towards them (ver. 12). But the memory of their past injustice now obtrudes itself into his consciousness; and, in the eagerness of love rather than in the bitterness of defence, he forestalls the possible objection to the sincerity of his asseveration, declares his entire honesty in his assertion of confidence in them, and appeals to their conscience to substantiate his words (ver. 13*a*), ending with an expression of hope that in the light of the day of the Lord Jesus, when the thoughts of every heart would be revealed, they and he would be seen to be mutually the ground of boasting of each other, — they, that they had had him as their apostle; he, that he had had them as his converts (vers. 13*b*, 14).

By the adduction and allaying of this hypothetical mistrust of his word (ver. 13*a*), the way was naturally prepared for a discussion, in the same noble spirit, of the real charges of double-dealing that the Corinthians had brought against the Apostle. He had originally intended to go to them directly from Ephesus and to return from Macedonia to them again before proceeding to Judea, — thus giving them a double joy in his double presence (vers. 15, 16); and clearly he had in some way communicated this purpose to them. But when the news of their evil state of mind towards him came to him, he had, for their good (ver. 23), so far changed his plans as to go first to Macedonia and only after that to visit them, by which new

arrangement he could be with them only once; and in writing 1 Corinthians to them he announced this new purpose (1 Cor. xvi. 5). Immediately the malcontents at Corinth were loud in their charges against him as a man of vacillating purpose and levity of statement, who made his promises lightly and broke them lightly. It is to meet these charges that he now (ver. 15 sq.) speaks with them as to his change of plan for his journey.

Ver. 15 takes close hold upon the expression in vers. 13*b*, 14 of the Apostle's hope that he and the Corinthians would be discovered at the judgment-day to have each the other as their ground of boasting. This is what he thinks now, since once more he and they are on terms of mutual confidence. And this is what he thought before those terms of mutual love were disturbed: "*And it was in this confidence that I was cherishing the determination to come to you first.*" The emphatic prepositing of ταύτῃ τῇ πεποιθήσει, and the time set by the imperfect ἐβουλόμην must not be overlooked. The language is equivalent to saying: "And it was in consequence of my confidence in our mutual love for one another that I was at that time intending to come first to you." The emphasis is laid on the attitude in which his mind stood towards them before the bad news from them reached him. He was confident, at that time, that his coming would bring them joy, and he consequently was intending so to arrange his journey as to come twice to them "*in order that they might get* (not one only but also) *a second joy.*" The effect of this arrangement of the words and the resulting emphases, is to imply that the plan of the Apostle necessarily depended on his relation to the church: so that his plan would be necessarily set aside when he learned that his coming to them would not bring the joy he had fondly hoped, but rather pain. It thus happens that the whole matter concerning his change of plan is settled by the first sentence (vers. 15, 16), and the Apostle is able to leave the necessary inference to be drawn by his readers and to content himself with a single pointed question (ver. 17*a*) which could not fail to pierce the dullest conscience. "*Seeing, therefore, that it was this that I was intending, was it then fickleness that I showed?*" he asks in a tone that branded the affirmative answer beforehand as utter folly. The "*this*," put forward with a very strong emphasis, refers not merely to his intention of coming to them first, but to his intention of so arranging his plan as to bring them a second joy. The οὖν thus has its collective force fully developed. And the participle βουλόμενος, the time of which is set by its verb ἐχρησάμην, is to be resolved causally. In the second clause,

the effect of ἄρα, 'as the matter stands,' 'in this condition of affairs,' is to throw increased emphasis back on the protasis, 'seeing, therefore, that it was this that I was intending'; while the emphasis within the second clause itself falls on τῇ ἐλαφρίᾳ, the article in which belongs to the abstract form of the conception. No language could express more strongly than this sentence the unspeakable folly of charging frivolity as the reason of a change of plan which was thus so necessarily involved in the change of circumstances. And as nothing further remained to be said on this special matter, the Apostle was free to turn at once to the broader implication of the accusation, which again he deals with in a single crushing and self-answering question. "*Or*," he adds at once, with an implication that unless this be true there is nothing further possible, "*or* is it possible that in *the things which I purpose, it is according to the flesh that I purpose* them, *that there should be with me the yea, yea, and the nay, nay?*"

How the Apostle deals with this question is exceedingly instructive. He appeals simply to the faithfulness of God, as the guaranty that his word was not a vacillating yea or nay (ver. 18),—and then to the experience of his readers under his preaching, as the inward demonstration of the Holy Spirit that this part of his word at least was yea alone (ver. 19 sq.); leaving it to his readers to draw the conclusion from this *argumentum ad minus* that he who was true in so great a witness-bearing could be trusted also in the little matter of his own plans.

