

## Current Topics and Events.

### UNIVERSITY FEDERATION.

This great question was the subject of one of the most important and masterly debates in the General Conference which ever took place in any deliberative assembly in Canada. Intense convictions were held on opposite sides by ardent friends of Victoria University and of higher education. With great ability and cogency and eloquence, and, with scarce an exception, with good temper and moderation of language, these views were set forth. Especial commendation must be given to the speeches of Drs. Sutherland, Dewart, Nelles, and Burwash, and of Judge Dean, J. Mills, and J. J. Maclaren, the leaders in the debate. We never listened to more vigorous arguments or more skilful word-fencing. Intense interest was felt in the subject, not only by the members of the Methodist Church, but by the general public. Day after day the galleries were filled by deeply interested auditors who on the last night of the debate remained till midnight to learn the final decision. The papers, both of Toronto and other cities, gave extended reports of the speeches, and the present writer was requested by James Gordon Bennett, of the *New York Herald*, to furnish a daily dispatch for that paper. Among the auditors of the debate were members of the Government—Dominion and Provincial—heads of colleges, and many distinguished educationists.

And small wonder that this intense interest was felt. The educational policy of Methodism for the future was in the scales. We believe that the decision reached was a wise and just and patriotic one; that a great impetus will be given to the cause of higher education in our Church and in the entire country, and that fountains of liberality will be opened which would otherwise have re-

mained sealed. Of this the munificent offers of Messrs. Macdonald, Cox, Gooderham, and Sanford are proof. We believe that just such a crisis was needed to rouse the Church from its apathy on this educational question, and to kindle that enthusiasm which alone can make the federation movement an assured success.

The duty of the hour is for every one—whether opposed to federation or in favour of it—now that the decision has been made, to join hands heartily and work out the problem before us. We believe that upon every institution and enterprise of the age—especially upon our institutions of higher education—should be written "Holiness to the Lord." We trust the Methodist Church will unite with the other religious denominations of this land, and in no narrow or sectarian sense, but in the broad free spirit of our common Christianity, strive to so surround the highest seat of learning in the land with all the influences of faith and hope and prayer and consecration and high endeavour as shall make it like Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, and other great seats of learning—a centre of light and power and moral energy for the glory of God and the uplifting of man.

### THE CONFERENCE ELECTIONS.

It must be very gratifying to those who have had charge of the important connexional interests represented by the General Conference Officers, to find that their administration of the departments severally allotted to them has so far commanded the continued confidence of the General Conference, and we believe of the entire Church, as to lead, almost without exception, to their re-election to those responsible positions. Although strong reasons, chiefly on the ground of economy, were urged for reducing the number