

Correspondence.

REFORMATION OF INEBRIATES.

To the Editor of DOMINION MEDICAL MONTHLY :

Sir.— The Ontario Society for the reformation of inebriates desires space for calling the attention of the benevolent public to its work and to its needs. Its object is the reclaiming of inebriates. Its methods are as follows: Home treatment is given in suitable cases and such cases as require hospital care are treated from one to three weeks in hospital. A friendly visitor, called a probation officer, takes the supervision of inebriates subsequent to treatment, finds them employment, and endeavors to bring them into touch with the church of their choice. The medical officer of the society administers the treatment, and associated with him is a consulting committee of three leading physicians of Toronto. Arrangements have been made with the police authorities whereby persons arrested for drunkenness (when not hardened offenders) may be committed to the care of the society instead of being sent to jail, and forced to associate with the vicious and the depraved. The medical treatment is conducted on strictly ethical lines, no secret remedies being used, and it is continued for three weeks, while the probation on parole is continued for several months. The scheme is a unique economic measure, which for the class referred to renders prolonged detention in an institution unnecessary. It is combining maximum efficiency with minimum expense. We wish to put this unique economic system to a crucial test on a sufficiently ample scale, to be used as an object lesson, before the next meeting of the Ontario Legislature. The result, we do not doubt, would be eminently satisfactory, and would more than justify legislation along the same lines. An eminent Oxford professor, and a Canadian, in a letter to the secretary of this society, speaks of the proposed legislation as follows: "I think the plan you propose is an excellent one, and I do hope it will be carried out."

At the last quarterly meeting of this society the report of the officers was most gratifying, inasmuch as 60 per cent. of the cases of inebriates treated and cared for were doing remarkably well. In view of the satisfactory character of the report it was