



A DISGRACEFUL SEQUEL.

THE sequel to the bringing down of Mr. Ferguson's report is hardly less interesting as a side light on Tory methods and tactics than the report itself. No sooner had Mr. Ferguson's report been tabled than an effort was made by the Conservative press to have it appear that a scandal had been unearthed which reflected upon the Laurier Administration. The ink was scarcely dry before the real scandal was shown to be that in its effort to dispense patronage to party followers, the Government had appointed Mr. G. Howard Ferguson as a Commissioner to conduct this inquiry at a time when as a member of the Ontario Legislature, it was against the law for him to accept remuneration for

services of the kind from the Federal Government. By accepting this position and drawing payment for his services, Mr. Ferguson according to the Ontario Statute was disqualified from longer holding his seat as a member of the Legislature.

To permit Mr. Ferguson to draw money out of the Federal Treasury and to save the public disgrace of his enforced retirement as a member, a fresh scandal was enacted in the Ontario Legislature. On Tuesday, the 17th of March, Hon. W. J. Hanna, to rescue Mr. Ferguson from his liability to fine and forfeiture of his seat brought in a special Bill to amend the Ontario Act containing the disqualifying clause, and by the assistance of partisan rulings by the Speaker, and the force of the Tory majority in the Legislature, jammed this Bill in all its stages through the Legislature between the time of meeting on Tuesday and half past four o'clock on the following Wednesday morning. All regard for Parliamentary procedure and tradition was forced to one side by processes similar to those adopted by the Tory party at Ottawa at the time of the enactment of the closure. The whole procedure was as arbitrary and contrary to Parliamentary rules as were the parent proceedings in the Federal House a year ago.

WHITE PHOSPHORUS MATCHES.

THE Minister of Labour, the Hon. T. W. Crothers, is taking much credit to himself in that after being in office for over two and a half years, he has at last introduced one measure in the interests of labour. The Bill to prohibit the manufacture, importation and sale of matches made with white phosphorus was introduced in the House of Commons on March 11th and passed its third reading on the 17th.

In introducing the Bill the Minister made a long speech in support of the proposed legislation and but for a question asked by the Hon. Charles Murphy after it was concluded, the public might have gathered the impression that the measure was some brilliant inspiration of the new Administration. No reference was made by the Minister to any similar measure ever having been previously introduced in Parliament or to any previous discussion of the subject.

Mr. Murphy's question, however, compelled a disclosure. It was short and to the point.

"Does this Bill," asked Mr. Murphy, "follow the Bill introduced in the House in 1911?"

Much to his discomfort the Minister was obliged to reply: "It is substantially the same."

The Minister's admission is borne out by the fact that the Bill which Mr. Crothers introduced is, with the exception of a single clause, the identical Bill introduced in 1911 by Hon. Mackenzie King, while Minister of Labour in the Laurier Government. Clause by clause, with this single exception, the Bills are the same. Moreover, virtually the whole of the speech of the Minister of Labour as reported in Hansard for March 11th, 1914, is taken from the speech of his predecessor in office as delivered in Parliament on January, 1911, though Mr. Crothers did not make so much as an allusion to the remarks of his predecessor in originally introducing the legislation.