

of the whole, the proportion of female students in the other classes is more than one in ten. Should any envious male be ungallant enough to suspect that other causes, such as stiff examinations, may have had to do with the smaller proportion of the gentler sex in the higher years of the course, we doubt if the full statistics will bear out the inference. Certainly the ladies whose names appear in the class lists have borne off their full share of the Academic honours.

IN discussing the cause of the Southampton surprise of a few weeks since, some of the English papers bring pretty good evidence to show that those causes were largely local, not to say, mercenary. The prospects of certain material advantages which were to accrue from the election of the successful candidate was wielded most effectively as an argument in his favour. In pointing out the fact some of the journals in question manifest a degree of surprise and disgust which seem strange and almost amusing to Canadians. Is it, indeed, the rule that electors in England vote with chief reference to great political and national issues, and that questions of local advantages have little or nothing to do with the result? What would our trans-oceanic contemporaries think of a state of affairs under which the results in a large percentage of all the constituencies were determined notoriously by just such sectional and objectionable "influences." Such a state of affairs they would find prevailing almost openly and confessedly in Canada. A striking instance is afforded by an election just now in progress. In the county of Nicolet there are vacancies in both the Dominion and the local House, and an arrangement has, it is credibly stated, been reached by the electors in accordance with which a conservative shall be returned unopposed to the Dominion Legislature and a Liberal to the local. As a result these far-sighted electors will have backed the winner in each case. They will have a friend at each of the courts, antagonistic as those courts are to each other politically. The fact throws a curious gleam not only on the politics of many Canadian electors, but on the depth of the fundamental principles which divide and distinguish Canadian political parties.

THE Democratic Convention at St. Louis has amply fulfilled the expectations of those who so confidently predicted the endorsement of President Cleveland and his tariff-reform platform. Second only to the enthusiasm which led to Mr. Cleveland's re-nomination without a dissenting voice, was that aroused by the nomination of Mr. Thurman as the convention's candidate for Vice-President. President Cleveland's history and record are now too well known to need repetition or comment. Mr. Thurman has been for some years out of public life, but he is widely known and respected as a man of excellent judgment and ability, and what is better, of unimpeachable integrity. His selection does great honour to the party and to Mr. Cleveland. The Democratic party is certainly to be congratulated on the character of both its candidates. Nor is its platform, with tariff reform on the lines laid down in the President's message and the Mill's Bill, likely to be less popular. It is, of course, impossible to foresee what startling nominations and policy may be devised by the Republicans in their coming convention to checkmate their sanguine opponents, but it seems now as if any standard-bearer they may select must enter upon the contest as a leader of a forlorn hope.

THE ubiquitous and indefatigable reporter seems bound to win all along the line. He will soon be looking around for new worlds to conquer. Hitherto it was understood that there were certain elevated spheres within which his profane pencil and note book could not enter. Of these, one of the most unapproachable, next to the sacred precincts within which the majesty of the Sovereign is hedged around was that which protects the official dignity of the cabinet minister. Scarcely an United States' Secretary of State, much less a member of a Canadian Cabinet, and least of all a British Minister, was supposed accessible to the pertinacious asker of questions. And yet, it is now alleged, the British Minister has been the first to yield. Mr. Balfour, the Secretary for Ireland, has, if we may rely upon the asseverations of Mr. Blakely Hall, not only consented to be interviewed, but has actually taken the reporter into his confidence and unfolded to him his great schemes for the pacification of Ireland. It may be that the reporters have been so officious in foretelling that the coercion policy of the Government was about to be modified, that Mr. Balfour despaired of overtaking the rumour with an authoritative denial otherwise than through the same fleet agency which circulated it. But that Mr. Balfour should first confide to the representative of the New York *Sun* the outlines of his great policy of public works in Ireland staggers credulity. According to this interview, however, it appears that without withdrawing the sword from the right hand, the Government is about to

hold out to the people of Ireland the olive branch with the left. A great scheme of arterial drainage, involving the expenditure of very large sums of money is to be undertaken, as a means of relieving the prevalent distress. This is to be followed up from year to year. The scheme is of such magnitude and importance that it will be surprising if the faithful Commoners do not intimate that it should first have been communicated to them, as the holders of the purse strings. On the whole it will be safer to withhold comment until the statements have been confirmed by better authority.

