



The following 27 Letters to the Editor appeared in the *South Australian Register* between 1888 and 1891 above the nom de plume "Zenobia" (Queen of Palmyra).

The letters supported women's suffrage and covered a number of other areas advocating the involvement of women in public life and commenting on the education of girls.

SA Register 9 Feb. 1888, p7, g

Women and the franchise

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—The movement in favour of women's electoral power is manifestly gaining ground among all the English-speaking peoples. The most striking proof of this is the declaration of the Conservative party at Oxford. The triumph of the cause cannot be far off when even the stupid party has been brought to see its need and propriety. No doubt that party has been largely influenced by the expressed opinions of its late brilliant chief, the Earl of Beaconsfield. The cogency of the reasons for giving women a due influence in legislation, administration, and public policy is so great that we need not wonder at the favourable trend of public opinion. It is very plain that government by males only has not been a brilliant success. The men cannot boast that they have managed things with such a happy skill that their wise and infallible lordships do not need the aid of the women in order to secure more perfect laws and administration. The finances of the country have not been well managed by the men. There is need of a little of woman's thriftiness to check the men in their extravagant use of the public funds. In private life it is well known that in the majority of cases the woman takes the most care of the family funds. The diminution of waste on the part of the Government is one great result to be expected from female suffrage. The men have not been careful about the moral character of persons sent as representatives to Parliament. They have and do make lawmakers and rulers of unclean men and of those who have induced the wife to forget her marriage tie. Men have again and again elected the most scandalous characters to great positions. Persons who in reality are steeped in criminality men will persist in placing in positions of honour and emolument. Let the women wield the ballot paper and such persons will be cleared out of public position to the manifest advantage of society. The men have not considered that the home is the true seat of virtue and happiness. They have neglected in the land laws they have made to secure the establishment of homes, or to defend those established. The men have been actuated by the spirit of a wretched commercialism. They seem to think that the great object of existence is to buy and sell, and that the only value of anything is "what it will sell for." Give the women a vote, and at once the interests, the honour, and the happiness of the home would become paramount in public consideration to the advantage of men, women, and children. Changes are better brought about by degrees. Hence many have felt that it would not do to give all women over 21 the vote, and they have sought to limit the number in some way. Dr. Stirling proposed to limit the vote to unmarried women. While all thoughtful women feel grateful to Dr. Stirling for his championship of the cause



of female suffrage, it is plain that the limitation he proposed has no proper *raison d'être*. The married woman, all things being equal, is the best fitted for the exercise of the franchise. She has deeper knowledge of life, and through her children realizes its solemn interests much more than the unmarried. Hence it is quite wrong to make marriage the ground of exclusion from the suffrage. How absurd to propose that the married men should lose their vote because they were married? The men seem fearful that the women might outnumber them. This is an absurd fear, as the women, like the men, would divide into the various parties of the day. However, it was this fear which partly influenced Dr. Stirling to limit the suffrage to unmarried women. In any future Bill the proper thing would be to give the suffrage to all women over 25 years. This would limit the number of women in proportion to the men, and would not give the woman the vote till she had attained years of discretion. For the good of the community let the women exert themselves by petitions and other lawful agitation to secure the franchise. Why do not some persons, both male and female, exert themselves to form a Society to secure the "enfranchisement of women?"

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA

SA Register 19 Mar. 1888, p7, h

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—Women should have a vote when over 25 years of age, among other reasons because of the reflex influence of such vote upon the administration of the criminal law both on the part of the police and the judicial Bench, and also on the part of the gaol authorities. There is on the part of men a strange tendency to visit women with heavy penalties, and a most unjust leniency toward men who commit grievous offences against women. What gross favouritism it is on the part of the law that a woman who solicits is liable to punishment, whereas a man who solicits goes scot free! How helpless are the women of the town in the hands of the police. If women had electoral power the police would soon feel a pressure which would oblige them to the effective enforcement of the laws which protect women and children; and, further, the police would feel that the influence against their doing their duty would be curbed. In the *Methodist Times* of February 2 inst., the Rev. Price Hughes, M.A., says:—"I have studied verdicts and judgments for years, and my blood has often boiled within me when I have noticed the fearful leniency with which crimes against women are treated, and the yet more fearful severity with which crimes of poor women are punished. There was a case the other day of a poor starving girl who left her child behind her in the hope that someone would take it up, and thus save them both, perhaps, from death. For this she was sent to penal servitude for five years. On the other hand, I read to you, two or three Sundays ago the cases of men who for nearly murdering their wives got only three or four months imprisonment. For my part I am very glad that some women are studying law. I believe that there are one or two ladies practising as chamber barristers in this city (London). Eccentric as I may be regarded, I believe the time will come when we



shall have a few women sitting on the seat of justice. I cannot trust a Judge and Jury, all of them men, and all of them corrupted by ages of false sentiment, to be judges of moral purity in relation to women and girls. I hope the time will come when women will be found as the administrators of justice to women and little girls."

Young women of means and capacity might do great good to the sex and to the community if a few of them made a thorough study of the law. The Adelaide University offers every facility for legal study, and if a few women took degrees in law such ladies would become fit for the office of Justice of the Peace; also by their knowledge of the law would be able to see where it should be amended in order to make it fair and equal between the sexes. A few might practise the law.

It may encourage the workers for the elevation of women, and also interest many in this time of hot discussion about the Chinese to hear "that the young men of the Anglo-Chinese University of Shanghai have organised a Temperance Society, and have elected one of the lady teachers President. This action by Chinese young men of the highest class is very astonishing, and presages a higher moral standard for China"—vide Union Signal, December 11, 1887. It is of great moment that the Chinese, while receiving the highest culture of the European model should at the same time imbibe right ideas of the equality of the sexes. This, like a straw on the current, indicates the profound revolution through which the Chinese are passing, and how the movement for the elevation of women is spreading through all nations. Man begins to recognise that woman is a sister and not a slave. The sisterhood of women is the watchword.

I am, Sir, &c.,

LENOBIA (sic)

