

FEMALE ATTORNEYS—EXPERT TESTIMONY.

gether with a democratic candidate for the presidency."

Female aspirants for the Black Robe meet with far less encouragement in the region of Temple Bar, than they have received in America.

The *Solicitors' Journal* says :

"Almost simultaneously with the request by a young lady to be examined at the preliminary examination for solicitors, an application in writing from another lady has been received at one of the Inns of Court with reference to the preliminaries for call to the bar. The applicant has been informed that, under the regulations of the Inns of Court, ladies are not allowed to enter as students. With regard to the young lady candidate for the solicitors' examination, we are informed on authority that she has no intention whatever of presenting herself for examination in February next, in face of the reply of the Council of the Incorporated Law Society. That ungallant body, according to our correspondent, have definitely said that they do not feel themselves at liberty to accept the notice of any woman."

Perhaps, however, we need not exclaim *proh pudor!* but should rather rejoice that the authorities in the mother-country, having convictions, have the firmness to abide by them. As conveyancers, or as compilers of text-books, there may be no reason why some women should not succeed as well as some men: but to refuse to allow them to embark upon the rough and troubled sea of actual legal practice, is, as it appears to us, being cruel only to be kind.

EXPERT TESTIMONY.

The value of expert testimony appears to be the subject of a good deal of discussion just now, and it does not require a prophet to anticipate, before long, the introduction of new regulations in regard to it. In October last, the correspond-

ent of the *Times* at Naples wrote as follows :—

"In several recent letters I have noted it as a flagrant defect in the administration of justice in Italy that the plea of '*impulso irresistibile*' is so often urged in extenuation of crime—so often, indeed, that it has awakened the attention of the press and of some of our most distinguished medical men. Professor Tomassi, whose name is well known throughout Europe, announced at an early meeting of the congress of medical men assembled in this city that he would bring the subject forward for their consideration, and this he did at the closing meeting. He had observed, he said, in criminal cases, the introduction of a practice of late, which is *inqualificabile* in the presence of justice, of science, and of common sense, and that is the selection of experts for the defence by the advocate, and experts for the accusation by the Attorney-General. Whether this distinction was sanctioned by the law, or had crept in from some abuse, he was not aware, but undoubtedly it was an enormity which ought to be abolished. The expert for the defence having been selected by the advocate, is almost under an obligation to find excuses for the prisoner at the bar, while the expert for the accusation, having been selected by the Attorney-General, is disposed to support the views of the legal authorities. Of what value, then, can be the addresses of men which are, or appear to be, obligatory? It could not be denied that sometimes conscientious experts, and possessing much medical learning, may act differently, but such cases are rare; in general, experts follow the lead of the advocates in excusing or accusing the prisoner. This cannot continue; it is contrary to justice, to the dignity of medicine and of the magistrate. Certain statements which are made by advocates, especially those for the defence, are perfectly incredible. As remedies for this state of things, the Professor proposed, first, that in every province a body of experts should be instituted who had made legal medicine their special study, and who had undergone a corresponding examination, from whom, when there was any necessity, a selection should be made.