

## EDITORIAL.

## UNIVERSITY CONFEDERATION.

THE question of the federation of the Colleges of the Province, long hinted at and undoubtedly desirable, has during the past few months made notable progress. At recent gatherings of the representatives of the colleges interested in the scheme, most of the objections raised against federation were cleared out of the way. Whatever weight was attachable to these objections, the objectors themselves seemed to have vanished in presence of the strong and widely diffused feeling in favour of federation, and the general conviction that the step proposed to be taken was in the right direction. For a time, it was charged, that those who were moving in the matter had no definite plan in view beyond the rather hazy and sentimental idea of reproducing in Toronto the state of things that obtained in the great educational centres of Oxford and Cambridge. If this were ever true, the nebulous period soon passed away, and the well shapen, fully matured plan began to appear with its adjunct of cogent argument and weighty illustration of the benefits likely to accrue from putting the scheme into practical effect. That sentiment was, and probably still is, largely mixed up with the matter, need not be denied. As a mere matter of sentiment it is of no little moment that a cluster of colleges, each doing its own special educational work, and using in common the examinational system and degree-granting machinery of a great central university should be concentrated in the Provincial Capital. Here is the great intellectual centre of the Province, and here, if anywhere

within the region, are the conditions most favourable for obtaining the fullest advantages of university education. The impetus the scheme will give to the Provincial University, together with the increased prestige, is a matter not for jealousy but for mutual gratification, for, if all come into the scheme, all must derive advantages from the increased efficiency of the central institution; share in the benefits of the higher standard of examinations; and each institution receive a portion of the lustre that must fall upon its alumni who are distinguished by the degrees conferred by the great Provincial University. The setting apart of the Central Institution for its special functions of conducting examinations and granting degrees, must have no indifferent effect in raising the general standard of educational work done by the colleges that come into the university scheme. This of itself is no mean gain; and the general gain will be added to in the increased equipment of the Arts' Course in the proposed arrangement of professional work, and by what is sure to follow—a general invigorating and quickening of the educational pulse throughout all the Federating Colleges. The result of the scheme, moreover, must ensure the growth of an academic system more economical and efficient than is possible under the present plan of isolation. It will effect much if it secures this, and succeeds in enlisting a greater degree of lay interest and pride in the work of higher education. What University College has particularly suffered from is lack of popular interest in its aims and work. The federation scheme will rouse the public from its supineness, and edu-