

to deal as I should desire with the matter to which it relates. I refer to the clause empowering the governors, if they think fit, wholly or partially to combine the boys' and girls' departments of the schools. I need not tell you that to educate boys and girls together is the common—I believe I may say it is the universal—practice in the public schools of the United States; and had I foreseen that I should have occasion to speak of the subject here, I might have observed the results of the system more closely than I have done. As it is, I can only state impressions. The convenience of the system is obvious, especially in a new country; it enables you to economize in buildings and apparatus, perhaps to some extent in the staff, though a due proportion ought in every case to be preserved between the number of the teachers and that of the pupils. Nor have I ever heard or observed that the system led to anything bad. On the other hand, I never heard or observed that it led to anything particularly good. Those who can afford to send their children to private schools generally, I believe, prefer the separation of the sexes. American women differ in character from English women, but there are various circumstances to which the difference may be ascribed, and I could not undertake without more careful inquiry to say, how much of it is due to the particular circumstance of mixed education. Still less would I venture to solve the question which type of female character is to be preferred. One whose taste has been formed in England is naturally disposed to say of English women that, in spite of the jeremiads one hears, we might go farther and fare worse. We are here dealing of course with the case of boys and girls at school, not of young men and women at a University. We therefore have not to consider, as in dealing with the

Universities, the destinations of the sexes in life, which, supposing them to be different, would require a corresponding difference in their final education; nor have we to consider the risk, as I suppose most persons would admit it to be, of throwing together all the young gentlemen and all the young ladies of the country in a university city at a distance from their homes. I cannot help thinking, however, that with regard to the whole question, one, at least, of the grounds for desiring the change is in some degree fallacious. Great results are expected from the beneficial interaction of the sexes. The interaction of the sexes is of unspeakable value; but it depends upon the retention by each sex of its distinct mental characteristics. Obliterate the distinct characteristics, or greatly reduce them by a common education, and the beneficial interaction will hardly remain the same. As I said, I am merely stating impressions. There is no danger in the experiment, and the result of the experiment must decide.

In speaking of the effects of education in the United States, I ought to have added that it did not end with the school, but was continued in after life. It is continued by lectures, institutes, and public libraries, besides a very active press and the stimulating influences of a highly political community. The benefits of merely elementary education, with nothing to sustain it afterwards, may be easily overrated; I fear they are very limited in the case of our country-people, who often give up reading entirely and lose the power of writing altogether. Here you have the means of keeping up education in your Institute, which is maintained on a most liberal footing, and appears to be doing its work well.

I said that it would be presumptuous in me to speak of the organiza-