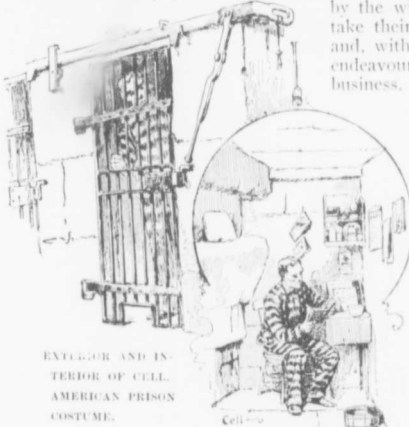


free;" etc., draw the thoughts to higher things, and the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, lettered in full, face the worshippers throughout the service. Choir and organ—conducted by inmates—lead the singing, and hearty and deep is the music that arises at the two regular Sunday services. This mental and spiritual instruction of the convicts is the most hopeful part of our anomalous and self-contradictory prison system.



What is meant by the words, "with hard labour," attached to a sentence? It is largely now a fanciful phrase which we inherit, along with other features of our prison system, from the dim past. Convicts are *always* supposed to work hard, though as a matter of fact, when we come to consider (1) that they are not free men; (2) that most of them have come to prison through laziness—desire to get something for nothing; and (3) the essential defects of our system, we must not be surprised if "hard labour" has a different signification in prison from what it has outside.

There are trade instructors in all

the more important lines of work—tailoring, shoemaking, blacksmithing, etc., and if any young fellow really wishes to learn a trade, there is generally nothing to hinder him.

Altogether, if a visitor passed through the penitentiary at any time during morning or afternoon, he would, with the above conditions considered, see an active, busy place, and here and there he would see careful and excellent work being done in all the departments by the wiser of the convicts, who take their position philosophically, and, with their eye on the future, endeavour to make the best of a bad business.

Neither while at work nor at rest are the prisoners supposed to carry on any conversation with one another. In theory the "silent" system is in vogue; but of course it and the congregate system cannot work together, and the silence—though as a rule, especially in some departments, well observed,—works much more thoroughly on paper than in practice. Convicts should have no

dealings whatever with one another, and certainly, therefore, the silent system ought to prevail; but we, by our laws, give the congregate system complete right of way. Of course silence and non-intercourse between convicts cannot rule until the "congregate" is superseded by the "separate" system. This latter is not in practice anywhere in Canada. In less than a hundred years there will be no other. Of course we have the "solitary" system in one prison in the penitentiary, the prison of isolation, but this is for "incurables" from all the Dominion penitentiaries, and though it marks a stage in a right development, is not an illustration