SA Register 22 Mar. 1888, p7, h

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—As an Editor you naturally make the nearest approach to omniscience possible to mankind while in this vale of tears. Can you tell me how humans of the male gender, commonly called men, have any more right to the ballot than have women? Appealing to the essential equities and verities, where do adult men acquire a right to elect representatives of themselves with rightful authority and power to make laws for the government of adult women? The only right of the men to do these things is the right of brute force, but might does not constitute right. Adult men have not and cannot have any right to vote which the women do not possess. Grant that the woman is to take the second place in marriage, does that prove that she is to have no status at all in the body politic? The idea only requires statement in order to reveal its absurdity. Wake up ye men! Give account of yourselves. Whence your right to rule the women without their voice and consent? Brothers, women do not blame you. You have been thoughtless concerning women's rights. With the best of intentions you have not thought of the wrong you were



perpetrating in denying woman a voice in making of the laws which materially influence her life from the cradle to the grave. Brothers, clear your eyes from the delusions of ages. Behold facts in the clear daylight of reality. "So long as man makes the laws by which woman is governed, so long he is the ruler and she is the subject, he the master and she the slave." As a recent writer says, "It is true in this high noontide of Christian civilization in most cases man makes a very mild master, but he is none the less the master." Women want the suffrage, not simply for the suffrage itself, though that is of immense value to themselves and their children. Women want the suffrage because it is right that they should possess it. And all progress in the concrete realization of righteousness exalts and blesses the whole community—men, women, and children. Women want the suffrage because it will magnify women in the eyes of men, and deliver them from the unworthy contempt with which many men dare to speak and otherwise manifest towards them. The suffrage would immensely increase the respect of men for women. And thus there would be immense rise in the moral life of the nation. Dr. Stirling has laid the women of South Australia under great obligation for his labours on their behalf when he was in Parliament. Has he abandoned the cause of his sisters? Would it be too much to ask him to initiate and carry out a movement in the country which should aim at giving all women over the age of 25 a vote, so long as they possess the residential and other qualifications possessed by men. Let Dr. Stirling do this and his countrywomen will crown him with laurel. He will also stamp his name upon Australia in indelible characters.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBI

SA Register 27 Mar. 1888 p7 d

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—I am astonished with great astonishment to hear "Woman's Advocate" say, "Surely there is in every man more or less of that feeling towards women which would lead him to be at least thoroughly just, and with a leaning towards considerate kindness." If the dear deluded advocate would only reflect on the doings of men in all ages and countries towards women he would discover no evidence on the part of the men as a whole to be just to the women, much less to show them considerate kindness." Look at the injustice to women to be found in the laws of inheritance in most lands; see how for ages the eldest son in England by law has taken all real estate from his younger brothers and sisters; see how the English nobles have generally entailed the estate on the heir-male. Look at the preference given to the man over the woman in matters of divorce. See how the control of children, till just lately, was given to the husband alone in South Australia, and is still so given in all the other States of Australia. Where is the manifestation of a disposition of thorough justice to the women on the part of the men in these laws? Does not "Woman's Advocate" know that in many employments if a woman does the same work, and does the same amount, and does it as well as the man, that she will be paid less wages? Where is the considerate kindness in this? Now, when we find the men who, in the past, have been the sole makers



of the laws saturate their laws with injustice to women, it is reasonable to think that the same spirit of injustice towards women will manifest itself at times in Judges and Juries. Old England has not gone back. It has always been looked upon as a venial offence to kick and brutally assault a man's wife in the old country. A man would always get more punishment for stealing a watch than for savage assault on her whom he had sworn to love and cherish. As regards the Judges of England they have manifested great animus against the Act for the better protection of women, and have spoken against it from the Bench. So much has this been the case that Lord Justice Coleridge lately rebuked them from the Bench, saying that their business was to carry out the law, not to criticise it. Most likely if women were now asked would they be judged by men or women they would say by men, because women have been brought up to believe that they are inferior and foolish creatures, and capable of next to nothing. The highly educated women who are now coming into existence will entertain no such nonsensical notions. Moreover, at present there are no women trained for legal and judicial duties. The Rev. Price Hughes and others do not wish female Magistrates and Juries till the women have come into existence who can conduct the trials. However, what the women now want is the suffrage, and then no doubt they will get considerate justice from men in all spheres to a greater extent than at the present.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA

SA Register 4 April 1888 p6 d

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—Alas, there are many men full of prejudice, who are not willing that all women over 25 who have the same residential or other qualifications as those possessed by men, should have a vote. For want of better argument they say the women ought not to vote because they cannot be soldiers and fight for their country. I would ask, Are not the women the mothers of soldiers? Do they not give their best years with ceaseless devotion and love to rear the boys who afterwards become the defenders of the country? Because they are the mothers of your soldiers the women demand the vote; because the sons of the women are dearer to them than life, and because their sons are sent as soldiers to face death, women demand votes that they may have a say as to when their sons shall be sent to battle, and for what. But as regards the average risk of man, and the average amount of pain that comes to the mass of men from their military liabilities, they are nothing when compared with the average risk and pain of women in their office and functions of mothers. The daughters of Eve know from ancient experience "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children." To say the least, women take their full share of the pain which individuals have to endure for the general good in the present mysterious form of human existence. However, it is pleasing to know that the nobler sort of men no longer urge that women should not vote because they cannot become soldiers.



What a dark, brutal, and pagan idea it is that because women cannot bear arms they should not give votes. This stupid notion proceeds upon the idea that brute force is the foundation of Government. Yet this is not the idea of the Government of South Australia, for our system rests upon the votes placed in the ballot box as indicators of the opinions and wishes of the men voters. South Australia repudiates Government by brute force, and arranges for Government by public opinion and choice of the men. To give the women the vote agrees with the essential principle of our system of Government. It simply would give the opinion and choice of the women an influence over the law and policy of the country, it strikes me also that if the women had the suffrage in the different countries of Europe there would be a considerable diminution of war. Women would not be misled by the false and deceitful glory of war, they would form a powerful element in favour of peace in most lands. Wake up sisters; combine, petition, agitate, your cause is righteous. Put South Australia in the van of the great movement for the elevation of the human race by the elevation of women. One marked means of which is for all our qualified women over 25 to obtain the suffrage.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA

SA Register 10 April 1888 p.6 e.

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—As a good orthodox believer in the Bible you will dance with delight to hear that in the very first chapter the Bible is quite in favour of woman's suffrage. Verse 27 says:—"And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them and said unto them (mark the them that includes the male and the female), 'Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion (mark dominion, rule, authority) over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.'" Whoso reads that Scripture must see that the grant of dominion and authority over the earth was not given to the man alone, but to the man and the woman as joint authorities. All, therefore, who believe that the Bible is a divine revelation must perceive that the woman has a divine right to share with man in the ruling power. Now the method, the wise and scientific method, by which ruling power is exercised in these days is by representation, which springs from vote by ballot, so your editorial acumen at once discerns that the Bible favours woman's suffrage in the State. Hence, in its foundation doctrine of humanity the Bible is profoundly democratic, it gives rule to collective and individual humanity, and bases that grant on the fact that there is in the human individual, either male or female, a likeness to the Divine personality. To appropriate the phrases of St. Paul—Is the man a son, then the woman is a daughter of the Almighty. She pertains to a race whose right to rule on earth is inherent. The Bible is really democratic in its vindication of woman's right to share the ruling power. For what is a democracy? "Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people." The women are half the people, so that there cannot in reality be democracy



without the woman's vote. Government by males alone is lopsided. It is aristocracy based on sex. If we are to have aristocracy, let us have aristocracy based on virtue, on learning, on both; but aristocracy based on sex is ignoble and wrong. It excludes virtuous and intelligent women, and includes ignorant and vicious men. It may be objected that Paul said that he suffered not the woman to usurp authority over men; well, the women do not want to usurp authority over men. Women want a certain legal and not usurped authority in the general affairs of the community. Their object is not to domineer and make laws against the men, like the men have domineered and made laws to favour themselves at the expense of women. So far also as the Scriptures are concerned, it should be noted that Paul is not dealing with questions which relate to the State, but matters which pertain to the internal government of Churches. It is not right to take language used in connection with one subject and apply it to another. Good women may be quite sure that their Bibles support them in the effort to gain the suffrage for all women who are of the full and mature age of 25, when they have the residential and other qualifications possessed by men.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA

