

might be assured that "we had passed from death to life, because we love the brethren." It is to be feared that this mock-priest is better acquainted with the saints of the middle and other ages, than with the sinners around him, and yet the circumstance is not without an element of satisfaction, as were it otherwise, he would make either hypocrites or fools of them; now that he is about to receive a good share of the booty from St. James, he will probably also receive more frequent visits from his neighbors, whenever their cupboards and coal bins are empty.

### EXTRA PULPIT CRITICISM.

#### A VISIT TO THE CENTRAL PRISON.

The Province of Ontario possesses more than one *representative institution*; it is happily needless to affirm in what proportion the inmates of a prison represent the great undetected without the walls; suffice it to observe that an incidental advantage accruing from incarceration of the *representative assemblies* is that the little Christian band which habitually seeks their welfare, knows where to find them; one may add moreover, that in such an endeavour, they are, *in principle*, obeying the Divine command to "go out into the highways," a command which involves the suitability of the message for those to whom it is conveyed. The writer availed himself of one of the cabs which the Government supplies for the use of the teachers, and arrived at the prison about 9 o'clock; about that time came some five and twenty teachers together, and speedily we proceeded to a spacious hall, which had just been vacated by an assembly of Roman Catholic prisoners; in that particular corner of the hall, which has been allotted to the use of the priests are altars &c., with the words "Venite adoremus," (Come, let us worship,) on the wall beyond them; in other parts of the hall, the following passages appear in large letters; "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given;" "We praise thee O God," "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will towards men." The far-reaching sublimity of the latter passage, it is to be feared, would be as little apprehended by all but

everyone within those walls, as was the portion quoted in the opening prayer, and utterly misapplied—"The bruised reed thou wilt not break, and the smoking flax thou wilt not quench until thou send forth judgment unto victory." Matt. xii., 20. It is a pity that it is scarcely practicable to enquire of persons who put such words into the form of a petition, if they attach any intelligible meaning to them; it is of course obvious that they have not the remotest shadow of a notion that they are reducing a definite prophesy of future "judgment" to an absurdity. It would be more gratifying, if it were possible, to write in terms of unmeasured praise of an effort which, in itself is so commendable as that of seeking the welfare of prisoners, but when one finds one's self in the presence of upwards of two hundred men, with "C. P." (Central Prison) on their backs, and the following words on their lips, one is constrained to say that a service so conducted is desperately and undeniably unsound

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,  
Safe on his gentle breast,  
There by his love o'ershaded,  
Sweetly my soul shall rest.  
Hark! 'tis the voice of angels  
Borne in a song to me,  
Over the fields of glory,  
Over the jasper sea."

Average prisoners have at least as much common sense as those outside the walls, and no one need be surprised if they laugh at such an anomaly as this; it is of course only an exaggerated illustration of the teaching which is all but universal, which is traceable to the days wherein Constantine, for political purposes, constituted the Roman empire Christian, which finds its expression in public worship, in the words "Dearly beloved brethren," and in the household, in teaching children to "say grace" &c; it is, in principle, approaching the Almighty as Cain did, and as Abel did not, and that is the teaching, more or less direct, of all spurious churches. The writer is well aware that nothing is more remote from the *intention* of the teachers of this interesting school than to "go in the way of Cain," but they do so nevertheless; they might find some hymns, *written for the express purpose of avoiding*