

windows as we ourselves see in 1915 ; but the general aspect of the town has probably changed little.

Use a stereograph entitled, Shechem Where the Hebrew Empire Was Divided ; East past Mount Ebal.

THE LESSON APPLIED

"Rehoboam took counsel with the old men." He stood on the threshold of life, and his decision in reply to Israel's request would have consequences of the utmost importance in the years to come. He needed wisdom, and a true instinct drove him to seek the advice of those who had had much experience. As we stand at the beginning of the way, with the long unknown road stretching out before us, it is well for us, too, to seek counsel of those who have passed far along the way and therefore know the dangers that lurk by the road side, the enemies that lie in wait, the bypaths that lead astray. We should strive to profit by their experience and to be prepared for all tests. It is the part of sanest common sense to heed the warnings and ponder the instruction of parents, teachers and friends. It is especially wise to sit at the feet of the great saints and prophets, and above all, at the feet of Jesus, whose illuminating wisdom and experience is enshrined in that great guide-book of life we call the Bible.

The advice of the "old men" was good advice. We are in this world to serve. Had Rehoboam seen in his high position and great power an opportunity to "be a servant unto this people" the path of duty would have been clear to him, and the people would have loyally responded to his interest in their welfare. When a man is more concerned about his rights than about his duties, he is sure to antagonize others and the path of safety will be more and more difficult to find. On January 22nd, 1905, the Russian people, in bitter revolt against the tyranny they were suffering at the hands of a corrupt and heartless bureaucracy, went direct to the Czar, whom they fondly called their Little Father, that they might tell him personally their grievances. They gathered in tens of thousands before the palace. It was a unique opportunity to show himself the servant of his people and so win their love forever. But Nicholas was not there. His subjects were greeted instead by his Cossacks, and the

streets ran with blood. He was untrue to his real mission and so lost the confidence of his subjects and the respect of mankind. He also endangered his throne. The prevailing forces in life fight against the man who dominates, and favor the man who serves.

The counsel of the young men prevailed with the young king. The influence of companionship in youth is incalculable. Friendship is one of the greatest gifts of God to boyhood, and it can become a boy's richest blessing or his worst curse. When so much depends upon his choice of chums, a boy should very carefully test any who may seek his companionship. What kind of language does he use when away from home restraint ? How does he act among those who are worse than he ? Does he sink to their level ? What is his attitude to sacred things ? Does he sneer at goodness ? Is he courteous and kindly to the old and the poor ? Do you find it easy to be good in his presence ? Does he draw out the best in you ? Such questions need to be very earnestly asked and carefully answered before any one is admitted to a boy's inner life. Mrs. Browning once asked Charles Kingsley the secret of his noble life of unselfish service. "I had a friend," he replied. And many a young man who has missed the way might explain his downfall by saying, "I listened to the suggestions of some bad companions."

The arrogant reply of the king was made more offensive by the rude manner in which he spoke. Gracious speech does not always assure a good heart. With some, politeness is only a veneer. Beneath the politeness may be a very selfish and sordid soul. But wherever you have real manliness of spirit, it will manifest itself in gentle speech and a generous consideration for the rights and feelings of others. Bluntness of manner and rudeness of speech is always an evidence of some defect in character. Where the sympathetic, sweet, pure love of Jesus fills the heart it will find its expression in words and deeds that are genial and kindly.