

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. (1) The three persons hereinafter mentioned, namely, and

are hereby appointed commissioners for the purposes of this Act, and are in this Act referred to as the commissioners.

(2) The commissioners shall inquire into and report upon the charges and allegations made against certain members of Parliament and other persons in the course of the proceedings in an action entitled *O'Donnell v. Walter and another*.

2. (1) The commissioners shall, for the purposes of the inquiry under this Act, have all such powers, rights, and privileges as are vested in Her Majesty's High Court of Justice, or in any judge thereof, on the occasion of any action, including all powers, rights, and privileges in respect of the following matters:—

- (i.) the enforcing the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath, affirmation, or otherwise; and
- (ii.) the compelling the production of documents; and
- (iii.) the punishing persons guilty of contempt; and
- (iv.) the issue of a commission or request to examine witnesses abroad;

and a summons signed by one or more of the commissioners may be substituted for, and shall be equivalent to, any formal process capable of being issued in any action for enforcing the attendance of witnesses or compelling the production of documents.

(2) A warrant of committal to prison issued for the purpose of enforcing the powers conferred by this section shall be signed by one or more of the commissioners, and shall specify the prison to which the offender is to be committed.

3. The persons implicated in the said charges and allegations, the parties to the said action, and any person authorised by the commissioners, may appear at the inquiry, and any person so appearing may be represented by counsel or solicitor.

4. Every person who, on examination on oath or affirmation under this Act, wilfully gives false evidence, shall be liable to the penalties for perjury.

5. Any person examined as a witness under this Act may be cross-examined on behalf of any other person appearing before the commissioners. A witness examined under this Act shall not be excused from answering any question put to him on the ground of any privilege or on the ground that the answer thereto may criminate or tend to criminate himself: Provided that no evidence taken under this Act shall be admissible against any person in any civil or criminal proceeding, except in the case of a witness accused of having given false evidence in an inquiry under this Act.

6. (1) Every person examined as a witness under this Act who, in the opinion of the commissioners, makes a full and true disclosure touching all the matters in respect of which he is examined, shall be entitled to receive a certificate signed by the commissioners, stating that the witness has, on his examination, made a full and true disclosure as aforesaid.

(2) If any civil or criminal proceeding is at any time thereafter instituted against any such witness in respect of any matter touching which he has been so examined, the Court having cognisance of the case shall, on proof of the certificate, stay the proceeding, and may in its discretion award to the witness such costs as he may be put to in or by reason of the proceeding.

7. This Act may be cited as the Special Commission Act, 1888.

BARRISTERS ADVISING DIRECT.

The following is the correspondence referred to in our last issue:—

Dear Mr. Attorney-General,—As a member of the bar, I appeal to you as its titular head for a definite opinion as to the rule of etiquette which regulates the intercourse of the profession with the general public.

May a barrister advise and otherwise act for the outside client, and receive a fee direct, without the intervention of a solicitor? To