

COLLEGE CONFEDERATION.

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I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS.

“It is proposed to form a Confederation of Colleges, carrying on, in Toronto, work embraced in the Arts Curriculum of the Provincial University.” Such is the opening sentence of a document, understood to have the sanction of the Minister of Education for Ontario, in which is outlined a scheme for gathering the various outlying Colleges of this Province around the University of Toronto. The idea is not a new one. At intervals, during the last forty years, the plan of a single University, with affiliated Colleges, has had its advocates, and some feeble attempts have been made to realize the dream, but, hitherto, without effect. Once more the question has come to the front, and though differing somewhat from the affiliation schemes of former days, there can be no reasonable doubt as to the outcome of the present movement. There is to be, ultimately, one Arts College and one University for the Province of Ontario, and the outlying Colleges are to be used only in so far as they will contribute to that end.

This idea of a single University has a peculiar fascination for a certain class of minds. They regard it as a universal solvent of educational problems, a panacea for all mental ills; the philosopher's stone that will transmute the baser metal of the Denominational Colleges into gold; a royal mint from which the intellectual coin of the realm will come forth of equal weight and uniform *contour*, stamped with the image and superscription of the State. They think the *prestige* of such an institution, standing solitary and alone, must be immense; the value of its degrees beyond computation. With an educational system built upon the foundation of our Common Schools, and rising through the successive stages of High School, Collegiate