SA Register 24 April 1888 p.6 a

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—"Caudle" could not have given himself a better name, for his letter betrays the feeble character of the never-to-be-forgotten Mr. Caudle. Now, as regards the Scripture he quoted, "That clearly lays down that in the marriage relation, and in the matters proper to that relation, the husband is to have the authority." Yet even the clouded intellect of feeble "Caudle" ought to see that a text which refers to the matrimonial relation has nothing to do with the relation of women to the State. As a believer in the Bible, I hold that its precepts are harmonious. People often think them not to agree because they do not look at them in their natural limitation by the subject which is being treated of and by the context; it is great lunacy to take Bible sentences as if they were universal propositions like axioms of Euclid. Poor "Caudle" in his caudling way puts forth the text which declares the rule of the man in the marriage relation as if it were a divine precept that man should have rule over woman in all the spheres of life, whereas it is restricted to one sphere alone — the matrimonial. "Caudle" also thinks that I want to set the sexes in opposition. Nothing is further from my mind; but I do want to break up the smug complacency of the men, and to let them understand that rule by men only is not such a remarkable success as they at times seem to imagine, and also to bring before them the profound, far-reaching, and injurious legal injustice with which they treat women, for I believe that if this matter of the legal status of women is once clearly understood by the mass of men that they will do justice to women. The appeal to the reason and conscience of the masses of men will not be in vain. The profound injustice to women, which under the present political system is the bottom of all the other legal injustice to women and of much of the social injustice is the absolute denial to women of the suffrage. Women have to be bound by the laws in person



and pocket, and yet have no voice in the choice of the makers of the laws. Adulterers and drunkards are elected by men to sit in Parliament, and women in the most helpless manner are obliged to submit to laws made by such characters. Men can show no more title to the suffrage than the women can. Do men require votes to protect their interests? So do the women. Do men require votes to further their interests? So do the women. Have men reason and knowledge? So have the women. Does it elevate a man to be a free citizen with the franchise and make him of more consideration? So it will a woman. Why, the vote gives a certain dignity to a feeble creature like Mr. Caudle. The vote will raise the women in the consideration of men, for they will be realized to be a political force. It will also redeem the lives of women from much littleness, and cause them to take wider views of life, of its interests, duties, and responsibility. So, notwithstanding poor "Caudle's" vapouring, I must still ask the men to do justice, and enfranchise all women over 25 who have similar qualifications to those demanded from men.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBI

SA Register 8 May 1888 p.6 d

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—It would not be right for me to allow the friendly letter of "Anglo-Australian" to pass without remark, or without some supplement. In addition to the countries mentioned as having organised Societies seeking the suffrage for women, I may mention that Great Britain has such a Society under the Presidency of the much respected Mrs. Panchet(sic), widow of the late Postmaster General and Political Economist. There is likewise a Society in the sister State of Victoria. It is to be hoped that South Australia will soon be furnished with a Women's Suffrage League. As regards the franchise it may be true that the existing relations of the sexes has been acquiesced in for a considerable time. It cannot, however, be fairly spoken of as centuries, because the men themselves as regards the masses have only obtained the franchise in recent years. One great reason why we ask the franchise for women is that the recent extension of franchise to the great bulk of the men has come because the world has endorsed the principle of democracy. Now the principle of democracy is government of all the people, by all the people, for the good of all the people; in antithesis, to the idea of government of all the people, by a few people, for the good of a few people. It is obvious that while so vast a proportion of the people as all the adult women are without rhyme or reason shut out from the suffrage that the principle of democracy cannot be fully realized. I am persuaded that the masses of men who have succeeded in wresting a share of political power from the privileged few will not want to found an aristocracy of sex. When once the men see that the same principle which was used to enfranchise themselves is applicable to woman and demands for her the vote, then their sense of justice will aid woman to a place at the ballot-box. It can scarcely be said that the existing relations of the sexes in relation to the franchise have been acquiesced in of late years. There have been movements not only out of, but also movements within Parliament



tending towards woman's franchise. For example, in 1878 an Act was passed giving the municipal suffrage to woman in Scotland. This was passed with little difficulty, both Lords and Commons recognised its justice. A straw shows the current, and this indicates that there is a favourable feeling in the highest political circles to woman's enfranchisement. The alarmists predicted all sorts of evils when the Scotch women obtained votes for municipalities. However, the women have voted for eleven years, and nothing dreadful has happened to Scotch burghs. Women ratepayers have the vote in South Australia; their vote has neither demoralized themselves nor the Corporations. So far from the woman's vote generally being of a revolutionary character Gladstone is said to oppose it because he is afraid that the women will on the whole be too Conservative. Another fact should be duly weighed—that is, that the Parliament and Queen have given to women the suffrage in the School Board Elections, and more than that, have given to women the right to sit on the School Boards; and women do vote, and also are elected to sit on the Boards. The London School Board is equal to a colonial Parliament almost, and women sit thereon and exhibit marked capacity. This is a further proof of the favourable feeling towards giving the woman the suffrage. Her general use of the vote at the School Board Elections has shown the man that she is capable of its wise exercise. I am patriotic enough to believe that what the British woman can do can also be done by her Australian sister. The idea that women are not capable of managing affairs, and are a kind of plaything, is absurd, Where they have fair opportunity many women exhibit marked capacity. For many years the Russian women have had absolute power over their own property, whether married or single, and it is notorious that there are no better managers of estates and businesses in Russia than women. Harper's Magazine, September 1882 p567, says :—"The Croesus of South America is a woman, Dona Isadora Consino, of Santiago, and there are few women or men in the world richer than she. Her property consists of millions of acres of land, flocks and herds that are numbered by the hundreds of thousands, coal, copper, and silver mines, acres of real estate in Santiago and Valparaiso, a fleet of ships, smelting works, potteries and other manufactories, a railway or two, and other trifles of productive value which are all under her own management and yield an income of several millions of dollars per year." The lady Consino shows that women can have great capacity. But her flunkies have votes, and she has none. Let the friends of justice and progress aid to give woman political franchise.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA

SA Register 13 July 1888 p.7 h.

