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Letter from a Father to his Son, an Apprentice Boy.

August 25th, 1821.

My dear boy,

I now go on with a few more particulars of the Roman history. After the death of Nero, Galba was declared emperor. His reign was very short, and there is nothing very particular for me to tell you about him. He reigned only about seven months.

Otho was next chosen emperor; but some of the people wished for Vitellius, and thus there was a great quarrel among them; and, in a battle between them, Otho was killed after a reign of only three months.

Then Vitellius was chosen: they were, however, soon tired of him; and they determined to have Vespasian for their emperor; and, accordingly, to make way for him, they put Vitellius to death, after he had reigned only a few months.

Thus, they had, in one year, three different emperors, which caused a great deal of confusion and disturbance, as well as cruelty and bloodshed; and this is generally the case in countries where the king is chosen by the people, instead of descending regularly from father to son.

Vespasian began to reign in the year of our Lord 69. You remember that our Saviour had declared to the Jews, that the time would presently come, when they should be brought to a severe punishment for their wicked opposition to him and to his Gospel; he told them that their city should be destroyed,—that its destruction should be so complete.

Note—I have divided the proper names as they are to be pronounced, according to your desire.

* Né-ro. † O'-tho. ‡ Vi-tél-i-us. § Ves-pá-shi-an.
that, of all their beautiful buildings, not one stone should be left upon another. Our Lord, indeed, describes, in the strongest manner, the coming destruction of Jerusalem, and the dreadful tribulations which should attend it. This prophecy was exactly fulfilled, when Vespasian was emperor of Rome. You know that the Jews were under the power of the Romans: but they never willingly submitted to their conquerors. They made frequent attempts to deliver themselves, and they still, notwithstanding their crimes, continued to think themselves the peculiar people of God, and still expected that they should receive some signal deliverance from heaven. The time of their destruction was, however, come. Vespasian sent an army, under the command of his son Titus, to lay siege to Jerusalem. The Jews were, at that time, in a miserable state. They practised all sorts of wickedness, and the vengeance of the Almighty seemed to threaten them on every side. We read that earthquakes and prodigies added their terrors to all the miseries which they experienced from the attacks of their enemies, and from their own dreadful quarrels and dissensions. When the Romans were besieging their city, they began to think it better to lay aside their own disputes, and to unite in resisting the common enemy. The Jews made a furious sally out of the town, and succeeded in putting the Romans into great disorder. These soon, however, rallied, and drove the Jews back again into their city.

The city was strongly fortified with three walls. After great labour and danger, the Romans battered down the first wall; then, in a few days more, they broke through the second. Then Titus prepared for attacking the third and last defence; he, however, first sent a messenger to exhort them to yield, but they treated his message with contempt and insolence. The siege was therefore carried on with greater vigour than before. Several new batteries
were raised by the Romans, but these were quickly destroyed by the Jews. Titus, finding that he could not yet succeed in taking the city, determined to cut a trench around it, and so prevent any supply of provisions from coming to his enemies. Thus we see that the prophecy of our Lord was exactly fulfilled, where he says, "Behold thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee." In fact the siege of Jerusalem is one of the most dreadful recorded in history, and, so exactly agreeing with the predictions of Christ, it will ever remain a sure proof of the truth of his Gospel. The Jews, unable to receive supplies of food, were now suffering the greatest misery from famine, and yet they continued to hold out. Titus raised more batteries, and at length beat down the third wall, and entered the city. Then the battle raged within the city, and even within the walls of the beautiful temple of Jerusalem. Titus was desirous of preserving this grand building; it, however, took fire, and was presently burned to the ground. After a siege of six months the city was so completely destroyed, that, according to our Lord's prophecy, "not one stone was left upon another."

I am, &c.

I. S.

PARTING ADVICE TO THE CHILDREN OF A SUNDAY SCHOOL.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us the following Address.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

Accept this parting advice from one who has ever watched over you with anxious care.

Remember that the day of Judgment will come, when you will be called to account for all the wicked things you do, or wicked words you say.—Endeavour
good, and keep him from bad courses. But whether the poor lad is alive or dead I cannot tell, for I never hear from him.

I am, Sir,
Your constant reader,
MARY MOURNFUL.

To the Editor of the Cottager's Monthly Visitor.

SIR,
Your last Number came rather too late for us. Our Fair was just over before it arrived. Just before the Fair we had rather more "money than wit," but now matters are changed with us, and we hope we are grown wiser, for we are sure we are grown poorer. We had got a little matter of money together, and we determined to have a little jollity, and a bit of a frolic at the Fair, and you may judge, Sir, that we have not much money left; but the worst on't is, that some of us have spent, as the saying is, more than we'd got, and we shall be in debt this next half year for our one day's frolic. I wish there was an end put to the Fair with all my heart; however, be this as it will, they shan't catch me among 'em. There will be plenty of people to play the fool without,

Sir,
Your humble servant,
WILLIAM WISERGROWN,
For self and others.

