

made by England, Germany and Russia, and demonstrations of force in treaty ports threatened, but redress is slow in coming. Russia has withdrawn from concerted action with other powers, as the shortest way to obtain influence in China, but England and Germany continue to insist on satisfaction being made for the injury which their subjects have suffered.

Germany sets her face against the Russian loan, and it is now certain that no part of it will be raised there. France, it is now believed, will have to be depended upon to subscribe the whole amount, and it is probable that she will make no difficulty about doing so.

#### THE INVESTIGATIONS AT OTTAWA.

During the investigation into charges of corruption at Ottawa, there was one halt in the process for which the public had not been prepared. The charges against Mr. Haggart were ruled out, at the instance of Sir John Thompson, on several grounds, but principally on account of their staleness. There had been an investigation before, by a commission, and the charges were not proved. But there had been none by Parliament. The doctrine was proclaimed that a member of the present Parliament cannot be tried for an offence against a previous Parliament, and the fact was insisted upon that the charge involved a statutory offence for which the alleged offender could be proceeded against in the courts. The precedents of Mr. Vail and Mr. Anglin, who profited by Government contracts while members of the House, were not quite in point. In these cases, the charges were proved, and after proof the attainted members were re-elected. Even if they had been expelled, they would not by that fact alone have become incapable of re-election. There can be no doubt that an expulsion does not incapacitate for re-election, and the attempt to deduce from it such a consequence was in the case of Lyon Mackenzie declared by the British Government to be unconstitutional. Nothing short of an Act of Parliament can create disability for re-election; and though this creation has been made as a penalty for certain offences against the election law, it does not cover the offence alleged in this instance. If Sir John Thompson intended to assume that Mr. Haggart, if proved guilty of the charge, could not be expelled the House or punished by it in any way, the fact may be admitted; but does it therefore follow that no enquiry ought to take place? Must Parliament never enquire where it has not power to punish? Here, we think, is the weak point in the defence.

It is not quite certain that the Minister of Justice intended the refusal of enquiry to be final. He objected to the inconvenience of bringing such a charge just at the end of the session, and pointed out that as it had been kept back twelve years, it was strange if it could not now wait a necessary five months longer. This seems to point to the possibility of enquiry being permitted on the reassembling of Parliament,

though the supposition is not sustained by other parts of the speech. The other points taken would seem to imply that though Parliament would have no power to inflict a penalty, if the charges were proved, redress would not be denied by the courts on which the Independence of Parliament Act throws a special duty. But who is to set the law in motion? If Mr. Haggart had any share in Section B contract, it was as a silent purchaser with Mr. McLaren, who may have been the only person who was cognizant of the fact, whether such partnership existed or not, and he has again denied on oath that Mr. Haggart was a partner or that he derived any profit from the contract. In this state of matters who will undertake the prosecution of the case, supposing it to be possible to bring a suit at this late day? On the morrow of refusal of enquiry, Mr. Haggart published this affidavit of denial. It would have been preferable if this witness had appeared before the committee, when he could have been cross-examined. The Opposition offered several other witnesses, but whether any of them would have personal knowledge of the facts, is a question. It would have been better if they had been heard, since their not being brought forward may leave a doubt in some minds as to what it would have been possible to prove.

Sir John Thompson takes the ground that there must be some limit to the time when charges against public men can be admitted. In the bill in which he strikes at corrupt practices, time is made an element, so that he is here at least consistent. If you are to go back twelve years, why not twenty? The question would arise at what point of time the limit was to be drawn. Each party would give different answers, and be desirous to make a restriction that would protect itself, and injure the enemy as much as possible.

It is a pity that anything should occur to create the impression that the investigation may leave something undisclosed which ought to be brought to light. There would have been fair ground for postponing an investigation into the Haggart charges till next session, and the person principally interested might be expected to be ready to insist that it should then go on. Sir John Thompson created the impression that he does not intend to countenance corruption in any quarter; and then, when every one is giving him credit for the stand he has taken, he surprises many and grieves others by coming to a halt when a colleague is under accusation. The charge may be false, as that against Governor Schultz was proved to be; but until there is an investigation the public will not be satisfied that there is no truth in it. All ground for doubt ought to be removed, and it is clearly the interest no less than the duty of the leader of the Government to see that this is done, without unnecessary delay, at the opening of the next session of Parliament.

—Some of the leading merchants of America, N. S., have private telegraph wires in their offices. They are put in by the C. P. R. Co., and besides being a convenience to the patrons in the way of a local telegraph service, it brings more business to the telegraph company. The patrons operate the keys themselves.

#### LEATHER AND SHOES.

If the good crops of the present autumn do not cause a spasm of over-confidence and excessive trading, there is a chance for satisfactory and profitable trade in leather and shoes. Our tanners have been buying hides with reasonable care and self-restraint, and there is now a prospect of their getting hides cheaper. This is true of the United States also, for there hides are plentiful and getting more so. The receipts of cattle this month at Chicago show a great increase. On one day last week 27,000 were driven into the stock yard pens. The *Shoe and Leather Reporter* reminds its readers that hides are still dearer proportionately than leather, and that is reason enough for fighting shy of them. There is no sense in such an unnatural and illogical disparity. "It is not in accordance with the law of supply and demand, and bodes no good to anybody in any branch of the trade. Values need to be equalized. The prices of every kind of raw material should be gauged by the rates the manufactured article will command. According to that standard, there should be a further decline in the price of hides, or an advance in prices of product."

The shoe and leather situation is still marked by some features that all thinking men deplore, and that a few make valiant effort to cure. It is as true here as it is in the United States, that there has been such eager bidding for trade of late years that the buyers in all lines, through being coaxed and coddled continually, have got spoiled. They not only want the best end of the bargain, but everything there is in the way of a bargain. But producers now and then make a stand for their rights. The latest and most determined defensive undertaking on the part of American producers has been that of shortening credits, and as our contemporary says, the common sense of the country is with them in that matter. "Long credits are bad for debtors, as well as for creditors—worse, in fact, when their relative circumstances are considered, for the creditor can generally afford to lose, and the debtors are too often led to ruin by the ease with which they can extend their liabilities."

One Canadian leather dealer tells us that he has sold much less leather in September this year than last, but he adds, "if they do buy from hand to mouth, they pay for what they get." There is still too much leather produced in Canada to expect continuous firmness in prices. While sole leather tanners have an outlet for their surplus stocks in exports to Britain, it may fairly be questioned whether our black leather tanners are making any money. The price of hides has hardly yet come down to its level, if we compare Chicago prices.

The Boston Boot and Shoe Club has begun an agitation to do away with dating goods forward, a practice that has prevailed long enough and done harm enough in Canada. The Club is now in communication with manufacturers on the subject and has requested their opinions as to the steps to be taken. The procedure of dating ahead is thus given by an exchange: "If