IV. 2 *Corinthians* i. 23, *and* ii. 1.

In the discussions of the import of οὐκέτι in the former, and of πάλιν in the latter, of these two verses, it seems to be ordinarily forgotten that the broader context must be taken into account. Commentators usually try to take οὐκέτι, for instance, either in the sense of "not yet" or in that of "not again," according as their preconceived belief is that Paul made one or two visits to Corinth before writing this letter. But as a matter of fact the word means neither one nor the other. What it means is '*no longer*,' and it usually denies for the entire future. Its meaning here can only be caught by perceiving its correlation with vers. 15 and 16, out of connection with which ver. 23 must not be forced. The Apostle had intended to come directly from Ephesus to Corinth in order that he might thus be able to bring the Corinthians twice the joy of seeing him; but when he perceived that it would not be a joy for them to see him, but his coming would rather bring them sorrow, he changed his plan and

"*no longer came to Corinth*," but departed into Macedonia. This is the common and natural meaning of the word, and is excellently expressed in the rendering of the Revised Version: 'I forbore to come to Corinth.' The implication is not that 'he still is coming but has postponed it for a time,' nor that 'he did not come another time in addition to those he had already come'; there is no reference in the word to "another" coming either not yet executed or already past. It simply says that that intention which Paul had of coming to Corinth directly from Ephesus, he concluded not to fulfil at all, at any time. It was finally and for all time laid aside. He saw what his immediate coming to Corinth involved, and in 'order to spare the Corinthians, he no longer came to Corinth,' but departed another way. The question why Paul uses εἰς Κόρινθον here instead of πρὸς ὑμᾶς seems to be settled by this understanding of his purpose. It is altogether parallel to the use of εἰς Ἔφεσον in 2 Tim. iv. 12, where he means to intimate that Timothy may well leave Ephesus and bring Mark with him, since Tychicus has been sent to that city. So here Paul speaks objectively because he has the plan, not his readers, in mind.

In this understanding of the passage, it has no bearing on the controversy concerning the number of the visits to Corinth which the Apostle had made before writing the letter. It only denies that he executed the first visit which he had planned when he was wishing to bring them a "second joy" (vers. 15, 16).

A result somewhat similar is reached when we read the first verse of the second chapter in its vital connection with the context. As a mere matter of fact, i. 23–ii. 4 form a very closely knit paragraph. We have seen how οὐκέτι looks back to vers. 15, 16; the χαρᾶς of i. 24 takes up again the χαράν of ver. 15 (for assuredly this is the right reading there), while, as the δὲ advises us, ii. 1 is only the other side of the matter, and its λύπῃ is the opposite of this χαρᾶς, and its πάλιν must be explained with reference to the plan of 15, 16. It is important to observe that the prefixed τὸ in ii. 1 binds the whole of the last half of the verse together as a single noun: "I judged this for myself, namely the-not-coming-back-to-you-in-sorrow." The order of words in this composite noun was determined not by their relation to each other, but by their closer or more distant relation to ἐλθεῖν and by their relative emphasis. The strongest emphasis falls on the μὴ πάλιν, but not as a qualification of ἐν λύπῃ, but of ἐλθεῖν. The πάλιν can best be rendered by the simple word 'back,' and what the Apostle says is not that he will not 'come back' to them, but that he is determined not to have his coming back in sorrow. In this there is

no implication that the former coming was in sorrow: there is no reference to the character of the former coming at all. There is simply an energetic declaration that he had intended to come to them in order to bring joy, and he had not come because he would not consent to have 'his coming back to them in sorrow.' The whole implication as to character is exhausted in the intention for the coming that was planned and that was not executed just because what he purposed was to bring joy and he was determined not to bring sorrow. Just because he was a fellow-worker to their joy, he could not bring sorrow, and the whole force of λύπη is taken up in its contrast to the χαρᾶς, which again takes us back to the χαράν of i. 15.

But if, again, this be the meaning of the phrase, it has no bearing on the question as to the Apostle's previous visits to Corinth. The πάλιν would, no doubt, imply that there had been one before. For it is probably impossible to make it a repetition of the πάλιν of i. 16, as if what the Apostle was saying was that though he had planned to come to them and then come 'back,' yet to spare them he had refrained from coming, and so could not have 'a coming *back*.' But it says nothing as to how often Paul had been in Corinth, whether once or twice; and, just because we cannot infer that a previous visit was 'in sorrow,' so it offers us no ground to infer that he had been there twice.

Although it carries us somewhat beyond the limits we have set for ourselves, it is worth remarking that this fatal inadequacy to the inferences put upon them attends all the passages that are appealed to in order to prove that Paul had already twice visited Corinth. 2 Cor. xii. 1 is, to say the least of it, thoroughly ambiguous, while exegetically speaking, 2 Cor. xii. 14, and especially xiii. 1, seem freighted with an opposite implication. For it is undeniable that grammatically the words τρίτον τοῦτο are equally flexible to the two meanings, 'this is the third time that I am coming,' and 'on this third occasion I am actually coming.' And exegetically, all reason fails for the very emphatic (note the position) assertion that the next time Paul visited his Corinthian children would be the third visit he had made them; whereas the whole Epistle teems with a very important reason why he need assert that on this third occasion of his preparation to visit them, he would actually fulfil his intention, — for which we do not need to go further than the passage we have just considered, i. 15 sq. This appears to me to be the decisive consideration that determines the sense of these two passages, and, if so, then they assert that Paul's next visit would be the second, not the third. So complicated a matter cannot, however, be argued in a postscript to i. 23, and ii. 1.