

land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia. And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, wrote they *unto him* an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter *was* written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue. Rehum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort: *This is* the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, *even* unto Artaxerxes the king: Thy servants the men on this side of the river, and at such a time. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come into Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls *thereof*, and joined the foundations. Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up *again*, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings. Now because we have maintenance from *the king's* palace, and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonor, therefore have we sent and certified the king; that search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city *is* a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time: for which cause was this city destroyed. We certify the king that, if this city be builded *again*, and the walls thereof set up, by this *as* thou shalt have no portion on this side the river. *Then* sent the king *to* answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to *the* rest of their companions that dwell in Samaria, and *unto* the rest beyond the river, Peace, and at such a time. The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me. And I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings and *that* rebellion and sedition have been made therein. There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all *countries* beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them. Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until *another* commandment shall be given from me. Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings? Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter *was* read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power. Then ceased the work of the House of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia. [Ezra 4.]

*The reading being ended, the Master of Infantry and candidate rise.*

M. OF I.—Most Excellent High Priest, our Sovereign Lord, DARIUS, the King, having ascended the throne of