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—Strange to say many persons imagine that the possession of the vote which would legally introduce woman to political responsibility, would injure her proper womanliness and domesticity. In Queen Victoria we see that the heaviest political responsibility and the most constant political duty do not in any way detract from the most thorough womanliness. Where can we see a more ideal picture of sweet domesticity than that



presented by the Queen's "Journal of Our Life in the Highlands." The long conscientious political life of the Queen, united with her domesticity and passionate love of home, and of all that doth become a woman, emphatically refute the idea that political power and duty would destroy the womanliness or domesticity of woman. Surely if the Queen can discharge all family duty and yet spend hours daily in connection with the grave duties of Imperial Government ordinary women at intervals of two or three years could put a ballot-paper into a box yet retain all feminine grace, and form the centres of love and light within their homes. The absurd notion that it would detract from the proper womanliness of women was formerly used against allowing women the advantages of higher education. However, the experiment has been made, and it is discovered that a woman remains a woman even when she becomes a doctor of science, medicine, or law, and that she loves the home and labours as cheerfully for the home as in the days when she was denied the highest mental cultivation. The gain is that now a class of highly cultured women exist as teachers to their sisters, and as leaders apt and capable in the various spheres of woman's activity. God's great institutions cannot be set aside, the womanliness will abide as strongly when she possesses the vote as it is now to be found in women without the vote. In all the past the government has been that of man only, and so has lacked the due proportion, the due consideration of all the interests of the human society. Woman's womanliness will remain, and with the suffrage will compel attention to woman's views of things, and so we shall attain government more true to the whole facts of the whole human society.

I am, Sir, &c.

ZENOBBIA

SA Register 23 July 1888, p7, d

Women's franchise

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—"Respite Finem" speaks of my fad. Can he define what he means by fad? I understand a fad to refer to matters of trivial moment. Now whether it be beneficial or injurious the granting of the suffrage to women over twenty-five is a matter of immense meaning both to women and to men. Hence it is an absurd misuse of language to speak of women's suffrage as a fad. I believe "Zenobia" would stand as good an examination upon the political constitution of Great Britain as "Respite Finem". He should remember that the era of ignorant women is coming to an end. Women have now for several years regularly beaten the men in the London University, and have obliged men to look to their laurels at Cambridge. Queen Victoria, though a constitutional monarch takes great part in the government of the country, reads and signs many documents of the highest importance and has great voice in our foreign politics, as all well-informed persons know. The manner in which she has fulfilled the heavy responsibility of her great station, and has yet lived a true womanly life does show that women can occupy high political position and yet preserve all that truly adorns the sex. In seeking the suffrage women are not seeking to enter the Senate, and as for Courts Australia is not in a mood to establish one. As for ambition's task, women are quite ready to resign that to men if they want it. What women



want is to assist in securing a proper set of men for the Parliament. We want the sort of men that will pay more attention to the rights and needs of women, and the rights and needs and defences of the home, than the men hitherto found in our Legislatures. We will grant that the important business of women's lives is to love. For love's sake women want to obtain a power which will help to defend their home and foster and help their children forward in life. All those a woman loves are injured or benefited by the laws of the land and by the administration of the laws. Without a vote the woman is powerless to mould or amend these laws. It is absurd to propound that because it is woman's business to love she should not vote. It would be just as sensible to say because it is woman's business to love she should not sew on buttons. Domestic work is quite compatible with marking a ballot-paper every two or three years. If "Respite Finem" has any arguments against women's suffrage of intrinsic weight let him bring them forth, and not fall back on inept quotations of poetry. Women want the suffrage because they have as good a right to a vote in the election of lawmakers as men. No man can make an argument in favour of man having a vote which is not equally good for women. Women should be called to the help of the man in electing Parliaments, and nobody could imagine that a Parliament elected by a joint suffrage of men and women would not equal the Parliaments men have made by their votes alone. If for once a Parliament was elected by women voters alone I am persuaded that it would be as good a Parliament as the present. Women want to vote that sundry very solid interests of society may receive much more attention than they do now.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBBIA

SA Register 27 July 1888 p3,e

Women's franchise

TO THE EDITOR

Sir— "Respite Finem" says that he showed that sentiment was opposed to women's suffrage. What sentiment is opposed? He quoted some poetry made by a British peer. As a rule the sentiments of the British peerage about women are shocking examples of the sort of sentiment Christian people should avoid. The sentiment which opposes the enfranchisement of women is an uninstructed and uneducated sentiment. "Respite Finem" is one of the uneducated persons filled with erroneous sentiment. He says — "Men are taught not to argue with women on subjects which concern women more than men" The women's suffrage while it concerns men it concerns women more, therefore he will not argue with women. Such an education was an education to look upon women as inferior creatures - was an education to hold women in contempt as not possessed of a proper reason. One of the strongest reasons for women's suffrage is to destroy this sentiment of contempt for women's reason, and the systematic miseducation of the sentiment of young men. It speaks little for the rational powers of "Respite Finem" that he has not been able to emancipate himself from the influence of such bad training and such false sentiment. The sentiment in favour of women's suffrage is growing everywhere, and is based on reason and conscience and the desire to spread the reign of righteousness. It finds its spring



likewise in the essential principles of the Christian religion. It also arises because the state of the world shows that the male alone is not able adequately to carry on the government of society. The world has been chiefly governed by men. Look at its disorder and misery. The men have made a mess of it. Let us see what men and women can do together. It is a curious spectacle to see "Respice Finem" interpret the Bible, he has such an amazing knack of quoting texts which refer to one subject as if they referred to another. He should get a really instructed woman to polish his reason up a little. Genesis iii, 16 refers only to the married state, and specifically to the marriage relation. "He shall rule over thee" does not refer to a woman's religious faith. A husband has no right to make his wife worship idols; so also it does not refer to woman's vote. What an inept quotation. Much absurd handling of the Bible would turn it into nonsense. Then 1 Corinthians xiv, 34 says women are to keep silence in the Churches. What has keeping silence in the Churches to do with the suffrage? Modern women do not want to get a legal right to chatter in Church while the service is going on like the ignorant heathen Greek women of old. They want right to a voice in the election of legislators. Going silently to put a ballot paper into a ballot box is not the same thing as going to Church either to talk or to preach. Why 1 Corinthians, vii 31 is quoted "Zenobia" cannot discover, it has no nexus with the subject under discussion, excepting that it speaks about single and married women. Then "Respice Finem" quotes 1 Timothy chapter 11. Here St. Paul is not treating of the political position of women, but of their ecclesiastical, he says, verse 8 - Men (that is males) are to do the praying in public, and he goes on to say that women are not to teach, that is, to propound Christian doctrine as public "teachers". But how inept it is to quote what Paul says about the Church as if he said it about the State. What nonsense could be made of the Bible on the principles of "Respice Finem". Women have some reasoning faculties. If "Respice Finem" has any arguments that are arguments, and not inept quotations let him bring them forth. Show that the weight of reason or the weight of that uncommon thing, common sense, is against women's suffrage and I will fight against it.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA.