Letter from a Father to his Son, an Apprentice Boy.

MY DEAR BOY,
In my last letter, when I was giving you an account of the Roman Emperor, VESPASIAN, I told you that
he sent his son, Titus, to lay siege to the city of Jerusalem, and that, during this siege, the Jews suffered dreadful calamities and distresses. I told you, likewise, that our blessed Saviour, when he was upon earth, had foretold that these things should be. The history of the siege of Jerusalem is given by Josephus, who was neither a Christian himself nor a friend to the Christians. We may be sure, therefore, that he would not invent any thing for the sake of exalting the religion of Christ; and yet his account of the facts which occurred at the siege of Jerusalem, thirty-six years after the death of Christ, clearly prove that Christ foresaw all these things; that he was therefore a divine person, and that all he told us must therefore be true.

My dictionary tells me, that Flavius Josephus, the ancient historian of the Jews, was himself a Jew, that he was born at Jerusalem, A.D. 37, and that he died A.D. 93. His history of the Jewish war, and of the destruction of Jerusalem, in seven books, was composed at the command of Vespasian, and is singularly interesting and affecting; as the historian was an eye-witness of all he relates. His "Jewish Antiquities," in twenty books, written in Greek, is a very noble work: we have also a discourse of his upon the "Martyrdom of the Maccabees," which is a masterpiece of eloquence; for certainly he was a great orator, as well as a great historian.

You remember, that in the Gospel of St. Luke there are these words. "And as some spake of the Temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones, Jesus said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down; &c. &c. When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in..."
the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days; for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled,” &c. &c.

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes: for the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee,” &c. &c.

Now the following passages are taken from the History of Josephus. You must remember that these things happened at the siege of Jerusalem, thirty-six years after the death of Christ.

“ There was no corn in the city which any where appeared publicly; but those who were thought to have any in their private houses were stripped of it by plunderers. If these plunderers found any, they put the owners to torture because they had denied that they had any. If they found none, they tormented them worse, because they thought they had more carefully concealed it. Many persons sold all their property for a small measure of wheat or barley. When they had done this, they shut themselves up in the inmost rooms of their houses, and ate the corn they had gotten; some did it without grinding it, by reason of the extremity of the want they were in, and others baked bread of it, according as necessity and fear dictated to them: a table was no where laid for a distinct meal, but they snatched the bread out of the fire half baked, and ate it very hastily.
The famine was too hard for any other feeling.
Children pulled the very morsels that their fathers
were eating out of their mouths, and, what was
still more distressing, so did the mothers do as to
their infants; and when those who were most dear
were perishing under their hands, they were not
ashamed to take from them the very last drops that
might preserve their lives: and while they ate after
this manner, yet were they not concealed in so doing;
but the seditious, everywhere, came upon them im-
mediately, and snatched away from them what they
had gotten from others; for when they saw any house
shut up, this was to them a signal that the people
within had got some food; whereupon they broke
open the doors, and ran in, and took pieces of what
they were eating almost out of their very mouths,
and this by force. The old men, who held their food
fast, were beaten; and, if the women hid what they
had within their hands, their hair was torn for so
doing: nor was there any pity shewn either to the
aged, or to the infants; but they lifted up children
from the ground as they hung upon the morsels they
had gotten, and shook them down upon the floor.
They also invented terrible methods of torments
to discover where any food was; and a man was forced
to hear what it is terrible even to hear, in order to
make him confess that he had one loaf of bread, or
a handful of barley-meal. Besides the distresses of
famine, there were dreadful quarrels among them-
selves. Some were falsely accused of laying trea-
cherous plots, and so were destroyed; others were
charged with designs of betraying the city to the
Romans. He that was plundered of all he had by
one party, was then sent to the other: the people
agreed in nothing but their wicked practices. It is
impossible to mention every instance of these men's
wickedness. I shall therefore content myself with
saying, that neither did any other city ever suffer
such miseries, nor did any other city ever breed a
generation more fruitful in wickedness than this was, from the beginning of the world. ** ** ** ** When Titus found the great difficulty of taking the city, after various consultations with his officers, he determined to build a wall round about the whole city, which was, as he thought, the only way to prevent the Jews from coming out, and then they would either entirely despair of saving the city, and so would surrender it up to him, or be more easily conquered when the famine had further weakened them. Titus then gave orders that the army should be distributed to their several shares of this work. Now the length of this wall was about forty furlongs, and the whole was completed in three days; for a certain divine fury came upon the soldiers, that, from the highest to the lowest, they all strove which should do the most. 

