

Their exertions are, however, to a certain degree, checked by the circumstance, that there is not sufficient time allowed previous to the marriage of the females to give that solidity to their knowledge which would ensure its permanency. They attempt too much for so short a space of time. Two or three years are usually the period during which the young women remain at the establishments, or colleges I may call them (for in reality they are female colleges.) In the prospectus of the Albany Female Academy, I find that the classes run through the following branches:—French, book-keeping, ancient history, ecclesiastical history, history of literature, composition, political economy, American constitution, law, natural theology, mental philosophy, geometry, trigonometry, algebra, natural philosophy, astronomy, chemistry, botany, mineralogy, geology, natural history, and technology, besides drawing, penmanship, &c. &c.

It is almost impossible for the mind to retain, for any length of time, such a variety of knowledge, forced into it before a female has arrived to the age of sixteen or seventeen, at which age, the study of these sciences, as is the case in England, should *commence* not *finish*. I have already mentioned that the examinations which I attended were highly creditable both to preceptors and pupils; but the duties of an American woman as I shall hereafter explain, soon find her other occupation, and the *ologies* are lost in the realities of life. Diplomas are given at most of these establishments, on the young ladies completing their course of studies. Indeed, it appears to be almost necessary that a young lady should produce this diploma as a certificate of being qualified to bring up young republicans. I observed to an American gentleman how youthful his wife appeared to be—"Yes," replied he, "I married her a month after she had *graduated*." The following are the terms of a diploma, which was given to a young lady at Cincinnati, and which she permitted me to copy:—

"In testimony of the zeal and industry with which Miss M—— T—— has prosecuted the prescribed course of studies in the Cincinnati Female Institution, and the honourable proficiency which she has attained in penmanship, arithmetic, English grammar, rhetoric, belles-lettres, composition, ancient and modern geography, ancient and modern history, chemistry, natural philosophy, astronomy, &c. &c. &c., of which she has given proofs by examination.

"And also as a mark of her amiable deportment, intellectual acquirements, and our affectionate regard, we have granted her this letter—the *highest honour* bestowed in this institution.

[Seal.] "Given under our hands at Cincinnati, this 19th day of
"July, Anno Domini 1837."

The ambition of the Americans to be a-head of other nations in every thing, produces, however, injurious effects, so far as the education of the women is concerned. The Americans will not "*leave well alone*," they must "*gild refined gold*," rather than not consider themselves in advance of other countries, particularly of England. They *alter* our language, and think that they have *improved* upon it; as in the same way they would raise the standard of morals higher than with us, and consequently fall much below us, appearances supplying the place of the reality. In these endeavours they sink into a sickly sentimentality, and, as I have observed before, attempts at refinement in language, really excite improper ideas. As a proof of the ridiculous excess to which this is occasionally carried, I shall insert an address which I observed in print; had