SA Register 3 Aug 1888 p 3 d,

Women's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir— "M.H.J." says "If women suffer any injustices can they not be remedied without upsetting the Constitution?" The major injustice under which women politically suffer is that they are not allowed a vote. They have no part in the choice of the persons who make the laws which deal with the life, liberty, honour, and property of women. Now, this injustice cannot be done away without an amendment of the Constitution, but the Constitution can be amended without its being upset. A notable example of injustice to women is about to be perpetrated. Sir John Downer has given notice that he will introduce a Bill to amend the law of divorce, and he will seek that a body of persons who represent one sex only shall vitally change the terms and conditions of the marriage contract. It is



gross tyranny for men to change the marriage laws at their will or caprice without consultation with the women. Sir John Downer's Bill may or may not be equitable, but it will be forced on the women, as if the women were so many slaves or so many cattle, instead of being reasonable human beings, on the average now a days as well educated and sensible as the men. What nonsense for "M.H.J." to talk about bleeding and dying in defence of wives, mothers, and daughters. The women by their motherhood go through more bleeding and dying for the sake of the men than men ever go through in military service in modern times in defence of the country; the women likewise nurse all the dangerous diseases of the men. When one compares what the one sex suffers for the other it becomes "M.H.J." to hold his tongue about bleeding and dying. Did he ever get his finger scratched for the sake of his mother, wife, or sister? I expect not. We want a woman's vote because we want the womanly, the home, and the domestic side of things to count far more in public affairs. We want women to have effective voice in the education of little girls, so that cooking and sewing might have as good a place in our public schools as geography and arithmetic. We see men intruding into things proper for women, and actually directing the education of the girls and trying to make them just like boys. Half the scholars in the public schools are girls, or nearly so, yet there is no woman on a Board of Advice nor woman Inspectress. The men will meddle with and manage women's matters. Mr. T. Dodd is not a true Conservative in his opposition to women's suffrage. The annual meeting of the Conservative Associations of England and Wales at their last meeting at Oxford passed a resolution in favour of full national suffrage for women. I suppose Mr. Dodd would put the Conservative Associations into Parkside. In 1880 the Queen gave the royal assent to an Act of the House of Keys, giving the full suffrage to women in the Isle of Man. Is Mr. Dodd mad enough to propose that the Queen should be sent to Parkside for assenting to that Act? Sir H. Loch, the present Governor of Victoria, advised Her Majesty to assent to that Act, and after it had been in operation some years spoke favourably of its working. I suppose Mr. Dodd would send Sir H. Loch to Parkside. On May 17 last the Queen gave the Royal assent to an act giving to women equal electoral privileges with men in the local government of England and Wales. Lord Salisbury introduced the Bill; it was passed nem. con. by Lords and Commons. I suppose Mr. Dodd, being the only wise man left in the world, would send Lord Salisbury and the Houses of Lords and Commons to the Lunatic Asylum. Mr. Dodd is a Rip Van Winkle; he must have been asleep a hundred years. Poor antiquated soul, he does not realise that he is in the nineteenth century after Christ.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBI

S.A Register 11 Sept.1888 p.7 h

Women as school inspectors

TO THE EDITOR

Sir— I am not surprised to hear of the deep injustice done to the girls in our State Schools. It is so natural for the male sex to treat the female to injustice, that men do not think it is injustice. It appears that while girls are very properly obliged to spend considerable time



learning the various kinds of sewing, that at the examinations the girls are obliged to pass an examination in arithmetic equal to the boys. If we had not been told this by a leading lady teacher we could not have believed that the Minister of Education would tolerate such oppression and such wrong. I wonder whether out of a sense of righteousness and pity any member of Parliament will ask the Minister of Education to amend this wrong to thousands of young girls, and also to the lady teachers. But not content with this wrong, it seems that different Inspectors set different papers to the girls—that is, the department presents to its pupils unequal tests, and this it seems is specially true concerning the girls. Such deep injustice springs from another injustice to women to be found imbedded in our system of public instruction. There are several male Inspectors of schools, there is not one women Inspector. Hence there is not one woman in the whole system who can speak with authority and vindicate justice to the large female element necessarily found in the schools both as teachers and pupils. A moment's reflection must convince capable persons that in connection with so many girls and women there should be at least one woman of higher status who would understand the peculiarities of the female constitution, and their special needs in connection with the schools. We have heard much of the difference between the man and the woman. That very difference is exactly the reason for woman Inspectors. Could you, moreover, Mr. Editor, explain to me the justice of securing all the well-paid appointments as Inspectors to the men teachers, and rigidly shutting out the women? As half the pupils are female surely one-third of the Inspectors should be female. It is pleasing to observe that the Education Commission in England recommends that there should be women Sub-Inspectors. I believe there should be women with full inspectoral rank; but then women have always been so wrongly treated in all public institutions that they have to be thankful for small mercies. Better be a Sub-Inspector than not be an Inspector at all.

The Minister of Education has introduced a Bill to amend our Education Act, yet he has never dreamed of putting in any clause to secure justice to women and young girls. Let him see if he could not insert a clause making it imperative that there shall be at least one woman Inspector, and that girls must be treated fairly and equally with the boys in the exams. There is such an inveterate tendency to treat girls and women unfairly that unless it is put into the Act it is doubtful whether they will obtain fairness in these particulars. The women teachers ought to have some plums as well as the men; however, they are not likely to obtain them without they exert themselves. They should respectfully represent their rights and the needs of the case to the Minister of Education. Many of them would like to do so, but perhaps are afraid of the frown of their rulers; but if they go respectfully to work the Minister of Education will not visit them with any displeasure. This is a question which all women should take up, for they are deeply interested in the schooling of their girls. It is not decent that there is no woman Inspector. Besides, it damages the industrial status and pecuniary prospects of all women when the Minister of Education altogether excludes them from the position of Inspector. One thing is clear as daylight, women need the suffrage in order that they may obtain fair consideration in the schools and other public institutions. Nothing is more ridiculous than the statement often made that women may safely trust their interests to their husbands, fathers, and brothers. The kindest thing these gentlemen can do is to give the women the suffrage, and let them take care of themselves.

I am, Sir, &c,

ZENOBI



SA Register 25 Sept 1888 p.7, h

The Hon. A. Catt on women's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir— The Hon. A. Catt spoke on behalf of the Playford Ministry against women's suffrage in a speech of singular inconsistency and, feebleness. However, he professes to believe that women are well qualified to deal with local public affairs. He quotes with approval Mrs. Chapman, who declares, "For the election of guardians of the poor and for the office of guardian also the distinguishing female characteristics are strong qualifications. The right administration of the Poor Law demands attention to the details of housekeeping, comfort, and decency, care of sick, care of children" Does not Mr. Catt know that there are no women on the Board of the Adelaide Hospital? And does he not know the deplorable revelations lately made about the domestic arrangements of this Hospital as governed by men alone? Would it not be decent and right that there should be some women of position sharing the management of an institution which has so many women officers and women patients? Talk about the women intruding into the positions of men it is the men who intrude on what is more proper for women. The Lying-in Hospital in under the Destitute Board, and the aforesaid Board is made up of men only. The injustice, folly, and indecency of this condition of things has not struck the Playford Ministry, or at any rate they have shown no disposition to remedy the wrong by appointing lady members on the Destitute Board and on the Board of the Adelaide Hospital. Mr. Catt's speech certainly pledges the Government to see that the women have a fair number of places on the Boards, which have so large a share in the local administration of South Australia—that is if they regard consistency. His speech speaks about the propriety and advantage of women being on the Local School Boards. Will he tell me one woman on any School Board in South Australia, or the name of one woman that the Playford Ministry intend to appoint to such a position? Half the pupils and half the scholars in public schools are female, and all the adult women are excluded from a voice in the administration of these schools. And yet the mouthpiece of this inconsistent Ministry says—"If there be one subject with which by common consent women are peculiarly qualified to deal, it is the training and education of young children." It is the gross and crying wrongs to women like this total exclusion from the local government of public schools, so largely made up of females, which have obliged thoughtful women in thousands to demand the franchise. How dare Mr. Catt oppose the franchise as a remedy without he seek to amend these wrongs which are under his nose? The Judges of the Supreme Court of Victoria declare that according to the School Act of Victoria women teachers ought to be classified. This would mean considerable increase of pay. But the Education Department of Victoria have neglected to do this for years, to the enormous loss of women teachers. A motion was brought forward in the Victorian Parliament a few days ago "that justice should be done to the women according to the law." By a majority the Victorian Assembly refused to do so. The Victorian Parliament voted against carrying into effect the law they themselves made. If such conduct had taken place towards a large class of men the country would have rung with condemnation. In the face of conduct like this Mr. Catt can pretend that women are fairly represented by fathers, husbands, and brothers. Mr. Catt knows very well that in all ages and countries the men



