

SCIENCE

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THE INFLUENCE OF ASTRONOMY ON
MATHEMATICS

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THERE are probably many reasons why the members of the eleven sections of the American Association, representing at least fifteen sciences, have united in a single society. One of these is undoubtedly that the mingling of men of varied chief interests, points of view and methods of work has at least a tendency to correct those intellectual provincialisms which are characteristic of isolation, and to show how wide and how rich is the field of scientific activity. While it is unquestionably advantageous on some occasions for narrower groups of men whose interests are more nearly common and whose scientific activities run more nearly in the same channel, to meet apart for the consideration of their own special problems, yet on the whole the benefits to be derived from occasional joint meetings are so great that it is earnestly hoped the American Association will prosper in the future even more than it has prospered in the past, and that the individual scientific societies will not cease to cooperate with it.

If it is agreed that there are real benefits to be derived from an association of many distinct scientific societies, it will equally be granted that some advantages may be obtained from a meeting where so many points of view, modes of thought, and methods of investigation are represented as among the members of Section A. These diverse, and in some cases conflicting, points of view have arisen from the narrow specialization of recent times, and from the fact that the bounds of our knowledge have extended more rapidly

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