

ness through manifold temptations." You may be tempted perhaps to hold in abeyance, if not altogether to surrender the glorious universalities of the Gospel, for the maintenance and defence of which the Evangelical Union was called into existence; or you may be tempted by the prevalent contradictory and soulless Calvinistic preaching, to give way to feelings of irritation, to the detriment, if not to the death, of your own high-toned spirituality of mind, and by reason of this irritation, which often produces a captious cavilling spirit, you may be tempted to desist frequenting the house of God altogether. Realizing then the difficulties and temptations and dangers peculiar to your comparative isolation, and want of congenial Christian fellowships and instruction, we would tender in all Christian sympathy and love "A word of exhortation"

First.—"Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end." Such was the apostolic exhortation Peter addressed to the "scattered strangers." And doubtless it was appropriate and stimulating and strengthening. They were comparatively isolated. Many of them, besides, were strangers scattered throughout strange countries. And not only were they comparatively isolated and strangers, some of them in strange places; their thoughts and aspirations and activities in their religious outgoings and manifestations, would seem strange also. The prevailing customs, the idolatrous superstitions, and the various forms of error rampant amidst those amongst whom they were scattered, would not only be unpalatable to the pure habits, the higher, clearer thoughts, and enlightened reasons of the "scattered strangers," but they would doubtless also come into close and formidable and perchance sometimes deadly contact and opposition. And how could it otherwise be? "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness?" They had engaged themselves as God's own "elect" in the great moral warfare between good and evil, between right and wrong, and unless they were prepared both to leave their first love and to crush to the death their "lively hope begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," there was no alternative but to "stand fast in the faith," and to "be strong." And could this be done without a struggle, or a difficulty? Methinks not. Mankind generally do not like to be odd, especially in matters pertaining to religion. It is comparatively easy to go with the multitude. But to swim and make way against the tide is much more difficult, and requires an effort. "The strangers," in fact, whom Peter addressed were in