have handled the government so as to wrong, rob and oppress women. Women want the franchise that these unfairnesses may be brought to an end.

— I am, Sir, &c.

'ZENOBIA'

SA Register 11 Oct 1888 p7 g

Women's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—No doubt the Hon. Mr. Catt deeply repents the speech he made in opposition to the Women's Suffrage Bill. I do not say that he repents opposition to the women's suffrage, but certainly he must feel angry with himself for not being able to discover and present to the country some good solid reasons for his antagonism to the women of the country. On reflection Mr. Catt must feel that the considerations he presented against the enfranchisement of the women are such as a person who had really reflected would see to be cogent arguments in their favour. Hence Mr. Catt must feel that he has presented himself before the women of the land and the men in a ridiculous and pitiable character. Mr. Catt tells us "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." If it be so it is supremely important that the mothers should take an intelligent interest in politics, so that they may be able to infuse right political ideas into the minds of their sons. Mr. Catt laments the present deficiency of the men voters in political interest and knowledge. He must be able to see that one of the great causes of this is that the women have been denied the vote, so have not taken much interest in politics, and therefore have not instructed and taught their sons. It must be plain, even to a man blinded by prejudice like Mr. Catt, that we are never likely to have a generation of intelligent patriots, till we have mothers who fell(sic) and know that it is their duty to vote, and to do their dutiful best to secure honest, pure, and progressive Government. The enormous improvement in the political education of the men which would result from woman's vote should cause all who love intelligent, progressive, and pure Government, to favour woman's right to national enfranchisement. Poor Mr. Catt does not half understand the men as the women do. The women have the watching and management of the men from the cradle to the grave. Mr. Catt is alarmed lest disputes should arise between men and women if women were introduced into the turmoil of politics. My dear Sir, the ordinary man would make more fuss if a button was not sewn on or his dinner not done to the minute by far than he would as to whether his wife voted for the Playford or for the Downer party. Women have constantly to face the liability of ill temper for matters most husbands think far more of than the casting of a ballot once in three years. I believe that (notwithstanding the angelic sweetness of his temper) dinner half an hour late would perturb Mr. Catt's soul far more profoundly than ever if Mrs. Catt was to be such a political heretic as to vote for Sir John Downer.

I see Mr. Jessop wants practical legislation, and on that ground objects to women's suffrage. It appears, Mr. Jessop, that a Parliament elected by men only is incapable of practical legislation. Give the women votes, and you will find a demand for measures which



will maintain families and multiply homes. Women's suffrage will compel attention to the solid bread-and-butter interests of the masses of the people, hence it is the highroad to practical legislation. Mr. Caldwell's Bill has not blocked the way of any ideas for the financial good of the country. We do not appear to have the men who know how to further the economical advance of the land.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA

SA Register 10 Nov 1888 p.7 f

Women's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—The result of the division on the Women's Suffrage Bill ought not to discourage its friends. The Government thought proper to oppose the measure, and have the consolation of being beaten by a majority of one as their reward. When Dr. Stirling's measure was before the House it was not opposed by the Government, but was an open question with the Cabinet itself. Evidently the measure has great political strength when it is able to secure a majority in spite of the Government opposition, even when that opposition went to such a length as formally to appoint a member to speak against the Bill. Another cause of triumph to the women is that the feeble speeches of Messrs. Catt and Hussey demonstrate to the South Australian public that it is not possible to make an argument of logical weight against woman's suffrage. Mr. Hussey assisted by Mr. Playford is capable on this subject of perpetrating the greatest absurdity. He affirms that the Bible is against woman's suffrage and adopts Mr. Playford's quotation. "I suffer not a woman to teach in the Church." If Mr. Hussey will think, he must see that teaching in the Church is a very different matter to giving a vote in the election of members of Parliament. The fact is there is no text or teaching in the Bible which opposes woman's suffrage. Teaching concerning woman's position in marriage or in the Church, is not teaching concerning woman's position in the State. In Genesis c.i., we are told God made mankind male and female. And God said to them, "Have dominion over the fish of the sea" &c. God made women queens by the same donation with which He made the men into kings. Let Mr. Hussey and Mr. Playford read their Bibles with proper care, and they will not quote texts which refer to one subject as if they treated of another. Mr. Caldwell is right, the opposition to women's suffrage is mere sentiment, and I will add that it is blind, uninstructed sentiment, putting itself in opposition to reason and righteousness. However, the women must take courage and go diligently to work, for the only argument which has a show of weight against their cause is that the women have not shown that they desire the vote. Let them get to work with their petitions and show by the number of signatures that the women of South Australia wish to vote in the election of the National Parliament. Mr. Hussey cannot resist the light; he acknowledges that where there is taxation there should be representation. Think a little more Mr. Hussey and you will join the ranks of the men who desire to do justice to the women.



