

tans commended the adroitness of a thief who could steal without detection, but condemned one whose dishonesty was discovered; but surely in our day we are not going to hold it worse to find a fault than to commit one. Is it not true, however, that by a certain class of moralists this is done?

Faults in children, which by timely training and by directing their attention to them, might easily have been corrected, are suffered to grow unchecked, and passed over without one word of disapproval. This course is considered by some as the advanced training of the nineteenth century. It is, however, not training at all. Parents and guardians who neglect the word of warning and caution to the young are largely responsible for the faults which they suffer their offspring unconsciously to contract. A lady was congratulated on her fruit garden, and the show for an abundance of fruit. She replied, laughing, "We never get any ripe fruit, our own and others' children gather it all before it ripens." The *fault* was not even hinted at. Children unruly in the streets, irreverent in the house of God, pass uncorrected without one word said to let them know that there is any wrong in such conduct, because that would be faultfinding. How shall a child be trained without being taught to clearly discriminate between what is right and what is wrong, what is proper and what is unbecoming? Indeed so far is the avoidance of faultfinding carried by some of our self-styled "advanced men," that they do not hint to their congregations that they are sinners and need repentance in order to pardon. Confession of sin is dropped out of some of the public prayers, and wicked men are addressed as though their conduct had not offended God, and no reconciliation was needed in order to friendship and acceptable service. Who can read the Psalms or the books of the prophets and not feel that the commission of the inspired men was to cry aloud and spare not, to show the people their sins? They did this faithfully; whole chapters of the prophecies were declarations of the people's sins. They were likely called faultfinders by those whose sins were found out.

Christ ushered in the Gospel with a call to repentance and a requirement of a higher standard of morals—a righteousness that had respect to

the motives and the desires of the heart. He tells them plainly that the many were on the way to death, and the few in the road to life.

Though the burden of His message was *love* and *gospel grace*, He did not think it inconsistent with love and the Gospel to upbraid the cities that repented not, and to declare that the heathen cities of Nineveh and others would rise up in the judgment and condemn that generation. He spoke to them as a generation of vipers, a sinful and adulterous generation. He did not hesitate to discriminate between what is right and what is wrong, nor fail to tell the people their sins. To many of your easy-going people the line between right and wrong is not very defined. Sin is not very hateful, save in its grosser forms. They would rather think everybody good than make anybody uncomfortable by showing them their sins.

We have not so learned Christ, or the Bible. Such confounding of moral distinctions bodes no good for the future.

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SKETCHES IN PALESTINE AND EGYPT.

BETHLEHEM.

One of our excursions from Jerusalem was to Bethlehem, the place of our Saviour's nativity, which is a pretty little town of some 8,000 inhabitants, about six miles to the south of Jerusalem. It is situated on a hill, with terraces of vines and fig trees below it, and altogether presents the most attractive appearance of any place we saw in Palestine, unless it may be Nazareth. The population in both these places is largely *Christian*, a fact which undoubtedly goes far to account for their neatness and attractiveness. The name Bethlehem — Ephratah — signifying "House of Bread," and "Fruitful," respectively, by which it was pointed out as the place of our Saviour's birth 700 years before the event took place (Micah v: 2), seems to have contained in itself a prophecy of Him who is the Bread of God given for the life of the world. Hardly any other place has so many allusions to it, and interesting memories associated with it in Holy Scripture.