

H. *Girls in the Grammar Schools.*

In the sketch which I gave of the direction in which the Grammar Schools are drifting, I referred to the great influx of girls into the Grammar Schools. Out of 102 schools which were in operation during 1866, 85 were mixed schools, that is, schools open to both boys and girls; and in the mixed schools, taken as a whole, though girls have the option of studying French without Latin, the daily average attendance of girls studying Latin, was to that of boys in the proportion of about 5 to 12. This phenomenon will be admitted to be worthy of attention.

In my Report for 1865, referring to the co-education of the sexes in the Grammar Schools, I stated, that, in schools conducted by teachers possessing weight of character, I had no reason to believe that the general moral tone of the pupils was injuriously affected by boys and girls being taught together. This is my opinion still. But, out of the hundred Grammar School Masters in the Province, some of them young and inexperienced, it is certain that individuals will here and there be found, who are destitute of the weight of character requisite for conducting a school in which girls of 15, 16, or 17 years of age, may be associated with boys of the same ages. For this, among other reasons, I cannot look upon the great influx of girls, that has recently taken place, into the Grammar Schools, as affording no ground for concern. I desire to treat this subject now, as I did last year, in the most temperate manner. I have not taken up the trumpet of the alarmist. An outcry, based on anything that I have witnessed, would be unwarrantable. In none of our mixed Grammar Schools did a single breach of decorum fall under my observation during the past year; and in many of them the appearance of the girls was very pleasing. But I must avow, nevertheless, that my feeling is in favour of the education of grown-up girls apart from never-up boys, wherever that is practicable. The risk of moral injury resulting in carelessly conducted schools, from the co-education of the sexes, though it may be easily exaggerated, is an element that cannot be neglected. Schools, it may be said, ought not to be carelessly conducted. True. But *what ought to be* and *what is*, are different things. We live in a world, where, if we expect always to find things as they ought to be, we are likely to be disappointed. It is not so much, however, any gross and palpable departure from the ordinary moralities, that is to be feared in mixed schools, as the loss of the higher moral refinements. I can hardly describe what I wish to indicate; but every one will understand it, who has been accustomed to associate with cultivated women:—an ever present delicacy, married to an intelligence which at once strengthens it and liberates it from constraint. That the atmosphere of the generality of our mixed Grammar Schools is favourable to the growth of this, the flower of all female accomplishments, I do not believe.

As it is principally in the United States that the experiment of co-education has been tried, I was anxious before giving in this Report, to examine all the more important testimonies that have been published, in regard to the working of the co-educational system there. I have not been able, however, up to this time, to obtain a sufficient amount of exact information, to warrant me in thinking that a summary of the documents which I have consulted would be of any material value. I shall therefore merely refer to three distinguished witnesses. A weighty authority on the side of the mixed schools of the United States, is De Tocqueville, member of the French Institute, and author of the well known work on "Democracy in America." On the other side we have the Rev. James Fraser, who was deputed by Her Majesty's Commissioners of Education, to inquire into the Common School system of the United States and of the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, and whose Report to the Commissioners has recently been published. Mr. Fraser says: "There is one point, however, directly connected with the American School System and their general theory of education, of the effects of which I entertain great doubts. I refer to the effects on the formation of individual character, and the general social influences of mixed schools, and particularly of the theory and practice adopted in America on the subject of the education of girls." Probably the most eminent name in the United States, which has been brought forward on the side of the co-education of the sexes, is that of the late Horace Mann. From an examination of some of his works, I am not disposed to attach much importance to his opinion. He is no doubt an eloquent writer. I am aware that he is very generally regarded as an authority on educational subjects. His