I. **1—3.**] ADDRESS AND GREETING. **The  
elder** (the Apostle, known by this name:  
see Introd., “On the writer of the  
Epistle”) **to the** (not, an: see Introd.,  
“To whom the Epistle was written”)  
**elect lady** (see Introd., ibid.) **and to her  
children, whom** (this **whom**, masculine  
plural in the original, probably embraces  
the whole, mother and children of both  
sexes: see 3 John 1) **I love in truth** (not  
merely, in reality: but in truth, such  
truth’ being the result, as stated below,  
of *the truth* of the Gospel abiding in him.  
See 1 John iii. 18, and note on iii. 19);  
**and not I alone, but also all who  
know the truth** (there is no need to  
imit this **all** to all dwelling in or near  
the abode of the Writer, or to all who  
were personally acquainted with those  
addressed: it is a general expression: the  
communion of love is as wide as the communion   
of faith);

**2.**] **on account of the truth** (objective:   
God’s truth revealed  
in His Son, see 1 John ii. 4), **which abideth  
in us, and shall be with us for ever** (see  
John xiv. 16,17. These words are a reminiscence   
of our Lord’s words there,  
*abideth with you, and shall be in you*. The  
future is not the expression of a wish, as  
some have supposed; but of confidence, as  
that also which follows, which takes its tinge  
and form from this):

**3.**] **there shall be  
with us** (by the **us** the Apostle includes  
*himself* in the greeting, as he had before  
done in the introductory clauses. **shall**  
**be**, again, not a wish: see above: we  
inst of necessity connect this second shall  
be with the first. But the very fact of a  
greeting being conveyed, must somewhat  
modify the absolute future sense, and introduce   
something of the votive character. It  
is as Bengel, “wish with its affirmation,”—  
a wish expressed by a confident assertion of,  
its fulfilment) **grace, mercy, peace** (Trench  
says well, “*Grace* has reference to the *sins*  
of men, *mercy* to their *misery*. God’s *grace*,  
His free grace and gift, is extended to men  
as they are guilty: His *mercy* is extended  
to them as they are miserable.” And  
thus *grace* always comes first, because  
guilt must be done away, before misery  
can be assuaged. *Peace* is the whole sum  
and substance of the possession and enjoyment   
of God’s grace and mercy: see