I am, Sir &c.,

ZENOBIA

SA Register 13 Nov 1888 p.7 h

Women suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—Superfine people say that there would be impropriety in women appearing at the polls on election day to cast their ballot. It said there are often coarse scenes around the polls on election days through drunken men and so forth. Knowing the general propriety of the men of South Australia I doubt whether there is any great coarseness and rudeness round the poll. I am also persuaded that the appearance of respectable women at the polls would at once put the men of the country on their best behaviour, and any little coarseness there may be at present would at once be suppressed. We know that the presence of women is the great civilizer. Wherever men are left to their own exclusive company they have a tendency to coarseness and barbarism, but the presence of women at once causes a refinement of conduct and of speech. In fact one great reason why women over 25 should have the suffrage is that that very fact would do much to abolish rudeness, coarseness, and ribaldry from the whole realm of politics. Politicians and political parties would understand that politeness and propriety would be necessary for those who would win and keep the women's votes. It is not at all improbable but that the women's past deprivation of the franchise has been one great cause of what measures of coarseness and bad manners there may be in politics conducted by men only. We may be certain that the cause of good manners would on the whole benefit by the women's vote. The improprieties which may or may not surround the polls at present are reasons for improving the conduct of the men. It is abominable to use these alleged improprieties as a reason for depriving qualified women of the privilege of voting. What an argument! Because some men misbehave at the polls and places of political assembly, all women shall be refused the right or privilege of a voice in making the laws which materially influence their lives for weal or for woe, from the cradle to the grave. If women could not make better argument than that they would be unworthy of the franchise. Women acknowledge that liberty of giving weight to one's opinions at the ballot-box is for their husbands, brothers, and fathers a sweet and precious privilege, bought by the suffering and toil of centuries. Why, brothers, if you love them should you not want your mothers, wives, and sisters to share this privilege. Your mothers, wives, and sisters are not horrible savages or idiots. Love demands that the men should gladly give the women of matured judgement the suffrage. Let then the love which the men so constantly express for the women find expression in a law giving the vote to women.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA



SA Register 24 Nov 1888 p.7 c

Women's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—What amusing nonsense the men do talk about, it being perfectly safe and proper for the women to leave their special interests in the hands of male electors. All history proves in all nations that women cannot leave their interests to be dealt with by men alone. Men are not always aware of those interests. Why, our Technical Education Commission did not even think of the need to teach the art of cooking to young girls till Mrs. Lee waked them up. It was a gross wrong to women that some women were not put on the Commission. In England, however, they are feeling that they must organize and develop machinery for the industrial education of women. The Royal Commission on Technical Education deals with this question. It gives details of the special provision for the professional trade teaching of girls and women in the great towns of Europe, and especially mentions and describes the curricula of the Elisa Lemonier Schools in Paris, where parallel with a general education in French language and literature, arithmetic and geometry, natural sciences and writing, special instruction is given in commercial subjects, such as bookkeeping and English, industrial drawing, dressmaking, wood engraving, painting on pottery and porcelain, and painting on glass. Germany, Belgium, Holland, and Italy, the report says, are all making provision for the industrial training and teaching of their girls. The girls on leaving these professional schools earn fair wages, and many continue in them after marriage. The Royal Commission speaks most highly of the instruction in these schools, which they say is very practical. Leading persons at home advocate the complete reorganization of the primary and secondary schools of Great Britain so that all children over 10 may receive elementary technical instruction, and pass on to higher grade work and technical schools. The leading women of Great Britain are awake, and insist that the girls shall have equal privileges in this respect with the boys; that as boys shall be given technical instruction in those matters special to boys, so girls shall receive technical instruction in matters and trades special to girls; and that that unjust preference which has ever been given to boys in educational privileges shall not find place in the new system of technical instruction. Let the leading women of South Australia be watchful, and secure justice for the young girls. They must be sharp or the girls will most certainly be treated with unfairness, for unfairness to girls and women saturates our present system of education. However, the only adequate and proper guarantee of justice to women is the power to vote for members of Parliament.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBI



SA Register 24 Nov 1888 p.7 c

Women's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—What amusing nonsense the men do talk about, it being perfectly safe and proper for the women to leave their special interests in the hands of male electors. All history proves in all nations that women cannot leave their interests to be dealt with by men alone. Men are not always aware of those interests. Why, our Technical Education Commission did not even think of the need to teach the art of cooking to young girls till Mrs. Lee waked them up. It was a gross wrong to women that some women were not put on the Commission. In England, however, they are feeling that they must organize and develop machinery for the industrial education of women. The Royal Commission on Technical Education deals with this question. It gives details of the special provision for the professional trade teaching of girls and women in the great towns of Europe, and especially mentions and describes the curricula of the Elisa Lemonier Schools in Paris, where parallel with a general education in French language and literature, arithmetic and geometry, natural sciences and writing, special instruction is given in commercial subjects, such as bookkeeping and English, industrial drawing, dressmaking, wood engraving, painting on pottery and porcelain, and painting on glass. Germany, Belgium, Holland, and Italy, the report says, are all making provision for the industrial training and teaching of their girls. The girls on leaving these professional schools earn fair wages, and many continue in them after marriage. The Royal Commission speaks most highly of the instruction in these schools, which they say is very practical. Leading persons at home advocate the complete reorganization of the primary and secondary schools of Great Britain so that all children over 10 may receive elementary technical instruction, and pass on to higher grade work and technical schools. The leading women of Great Britain are awake, and insist that the girls shall have equal privileges in this respect with the boys; that as boys shall be given technical instruction in those matters special to boys, so girls shall receive technical instruction in matters and trades special to girls; and that that unjust preference which has ever been given to boys in educational privileges shall not find place in the new system of technical instruction. Let the leading women of South Australia be watchful, and secure justice for the young girls. They must be sharp or the girls will most certainly be treated with unfairness, for unfairness to girls and women saturates our present system of education. However, the only adequate and proper guarantee of justice to women is the power to vote for members of Parliament.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBI



SA Register 11 Dec 1888 p.7 h

Women on boards of charitable institutions

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—No Christian woman could read the letters of A.M.M.B. and of D. James Walter Smith without feeling pity, horror, and shame. Who were those hard hearted officials who would not telephone for a bed-rest for an unfortunate fellow man suffering from cancer in his breast and shoulder? Can it be true that in the midst of the city of Adelaide no attempt was made to relieve an old man of over 80 years of age, who suffered such extreme pain that for three days and three nights before he died he did nothing but shriek? Can it be true that the beds in the Destitute so abound in lice that lady visitors are obliged to warn one another not to sit? Is it possible that there is such habitual indecency as to serve food to the bed-ridden on night stools? It is very obvious that the Destitute Board, constituted of men only, is as incapable of managing the Destitute Asylum as the board of the hospital also constituted of men only, is of managing that institution. Just as in the ordering of the household for the private family there is needed the joint labor of the man and the women and, mark it, chiefly of the woman, so it is plain that the hospitals and asylums which are but larger households, need the joint management of men and women. The vermin, the neglect, the feeding of patients upon close stools in the Destitute Asylum reveal that a Destitute Board without women upon it is a gross and unhappy failure. The gentlemen upon the Board mean well, but they have no notion of domestic economy. They ought to have been aware of that long ago, and not have sought to intrude themselves into the sphere of women. How ridiculous upon the very face of it—a body of elderly men managing a lying-in hospital. Decency demands that such a place should be under the supervision of a committee of ladies. When we find such gross abuses in connection with the old men, how are we guarantied that all is correct and as it ought to be in the lying-in? The "Englishwoman's Review" of October 15, 1888, contains a report of a meeting held at Manchester, the Mayor in the chair, when there was a large attendance of ladies and gentlemen interested in Poor Law work. Several ladies and gentlemen took part in the debate, after which the following resolution was carried unanimously:—"That the duties belonging to the guardians' of the poor, involving the care of women and children, and sick, and aged people, are of such a nature as to require the co-operation of suitably qualified women as member's of those boards." That is exactly what is wanted on the Destitute Board viz., "the co-operation of suitably qualified women." It appears that already fifty-five ladies in England have been elected to the Boards of Guardians of the poor, and the experience of the benefit of such a course is leading to a general movement throughout England in favour of a proportion of women being made guardians of the poor. Women are reasonable; they want a proportion of power in these things. Men have been unreasonable and greedy, and have kept all the power to themselves. They have received the due reward of their greediness in the failure of the Hospital and of the Destitute Board. So Lord Salisbury has made a public declaration that he favours woman's suffrage, and Sir H. Parkes during his late visit to the Illawarra reaffirmed in a speech at Novra his belief in woman's suffrage. Mr. Deakin M.P., in Melbourne Town Hall stated that he "would labour to enfranchise women," and he is a chief member of the Victorian Cabinet. The need of a proportion of women's influence in politics is thus felt by great leaders. We must have



woman's vote, and women must be called in to help the Destitute and Hospital Boards out of their present muddle and breakdown.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA

