

DIARY FOR MARCH.

- 1. Thurs. *St. David.*
- 4. SUN... *3rd Sunday in Lent.*
- 5. Mon... Recorder's Court sits. Last day for notice of [trial for County Courts.]
- 11. SUN... *4th Sunday in Lent.*
- 12. Mon... Last day for service for York and Peel.
- 13. Tues... Qr. Sessions and Co. Court Sittings in each Co.
- 15. Thurs. Sittings: Court of Error and Appeal.
- 17. Satur. *St. Patrick.*
- 18. SUN... *5th Sunday in Lent.*
- 22. Thurs. Declare for York and Peel.
- 25. SUN... *6th Sunday in Lent. Lady Day. Annun. V. M.*
- 30. Friday *Good Friday.*
- 31. Satur. Last day for notice of trial for York and Peel.

permit of the want of some punishment to prevent it.

By the other bill referred to, it is proposed to restrict capital punishment to "murder properly so termed," and this capital punishment is to be removed from public gaze. The report of the Commission on capital punishment was, we think, eminently unsatisfactory, nor did it, whatever conclusion we may have arrived at from other sources, convince us that any change such as is proposed is required. Any measure which tends to the prevention of crime as distinguished from its punishment is what every right-thinking man desires, and we hope that the proposed change may be a move in the right direction. If it prove so we should lose no time in following the lead, even if we do not ourselves try some other road with the same destination in view.

The Local Courts'
AND
MUNICIPAL GAZETTE.

MARCH, 1866.

LAW REFORMS IN ENGLAND.

Two measures of law reform are promised in the Queen's speech; one a bill to consolidate and amend the bankruptcy laws, the other a bill founded on the report of the royal commission on the subject of capital punishment.

The first we understand will effect, if carried out, rather a sweeping change. It is said that bankruptcy in name will be abolished, as well as all Courts of Bankruptcy. Debtors and creditors will be left to settle their affairs between themselves according to the general law, provided that a debtor may make a general assignment for the benefit of his creditors, and if his estate pay 6s. 8d. in the pound, that is to operate as a discharge from his debts; but if it does not, his after acquired property shall be liable until the debt is extinguished by the Statute of Limitations. Now this, it seems to us, is very much like having no law at all on the subject of insolvency. Is this to be the end of the boasted bankruptcy laws of England? If this is an advisable measure, and we presume the Government know what is required by the country, we have gone quite far enough in the somewhat limited enactment of 1864. The proposed measure is said to make no provision for the punishment of fraud. There may be, and probably is, a somewhat higher tone of public feeling in England, but we very much question whether there is such an absence of fraud in mercantile transactions even there, as to

ESCAPE OF PRISONERS ON TECHNICAL GROUNDS.

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Some courts are occasionally very careful that prisoners shall not be tried unawares and very probably the prisoner in the following case was as much surprised at the result of it as we could be. Several boys were tried before the Police Court, Inverness, for theft. A woman who had purchased the stolen property attended the court as a witness, but was not examined, as the boys pleaded guilty. The Bailie who tried the case intimated publicly to the superintendent of police that the woman should be put upon trial for reset of theft. The superintendent thereon told the woman that she would be tried accordingly; but he allowed her at that time to go home, on her promising to attend the court when he should require her. Five days afterwards a police-officer called upon her, and stated that she was wanted by the superintendent, and she attended the court on that verbal intimation, and was tried and convicted. A suspension of the conviction was brought, because it was alleged that she had not received sufficient intimation that she was to be tried. The conviction was quashed on the ground that verbal citation was irregular, and that she should have been apprehended and brought to court in terms of a warrant by the Bailie. Lord Deas dissented from the judgment, holding that the woman had received sufficient previous intimation that she was to be tried;