

THE ONTARIO REFORMATORY FOR BOYS.*

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INSTITUTIONS, as well as individuals, should have credit for all that they are fairly entitled to. The article in the January number of the *METHODIST MAGAZINE*, on "The Prison System of Ontario," does the Reformatory for Boys at Penetanguishene injustice. That any injustice was intended we do not for a moment believe, and we, therefore, the more cheerfully undertake the necessary corrections. It is in the interest of Reformatory boys, of the institution, of the Government that controls it, of the country, and of the management, that an accurate statement of the points wherein the article was in error be made. To these points the writer intends to confine himself.

The article states that "the building used as a Reformatory for Boys at Penetanguishene is an old barracks, built about the beginning of the century, but unused for many years." The old barracks was consumed by fire over thirty years ago. The Reformatory was started in the old barracks, when reformatory methods were but little understood; but its work is now carried on in buildings comparatively new, constructed at great cost, and on the most improved plans for reformatory work. The main buildings, which are constructed of stone, are two and three stories high above the basement, are splendidly lighted, heated and ventilated, and they have a frontage of over three hundred

feet. Besides these, there are the play-room, the carpenter's shop, the tailor's shop, and the shoemaker's shop, each building being two stories high; and there are some smaller buildings besides of one story. To the eye of the visitor they present an imposing appearance, and are suggestive of thorough work.

We cordially invite the writer of the article in the *METHODIST MAGAZINE* to visit the Reformatory for Boys. We can confidently promise him an agreeable surprise.

We have the Dormitory System here. There are two large dormitories, each of two stories, and capable together of accommodating three hundred boys. The boys are made very comfortable in their spring beds, with clean bedding, in rooms well aired, heated and lighted. Four guards and a night superintendent, shod with noiseless slippers, walk the well-lighted dormitories all night long, and it is quite impossible for anything bad to be done by the boys where the surveillance is so perfect. Two chaplains, a Protestant and a Catholic, each an ordained clergyman, conduct prayers with the boys every night and morning in their respective chapels, besides conducting services on the Sabbath. The chaplains also teach the boys catechism, have personal conversations, and access to them at all times, and endeavour constantly to promote their moral and religious interests. The Cottage System may be superior to

* We have pleasure in printing the accompanying rejoinder to an article published in the January number of this magazine. That article was written by a gentleman deeply interested in Prison Reform. It was a review of the entire Prison system of Ontario, making sundry suggestions for change and improvement in several of its institutions. It was based largely upon the evidence taken by the Prison Reform Commissioners in 1890. We are glad to learn of the improved manner in which the Reformatory for Boys is conducted. We know that Chaplain Card, an honoured minister of the Methodist Church, has the moral and religious interests of the boys deeply at heart (as have, no doubt, the other officers of the institution), and that he has been highly successful in promoting their spiritual and temporal welfare.—E.R.