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DIARY FOR APRIL.

3. Fri.....*Good Friday*. Prince Leopold born, 1853.
4. Sat.....Canada discovered, 1499.
5. Sun.....*Easter*.
6. Mon.....*Easter Monday*. Non-jury sittings of County Court (except York). County Court and Surrogate Court Terms commence.
11. Sat.....County Court and Surrogate Court Terms end.
12. Sun.....*1st Sunday after Easter*.
13. Mon.....Princess Beatrice born, 1857.

TORONTO, APRIL 1, 1885.

THE subject of prisoners giving evidence on their own behalf has again come to the front. It has been a favourite subject for theorists to discuss. But the discussion has not brought out any necessity for the change. There are, of course, plausible arguments in its favour, but most cogent and practical ones against it. At all events, it is eminently one of those matters which should not be decided without much more serious and lengthened attention than it has yet received in this country. It might be different if there were any evident or persistent demand for the change; but there is no such demand. If a prisoner were to refuse to testify it would be accepted as an evidence of guilt, although there might often be circumstances which would induce an innocent man to refrain from explanations. The timid, nervous, but innocent, prisoner often would equally ensure his condemnation by refraining to give evidence, or by giving it in such a way, as, by his hesitation or nervous self-contradiction, to induce a belief in his guilt, whilst the hardened and guilty scoundrel, who could cleverly invent and boldly stick to a lie, would often escape. "Guilty," or "not guilty" would become a question of temperament or experience in crime. But

more than all, the crime of perjury would flourish as it has never flourished before. It has largely increased since litigants have given evidence on their own behalf. How much more when a man's liberty or even his life would depend upon it. Let us hasten slowly in this matter, even if it is desirable to go in that direction at all.

WE find in a recent letter to *The Times* a suggestion which seems a most admirable one. The writer, who dates his letter at Perth, Western Australia, says:—

Now that the subject of Imperial Federation is occupying the attention of the powers that be will you kindly allow me space for a suggestion?

The want of a system of reciprocal legal procedure between the mother country and the colonies, as well as between the colonies themselves, has been a long-felt evil, and I venture to think that with the increasing commercial relations the time has now arrived, and the opportunity too, when some steps should be taken to remedy the evil. A debtor, who now betakes himself to another colony with a letter of credit on a bank there, has only to withdraw his balance from his local bank and remain where he is, and his creditors find themselves foiled. The evil is, however, not confined to cases of contract, but abounds in cases of tort, where the wrongdoer finds an easy escape from the consequences of his acts, provided they are not criminal, by taking a ticket for 'the other side.'

There is, of course, the remedy of a *ne exeat*, and the alternative of beginning an action in the courts of the country where the defendant is to be found; but they are sadly deficient remedies, and often prove worse than the disease.

A short clause in the Federation Enabling Bill, authorizing an execution in the mother country, or in any colony, of any legal process issued out of any of the Superior Courts of any other colony, and *vice versa*, would, I have no doubt, prove beneficial to all concerned.

It seems a pity that such a suggestion as this should be forgotten. Why should