

O WHY SHOULD A WOMAN NOT GET
A DEGREE?

ON FEMALE GRADUATION AND LADIES' LECTURES.

AIR—*Argyll is my name.*

YE fusty old fogies, Professors by name,
A deed you've been doing of sorrow and shame :
Though placed in your Chairs to spread knowledge
abroad,
Against half of mankind you would shut up the road :
College honours and lore from the Fair you withdraw,
By enforcing against them a strict Salic law :
Is it fear? is it envy? or what can it be?
And why should a woman not get a degree?

How ungrateful of You, whose best efforts depend
On the aid certain Ladies in secret may send :
CLIO *here* writes a lecture, URANIA *there*,
And more Muses than one prompt the Musical Chair.
CALLIOPE sheds o'er the Classics delight,
And the lawyers have meetings with THEMIS by night ;

Yet, if VENUS de' Medici came, even She
Could among her own Medici get no degree.

In Logic a woman may seldom excel;
But in Rhetoric always she bears off the bell.
Fair PORTIA will show woman's talent for law,
When in old Shylock's bond she could prove such a flaw.
She would blunder in Physic no worse than the rest,
She could leave things to Nature as well as the best;
She could feel at your wrist, she could finger your fee;
Then why should a woman not get a degree?

Your Lectures for Ladies some fruit may produce;
For a Course of good lectures is always of use.
On a married Professor your choice should alight,
Who may lecture by day—as he's lectured at night.
And allow me to ask, what would Husbands become,
If they weren't well lectured by women at home?
When from faults and from follies men thus are kept free,
There surely the woman deserves a degree.

Yet without a degree see how well the Sex knows
How to bind up our wounds and to lighten our woes!
They need *no* Doctor's gown their fair limbs to enwrap,
They need ne'er hide their locks in a Graduate's cap.

So I wonder a woman, the Mistress of Hearts,
Would descend to aspire to be Master of Arts :
A Ministering Angel in Woman we see,
And an Angel need covet no other Degree.