"So all hope of escaping was now cut off from the Jews, together with their liberty of going out of the city. Then did the famine widen its progress, and devour the people by whole houses and families. The upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine, and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged. The children also, and the young men, wandered about the market-places like shadows, all swelled with the famine, and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them. As for burying them, those that were sick themselves were not able to do it, and those that were hearty and well were deterred from doing it by the great multitude of those dead bodies, and by the uncertainty there was how soon they should die themselves; for many died as they were burying others, and many went to their coffins before that fatal hour was come. Nor was there any lamentation made under these calamities, nor were there any mournful complaints; but the famine confounded all natural passions: for those who were just going to die, looked upon those that were gone to their rest..."
Sunshine and Storm.

before them with dry eyes and open mouths. When there were too many dead bodies to be buried, they were cast from the walls to the valleys beneath.

"When Titus, in going his round along those valleys, saw them full of dead bodies, and the thick putrefaction running about them, he gave a groan, and, spreading out his hands to heaven, called God to witness that this was not his doing, but that they had brought it on themselves."

You see, then, how truly the prophecy of our Saviour was fulfilled, which foretold the siege of Jerusalem, and the miseries which should come upon the Jews. There is much more in proof of this to be found in Josephus; but my letter is getting too long. I must therefore conclude, &c. &c. &c.

I. S.

To the Editor of the Cottager's Monthly Visitor.

Sir,

I talked in a former letter of submitting to your inspection some verses on the consequences of early teaching. If you shall think them worth inserting in any of your future Numbers, here they are.

I remain, &c.

M. J.

(We think there is no one of our readers who will not think them very well "worth inserting."—Ed.)

SUNSHINE AND STORM;

OR, THE CONSEQUENCES OF EARLY TEACHING.

"When it is evening, ye say, 'It will be fair weather; for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowering.' O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky: but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"—St. Matthew, xvi. 2, 3.

Come hither, my child, let us reason together
A few little points about "signs of the weather."
Did you ever, in Autumn, take note of a day,
When the sun rises slow through a curtain of grey?
Letter from a Father to his Son.

Strength which she sought, and, as you have seen, sought not in vain: endeavour, like her, to obey in all things your heavenly Father; and then, like her, be assured that "He will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
E.

Letter from a Father to his Son, an Apprentice Boy.

My dear boy,
The last account I gave you of the Romans brought us as far as to the reign of the Emperor Vespasian. As the war against the Jews made so important a part of that reign, I then sent you a few particulars of that war, which I had read in Josephus. I must now tell you, that, after the taking of Jerusalem, Titus returned home again to Rome, and was received with every mark of congratulation and joy. All the beautiful and rich treasures which he took from the Jews were brought out to make a grand and splendid triumph. Vast quantities of gold, taken out of the temple, were displayed, and likewise the book of the Holy Law, which you know was written by Moses, and was kept in the Ark of the Covenant, in that sacred part of the Temple which was called the Holy of Holies. A grand triumphal arch was likewise erected in honour of Titus, which is to be seen at Rome in ruins at this day.

Vespasian reigned ten years; and, after his death, Titus was joyfully received as Emperor. I need not say much more about Titus, as we have already seen so much of him at the siege of Jerusalem. The following little anecdote, however, I must not leave out, as it so shortly expresses the excellence of his character. One night, as he was thinking over the
actions of the past day, he did not recollect that he had done any thing particularly useful to his fellow creatures, and he accordingly cried out, "I have lost a day." It would be well for us all, if we were thus in the habit of examining our daily conduct, and if we were all as anxious to be good and useful as Titus was. Time is a precious treasure, and, if a Heathen Emperor was thus fearful of spending one day without doing some good, surely Christians ought to be still more careful of their time, and still more anxious to employ it in deeds of usefulness and kindness to one another. "Do good to all men," "Bear ye one another's burdens," are great Christian rules; and by these our conduct should be governed, if we would be Christians indeed.

My history tells me that, in the reign of Titus, there was a great eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and that this burning mountain threw its ashes into countries more than a hundred miles distant; and that the great natural philosopher Pliny, being desirous of examining this wonderful sight, was suffocated in the flames.

Titus died after a reign of between two and three years.

