

should be taken by the Government ; and we can seldom expect a party Government, or any section of a party Legislature, to take the initiative in a question upon which no votes depend. Colonel WILLIAMS, in the late Assembly, illustrated the usefulness of an independent member by taking the matter up and pressing the Government to appoint a Commission of Inquiry. It was not surprising that, at a late period of the session, and on the eve of the elections, the Prime Minister declined to embark in an undertaking serious in itself, and by which some electoral hornets' nest might possibly have been stirred. But we hope the postponement was not a final refusal. This is the time for action, since, on the one hand, there appears to be a willingness on the part of some, at all events, of the local Universities, to entertain the proposal of consolidation ; while, on the other hand, the local system is rapidly striking roots which it will soon become very difficult to pluck up. There is no reason, so far as we know, why a Commission of Inquiry should not be appointed without delay, and be ready to report by the next meeting of the Legislature. When a question which has been the subject of Parliamentary discussion is consigned to a Commission, as in the case of the Pacific Railway Inquiry, constitutional principle requires that the opportunity should be afforded to Parliament of pronouncing an opinion on the measure. But a Commission of Inquiry merely for the information of the Government, or to prepare material for a bill, may, we conceive, be properly issued at any time. Whatever course may be deemed best, it is to be hoped that no mere indifference or inertness will be allowed to interfere with the prompt and judicious treatment of a question which concerns not only the interests of learning and science, but those of the country at large. Provincial patriotism may add its spur to more general motives ; for if University consolidation does not take place now at Toronto, it will take place hereafter at Montreal.