

by consent of parties, authority to hear, receive and examine evidence; but that every person so offered may and shall be admitted to give evidence, notwithstanding that such person may or shall have an interest in the matter in question, or in the event of the trial of any issue, matter, question, or inquiry, or of the suit, action or proceeding in which he is offering as a witness, and notwithstanding that such person offered as a witness may have been previously convicted of any crime or offence; but no person who has been convicted of the crime of perjury shall be admitted to testify in any case or proceeding whatever, and the parties litigant, and all persons in whose behalf, any suit, action or other proceeding may be brought or defended, themselves, and their wives and husbands shall be competent and compellable to give evidence in the same manner as other witnesses, except as hereinafter excepted.

2. When an original party to a contract or a cause of action is dead, or shown to be lunatic or insane, or when an executor or administrator is a party to the suit, action or other proceeding, the other party may be called as a witness by his opponent, but shall not be permitted to testify on his own offer or upon the call of his co-plaintiff or co-defendant otherwise than now by law allowed, unless a nominal party merely.

3. No person who, in any criminal proceeding, is charged with the commission of an indictable offence, or any offence punishable on summary conviction, shall be competent or compellable to give evidence for or against himself, nor shall any person be compellable to answer any question tending to criminate himself, nor, in any criminal proceeding, shall any husband be competent or compellable to give evidence for or against his wife, nor shall any wife be competent or compellable to give evidence for or against her husband, except as now allowed by law, nor in any case, civil or criminal, shall any husband be competent or compellable to disclose any com-