His brother Domitian then became emperor. I need not trouble you much with his history, as I see nothing of him worth writing about. He was a very foolish as well as a very wicked man. He sent away from his court all sensible and good people, and took a pleasure in the company of gamblers and horse-jockeys, and fiddlers, and prize-fighters. He was a cruel wretch besides, and would, when he was alone, find amusement in tormenting flies and other helpless animals. He likewise put to death many of his own subjects in the most wanton manner, and delighted in seeing the executions himself. He kept a sort of book in which he set down the names of those whom he intended to destroy. His wife, one day, happened to get a sight of this book, and
she found her own name written there. She shewed the list to some of her friends, whose names were likewise in the book; and they presently entered into a conspiracy against the tyrant, and killed him. This was the end of the bloody Domitian, and he was the last of what are sometimes called the twelve Caesars. You can easily remember them all;—1st. Julius Caesar. 2d. Augustus. 3d. Tiberius. 4th. Caligula. 5th. Claudius. 6th. Nero. 7th. Galba. 8th. Otho. 9th. Vitellius. 10th. Vespasian. 11th. Titus. 12th. Domitian.

After these twelve Caesars, the next five emperors were very good ones; but, as I do not know that there is anything which would be of much use to you in their history, I shall only just mention their names. 1st. Nerva. 2d. Trajan. 3d. Adrian. 4th. Antoninus. 5th. Aurelius. Many wise and good laws were made under these emperors, and several great exploits were done by some of them, upon which it is not now worth our while to enter. In fact, the power of the Romans was now fast declining. Sometimes, indeed, under a brave and active emperor, things seemed to revive, but this was not of long continuance. Immense nations, from the north of Europe, now poured their swarms of people into the richer regions of the south, and seemed to threaten the destruction of long established states. About 200 years after Christ, these northern nations came into Italy, and gave great alarm to the Romans. The Romans, however, in spite of these intruders, went on for several years. At length, when Constantine was Emperor, about the year 300, they left Rome, and the emperor fixed upon that city for the capital of the empire, which was since, from his own name, called Constantinople. Then Rome, being deserted, became an easy prey to the Goths and Vandals, who took possession of it, and all its mighty glory sunk into nothing.

One cannot help being curious to know what be-
came of the Christian religion during all this time. As the Roman emperors were masters of nearly all the known world, we might very well suppose that the religion of Christ would flourish if they encouraged it, but if they opposed it, that then it would fall. This, I say, is what we should expect; but the fact is directly the contrary. The Roman emperors opposed the Christian religion, and dreadfully persecuted the early Christians; and yet, notwithstanding all this, the religion of Christ kept thriving and increasing; which plainly proves that it was supported by a power which was far above the reach of man, and that all that man could do against it was of no avail. The Lord was with his people, and therefore they prevailed: they prevailed against all the persecutions that malice and cruelty could invent. There is only one way of accounting for this. Christ foretold the growth of his Church, and he promised that he would support it; and he did. It increased, in the midst of persecution, till the time of Constantine. He became a believer; he was fully convinced that the religion of Christ was indeed truth, and he gave it his support and encouragement. And thus was the prophecy fulfilled, which declared that, notwithstanding all the opposition which the Gospel should meet with, a time should come when "kings should be its nursing fathers, and queens its nursing mothers."

Vain is the attempt of man to destroy the work of God. This is our consolation in the midst of all the dangers to which the Church of Christ is exposed, from the opposition of unbelievers and scoffers. Well may we say of our religion now, as was said of it at its very first foundation, "If this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." But still we must not be idle. We must use

* Isaiah xlix. 23. † Acts v. 38.
the proper means for the support of truth. We have arguments in its favour. Let us know how to use them, and to give an account of "the reason of the hope that is in us." But the surest way to convince the unbeliever of the truth of the Gospel is to show him that our lives and practices are guided by its heavenly rules. Thus will they see, that Christians are indeed guided by a light from heaven, and that God is with them of a truth.

I am your affectionate father,

J. S.

ON VANITY IN DRESS.

Dialogue between Sarah Bird and Lucy Clarke, two Sunday Scholars.

Sarah. Oh, Lucy, you can't think what a pretty new gown Mary Green has got, I shall never be easy till I have one too, and a pink sash. Only think of a white gown and a pink sash! What can I do? My mother will not get me one, I am quite sure.—But you are not listening to me; you're such a stupid girl, you don't care whether a gown be old or new, blue, black, or brown.

Lucy. Yes, I am listening and thinking of what you say.

S. Well, then tell me what to do; for I shall not like to see Mary so smart, and stand by in my old gown.

L. Since you ask my advice, I shall speak my mind, and say you had better think nothing about it. You are greatly mistaken, in supposing you will be any happier for these things; and, if you choose, I can give you the reason why I would not now wear a white gown and sash; though I did not always think so.—But perhaps you are busy, and I am hindering you.