RUSSIA has just given to the Christian world a new interpretation of the meaning of religious liberty. The Evangelical Alliance last Autumn embraced the opportunity afforded by the Czar's visit to Denmark to present a memorial setting forth instances of the persecution of Lutherans in the Baltic Provinces on account of their religious belief. The Czar seems to have handed the matter over to M. Pobedonoszeff, the Ober-Procureur of the Holy Synod of the Greek Church, and this official has now addressed to the President of the Central Swiss Committee of the Evangelical Alliance a lengthy letter explaining and defending the policy of the Russian Government. Liberty of worship is one thing it appears, liberty of speech another. The constant care of the Czar, says the Ober-Procureur, extends to all his subjects without distinction of race or religion, and his Majesty wishes to secure for them all the free exercise of religion; but this, he is at pains to make clear, does not include the right of proselytising. "Never," he declares, "will Russia grant them freedom of propagandism, never will she allow the Orthodox Church to be robbed of her children. She declares this in her laws, and appeals to the supreme justice of Him who alone rules the fates of empires. This position M. Pobedonoszeff goes on to vindicate, in a lengthy argument, which amounts to this: that it is the Greek Church which gives strength and stability to the Russian Empire, by sustaining and fostering national sentiment. This it is which has enabled Russia to fulfil her mission of holding the balance between the East and the West, and keeping the barbarous hordes and the Mohammedan hosts of Asia out of Europe. "What saved Russia was her national spirit, raised and nourished by the Orthodox Church . . . and her sacred duty is to keep from the Orthodox Church all that can menace her security." The predominating object in guarding the Church is thus political rather than religious.

THERE is, to say the least, nothing inherently improbable in the supposition that other members of the planetary system of which our earth forms a unit, may be, like it, abodes of intelligent life, and theatres of scientific and industrial activity. Nor will those who have kept track of the growth of the science of astronomy, and especially of the development of the marvellous powers of the telescope, be wholly incredulous as to the possibility of astronomers becoming one day able to discover unmistakable indications of the presence and operations of such intelligent agents in the planets nearest us. This, a European astronomer, M. Perrotin, by name, even now claims to have done in the case of the planet Mars. Those who are familiar with the maps of this planet as outlined by the star explorers, showing the surface divided into long, narrow bands, presumably alternate strips of sea and land, will at once realize that, as an English contemporary puts it, "a few great inter-oceanic canals would be of immense benefit to commerce," and so a great convenience to the merchants and travellers of Mars. According to Mr. Perrotin, straight transverse lines have of late begun to make their appearance, intersecting these parallel bands. These lines the astronomer, with scientific instinct, at once recognizes as canals in process of construction. It seems not a little curious, assuming that the sister planet has, like our own, been through long æons the abode of intelligent beings of some order capable of wielding pick and shovel, or whatever may do duty for those implements in another sphere, should have commenced these great engineering feats in the same generation—if they count by generations there—as ourselves. Can it be that the Mars folk are interested observers of what takes place on earth, and have taken a hint from the operations of M. de Lesseps in Suez and Panama? Seriously, however, we may be wise to hold our scepticism in check, and await with interest the observations of other astronomers, who will no doubt be eager to follow up and test the clue given by M. Perrotin.

WHILE the resources of British military science are being laid under contribution for no other purpose that one can discover than to put the nation in a position to resist a possible French invasion by sea, the brains of certain scientific Frenchmen are busy with a project which, if successful, will give their countrymen a "walk over" into Britain. Their ambition