§ 11] “ FOR WHAT READERS WRITTEN. [1ytropvcrioy.   
   
 eh. i. 15, ‘on each occasion which offers,” seems also to point: besides   
 appearing to refer to some previous personal connexion of the Writer   
 with his readers. This latter has frequently been assumed from ch. i. 16 ;   
 but without necessity ; see note there. All that is there assumed is   
 that which is also stated in ch. i. 1, the delivery of the truths and faith   
 of the Gospel to them by competent eye-witnesses, of whom the Writer   
 (in office, but not necessarily in connexion with themselves) had   
 been one.   
 2. The address, ch. i. 1, is more general than that of the first Epistle :   
 the words of warning and exhortation are for all who bore the Christian   
 name. The dangers described were imminent throughout the then   
 Christian world. And the expressions, whether of praise and encou-   
 ragement, or of caution, must be taken as gencrally applicable to all   
 believers in Christ, rather than as descriptive of the peculiar situation of   
 any circle of churches at any one time.   
 3. Of necessity, the same general view must not be taken of the   
 enemies of the faith here depicted. The city of God, with its bulwarks   
 and towers, is ever the same: this was a special attack beginning to be   
 made on it by a body of foes of a special character. ‘The firmness and   
 watchfulness which seem to be predicated of the readers (ch. i. 12, iii. 17,   
 i, 19) are rather assumptions, certain to be true of true believers, than   
 statements of objective matter of fact: whereas the depravities and   
 errors of the heretics, as far as spoken of in the present, were things   
 actually oceurring under the Apostle’s notice. This must be borne in   
 mind, or we shall be liable to go wrong in our inference respecting those   
 addressed.   
 4. On the other hand it must be borne in mind, that the Apostle’s   
 field of view, as he looked over the church, would naturally be bounded   
 by the lines which marked out the cycle of his own observation : that   
 those to whom he had before written would be on this second occasion   
 nearest to his thoughts: and by consequence, that when he seems to   
 address these readers as in the main identical with those, this inference   
 must not be carried too far, but allowance made for the margin which   
 may fairly be granted to each Epistle: for expanding the apparent   
 limited character of the former address towards that more general   
 reference which was sure to have been in the Apostle’s mind: and for   
 contracting the very wide address of this one merely by believing that   
 in writing he would fix his thoughts on those whom he knew and   
 especially cared for.   
 5. If it be said, as it has been, that we find no trace, in the former   
 Epistle, of the peculiar kind of adversaries of the faith of whom so much   
 is here said, and on the other hand nothing in this Epistle of the per-   
 secutions, which bore so considerable a part in the matters treated in the   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 former one : the answer to both these is execedingly easy. A very   
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