

## CHAPTER 6.

An Act for facilitating the Proceedings of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works. [30th April 1888.]

WHEREAS a Commission has been issued by Her Majesty,

whereby Farrer, Baron Herschell, Frederick Albert Bosanquet, Esquire, one of Her Majesty's Counsel learned in the law, and Henry Riversdale Grenfell, Esquire, (herein-after referred to as the Commissioners), have been authorised and directed to inquire into and report upon the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and the irregularities which are alleged to have taken place in connexion therewith :

And whereas powers for the effectual conducting of this inquiry cannot be conferred without the authority of Parliament :

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 Commissioners shall 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, in respect of the following matters :—

Powers of Commissioners.

- (i) the enforcing the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath, affirmation, or otherwise :
- (ii) the compelling the production of documents ; and
- (iii) the punishing persons guilty of contempt ;

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, and shall not authorise the imprisonment of an offender for a period exceeding three months.

2. Every person who on examination on oath or affirmation before the Commissioners wilfully gives false evidence shall be liable to the penalties for perjury.

Penalty for false swearing.

3. The Metropolitan Board of Works, and any persons who may be so authorised by the Commissioners, may appear before the Commissioners by counsel or solicitor.

Power to appear by counsel.

4.—(1.) Every person examined as a witness in an inquiry before the Commissioners 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. Indemnity to witnesses.

(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 cognizance of the case shall, on proof of the certificate, stay the proceeding, and may in their discretion award to the witness such costs as he may be put to in or by reason of the proceeding.

(3.) 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 before the Commissioners, or any of them.

5. This Act may be cited as the Metropolitan Board (Commission) Act, 1888. Short title.