

College Argus.

VOL. V.

MIDDLETOWN, CONN., NOVEMBER 1, 1871.

No. 3.

A PROTEST AGAINST MIXED COLLEGES.

THE following written originally for the Springfield Union by a graduate of '63 is printed by permission.

DEAR UNION:—I quote the following from your issue of October 6th:

“While other colleges have been for years discussing the question of admitting ladies to the privileges of their halls, appointing committees to consider the propriety of such a radical change, and shirking the responsibility of saying one thing or the other, the Wesleyan University at Middletown, through President Cummings, announced last commencement that the Institution knew no sex. But all who asked admittance and proved themselves qualified, could enjoy its benefits. Since that time many young ladies in primary institutions, like Wilbraham, have changed their course of study, and are preparing for a regular college course—some from Wilbraham will be ready to enter next year, and we presume other similar schools will furnish more or less candidates; so other colleges, by waiting a few years longer, can decide the policy of the innovation without an experiment, if they please to wait.”

Now, Mr. Editor, allow me to say, at the commencement of this letter, that I am a woman's rights man—an advocate of woman suffrage, and in short, a new “departist” on all these questions. Thus what I may write cannot be charged to prejudice. I take it you simply state a matter of fact in the above quotation, without committing yourself either way. Therefore my objections to the measures inaugurated at Wesleyan and noticed in your paper, are addressed, through you to those who favor the opening of our male colleges to woman. I protest against this plan with all earnestness and in all sincerity. My earnestness in this protest is intensified by the memories of my college life, and by the attachments I formed for those noble fellows who fought together the four years' fight. The

sincerity of my protest is based upon an honest conviction that the measure will not advance the interest of either sex. I do not begrudge our young women the training of the preparatory course or the discipline of a four years college course. Nay, rather, as a teacher who delights in preparing young men for college, and who from his experience, is free to acknowledge as great ability in the girls as in the boys, I should be glad to welcome to my training classes in Virgil, Anabasis, Cicero as many young ladies as might choose to enter upon such a course. Moreover I should wish most heartily, as well as predict for them grand success both in the school and university. But, sir, must they go to Wesleyan, Yale or Harvard? Rather let Vassar and other female colleges raise their requirements for admission to the level of those of any college in the land, accept only those who are qualified, and then give them a thorough four years' course of study.

Yes—let the girls read Livy, Tacitus and Homer—success to them in Analytics, Trigonometry and Calculus. I wish them joy in reading Hebrew and studying Butler's Analogy. Let them inhabit cozy college rooms and fill them just as full of memories as we boys did. Let them board in a club, sing college songs, get “hazed,” (just a little,) “haze,” in turn, (equally little) and, in short, enjoy all the real life of college, but do not, I pray, send them where we studied and where our growing boys will soon want to go. Why, sir, if this measure prevails just picture me on one of my pilgrimages to the old college! Imagine how carefully and anxiously I should knock at the old door which still bears marks of my boyish knuckles, and then, imagine my feelings on finding my old room occupied by Miss Nellie Frizzle and her chum, Miss Jennie Strongmind! Why, Sir, do you suppose I should, under these circumstances, dare enter, even if invited? And, suppose I did muster courage enough to venture within, what satisfaction would there be? Could I make myself at home even if invited to?