

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 5 AUGUST 1869

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 5 August, 1869.

Explanation.—Hawkers and Pedlars Act Amendment Bill.

EXPLANATION.

The Hon. R. PRING rose to move the adjournment of the House; and, in doing so, stated that he wished to contradict a statement which had been made by an honorable member of that House, which he could not allow to pass unnoticed. He was sorry that honorable member was not in his place, but he had not the least intention of making any personal attack upon him. He merely wanted to place himself right. It was not the first time the honorable member for Maranoa had made charges—most unfounded charges—against honorable members; and, if he was not mistaken, he had had on one occasion to apologise to the honorable member, Mr. Sandeman, for so doing. The honorable member was reported to have said that he (Mr. Pring) was in the habit of going north with a commission from the Crown in his pocket, and questioned whether, as he received a fee from the Crown, he was entitled to a seat in that House. Now, the only inference which could be drawn from those remarks was that, as he was paid by the Crown, the Government received something in return. To relieve the honorable member's mind, he would state that he had travelled on circuit, not with a commission in his pocket, as that would be an absurd thing to do, but under a commission to act in certain cases. He would also inform the honorable member that he expected to do so again, shortly, and should certainly not refrain on account of anything which had been said by the honorable member. He might state, for the information of the honorable member, that he was one of Her Majesty's counsel, and that, as such, the Government could command his services any day in furtherance of the ends of justice. If the Crown required them, he was bound to give them, whether he received any pecuniary benefit or not. Neither did the receiving that pecuniary benefit affect his position as a member of that House.

Mr. WALSH thought the explanation which had just been made by the honorable member for the Burnett was one of very grave importance. He considered that the honorable member should have given notice of motion before he introduced it, as it was one affecting the constitution of that House.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that the matter had been settled long ago, not only in this colony, but also elsewhere: that any honorable member, being counsel to Her Majesty, was at liberty to act for the Crown without endangering his seat in Parliament. He should have answered the honorable member for Maranoa on the previous evening, had he thought it necessary to do so; but the honorable member was in the habit, sometimes, of making remarks in the heat of

debate somewhat recklessly, which, on reflection, he was sure the honorable gentleman was sorry for.

The Hon. R. PRING said he had not brought forward the question as a constitutional question. He would have done so were there something tangible. He merely spoke of himself—that, as one of Her Majesty's counsel, he was, although a member of that House, bound to give Her his services whenever they were required.

Mr. WALSH trusted that the present conversational explanation would not be considered as an assent, on the part of that House, to the Crown giving employment to members of it. He believed the question would be brought forward again in a more serious form.

The motion for adjournment was then withdrawn.

HAWKERS AND PEDLARS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. GROOM, in rising to move the second reading of this Bill, said that it would be in the recollection of honorable members that he had introduced a similar measure in a former session, but that it had been thrown out in another place. The object of the Bill was to relieve a class of industrious and hard working men, who were now suffering great injustice. He had been shown by the honorable the Attorney-General, that day, a letter from a lawker at Nanango, who stated that, owing to there not being a bench of magistrates there, he was detained, at great loss to himself, as his merchants' bills were becoming due, and was afraid to move, as his dray and goods would be seized, he not having a license. The object of the measure he now introduced was to give justices of the peace, or police magistrates, power to grant hawkers licenses, at any time, for all parts of the colony. He was sure that hawkers would gladly pay a larger sum than they did at present if the annoyance and inconvenience to which they were now subjected was removed. He now moved that the Bill be read a second time.

The motion was put and carried, and the Bill was read a second time.