

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## UNIVERSITY REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT.

*To the Editor of the EDUCATIONAL RECORD :*

SIR,—At the annual dinner of the McGill College graduates, a suggestion was made which deserves to be kept in mind, and perhaps even pressed on the attention of our public men. Dr. Howard, in proposing the toast of "McGill College in Parliament," broached the idea that the Universities should have a direct representation in Parliament.

If there is any truth in the pretension that the proper treatment of public questions is best secured by mental training, how essential must it be to have representatives in Parliament chosen by men of culture. It would no doubt be a matter of pride with electors of this stamp to select men of unquestioned capacity for the position. The mass of our representatives must of necessity be drawn from the ranks of the active business community, whether occupied in agriculture, or as merchants, lawyers or physicians. Men thus engaged often make good administrators ; but as there is a theory as well as a practice of government, and the busy men can rarely find time to study politics as a profession, an endeavour should be made to induce men of a different stamp to engage in politics.

Some will say, "Of what use are theorists?" and with such persons it is needless to waste time in argument: the difference of view is too great and too fundamental to hope for conversion: but the number of intelligent persons who think that the principles of government are not worthy of attention must be small indeed, and it is with the hope of securing for political life a class of men who have both the time and inclination to devote themselves to such study that the Universities may be found of use for representation. It is no new thing, for in the old country the great Universities are represented; and if found advisable and useful there, where enlightenment prevails so widely, then how much more necessary here. We greatly need a class of men who will study politics in the spirit of patriotism. It is notorious that in England many men devote themselves to this work, notably among the higher classes. True it does not entirely do away with party spirit, but it tends to soften the acerbities of party strife, and it tends to educate the "vox populi" which is so apt to run wild at the call of demagogues.

If it is thought that such a study is useful in any country, and that Canada would derive even special advantages from its cultivation, what better plan could be devised for its encouragement than to open a field for such students as representatives in Parliament of the educated mind of the country. I must reiterate what I have before mentioned, that I do not wish to disparage our present representatives, who are for the most part practical men—men who have already won their way to fortune or are seeking so to do; but such men, even if educationally trained, have generally some definite object in view. Lawyers seek parliamentary life as a stepping-stone to the Bench, and we all know how many lawyers are to be found in public life.

If, then, we seek not merely good administrators, but qualified men who