

## IS THE UNIVERSITY QUESTION TO BE REOPENED ?

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IN view of communications which have appeared in the daily press recently, and of the peculiar character of a bill of which notice has been given at Ottawa, it would appear that a serious attempt is to be made to reopen the entire university question for the Province of Ontario. Under these circumstances it may be well for the public to review the history of this subject, and to ask themselves whether they are prepared to reverse the forward movement of the past thirty-five years, and begin once more from the position of the last generation, a series of experiments upon our university policy. The university question has now been before the country for seventy-six years, and in that time has passed through five successive stages of evolution.

### EARLY UNIVERSITY HISTORY.

The first period, extending from 1827 to 1840, was one of strenuous contest against a charter which placed the Provincial endowment in the hands of a single denomination. During this period we had no university.

The next period, from 1841 to 1850, saw the inauguration of four colleges with university powers and arts curriculum, one enjoying the Provincial endowment and the other three receiving legislative grants in aid. During this period sixty-three students proceeded to the degree of B.A. in these colleges.

The next period opened with the severance of the provincial endowment and charter from all denominational control, and the consequent founding of a new denominational college. The four denominational colleges were still granted aid from public funds; and the collegiate system of instruction prevailed in all five colleges throughout the entire period of eighteen years.

The fourth period began with the withdrawal of all legislative assistance from denominational colleges, thus severing the provincial system of education from all church institutions, except at the single point of the Roman Catholic separate schools.