SA Register 28 Dec 1888 p.6 e

Women barristers

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—The women of the United States are realizing the great value to themselves of the women barristers who have come into existence during the last few years. These ladies learned in the law are most thoroughly searching into the laws, and wherever they find the laws unjust to women (as so many of the laws are in all English-speaking countries) they at once initiate efforts in favour of such changes as shall make the law fair and equal to the women. It is said that an American libertine dreads to see a lady lawyer acting as the prosecuting counsel in an illegitimacy or similar case. In Belgium a woman has received a legal diploma to practise in a European Court; this is the first instance in Europe-so far as is known. The lady is about to test her right to hold a brief in one of the Brussels Courts.

During the last thirty years women have won the right to study and practise medicine; they are now about to do the same in the province of the law. It is devoutly to be hoped that some of our talented sisters will turn their attention to the practice of the law. The Adelaide University affords great assistance to the study of the law, as the University exams are constantly proving our girl students are quite a match for the boys when they have the same advantages, hence we have the women capable of handling the law and the means of giving the needed instruction. I trust that some of our rising young women will choose the law as a profession. By so doing I believe that they would eventually attain large emolument. What is more to be desired? They could as women lawyers give vast help and protection to many injured women; they would raise the general respect of the community for women, and also help to get laws which will be fair and equal to the female sex. If any Christian young women of ability are in search of a mission let them prepare and become barristers, and then let them take up the causes of helpless girls and of widows who are constantly being bamboozled. Moreover, legal women will greatly assist all women in the proper use of the Parliamentary franchise. Various young gentlemen will exercise their poor wit at the idea of women lawyers. However, the Universities of Great Britain, America, France, and Switzerland show that the man has as much as he can do to hold his own in intellectual competition with the woman. It will be a happy day for many women and for all that is pure and right when the ordinary woman can obtain the help of women barristers.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA



SA Register, 11 Mar. 1889, p7,f

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir— The following extract from Lord Salisbury's speech at Edinburgh on November 29 last shows the exact view of the great Conservative Chief and Premier of Great Britain with reference to Woman's Suffrage. "The Primrose League is freer. It brings classes more together, and I think its greatest achievement of all is that it has brought the influence of women to bear on politics in a way that has never before been the case. . . I am now speaking for myself only, do not imagine that I am speaking for any one else, but I do earnestly hope that the day is not far distant when women also will bear their share in voting for members of Parliament—(cheers)—and in determining the policy of the country. I can conceive no argument by which they are excluded. It is obvious that they are abundantly as well fitted as many who now possess the suffrage, by knowledge, by training, and by character, and that influence is likely to weigh in a direction, which in an age so material as ours, is exceedingly valuable, namely, in the direction of morality and religion."

After the speech of Lord Salisbury, the Editress of the Woman's Gazette addressed letters to some leading politicians, and received the following answers:—The Right Hon. A. J .Balfour writes:—"I entirely endorse everything the Prime Minister has uttered upon the subject, and I have nothing to add to it." The Lord Chancellor's Secretary writes:—"In answer to your letter of the 7th inst., I am desired by Lord Halsbury to say that he has for long been in favour of the extension of the Parliamentary suffrage to women." In view of these public expressions by men of the very first political and social rank, the friends of woman's suffrage feel greatly encouraged all over the world. Woman's suffrage has passed out of the region of ridicule, it must be reckoned with as a question of serious and practical politics. When it is so the woman's cause is won, for those who oppose woman's suffrage are not able to present the ghost of an argument. I have been glad to notice that the Wesleyan Conference realized that all the argument was for the woman's enfranchisement, and by a noble vote of nine to forty-four they made it apparent that they were ready to do justice to women. The Primitive Methodist Church in their Conference on February 27, bettered the Wesleyans, for they passed a vote to give women a vote in the election of members of Parliament, and there was no dissentient. Well done the Primitives! These good people see where the truth is and are ready to stand by it.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBI



SA Register 27 Mar 1889 p.7 h

Woman's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—Mrs. Fawcett, the chief leader among the ladies of Great Britain in the effort to secure a vote for women in the election of members of Parliament, in the *Woman's World* very aptly and ably meets the objection "that women cannot be soldiers or policemen, and therefore they ought not to vote." Thus Mrs. Fawcett writes:—"Let no man or woman be mistaken as to what this movement for woman's suffrage really means. We none of us want to turn the world upside down, or to convert women into men. We want women, on the contrary, above all things to continue womanly—womanly in the highest and best sense—and to bring their true woman's influence on behalf of whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, to bear upon the conduct of public affairs. Some people attempt to meet the claim of women to representation by the absurdly irrelevant remark that women ought not to vote for members of Parliament because they cannot be policemen or soldiers. Who wants them to be policemen or soldiers? There must always be a certain division of labour between the sexes. The physical constitution of women fits them to perform certain duties on which the welfare of society in a high degree depends. The physical constitution of a man fits him for certain other duties, one of which is that of external defence. And there are certain other duties which men and women must undertake jointly, and in co-operation with one another, and from which the total withdrawal of one sex or of the other is fraught with danger and mischief. Those who are in favour of woman's suffrage maintain that the duty of loving one's country, of understanding her interests, of endeavouring to influence public affairs by the choice of men of high character and true patriotism to serve in Parliament, is one which incumbent on women as well as on men. There is nothing in the nature of a woman which unfits her to love her country, and to serve it by helping to send good men to promote sound legislation in Parliament. People sometimes talk as if fighting for one's country were the only way of serving her. Surely that is taking a very one-sided view of a nation's interests. All work well done. All service in lifting up the lives of others to a higher level, 'all we have wished, or hoped, or dreamed of good,' forms the treasury of natural greatness. I have no wish to disparage the usefulness or the necessity of the army and of the police force; but civilization owes quite as much to that great host of silent, busy workers, of whom at least half are women, through whose labour alone there is anything worth preserving, as to the army and the police force preserving it." The fact is numbers of the men are physically unfit to be soldiers or policemen, but no sane person would think they therefore they are unfit to vote. In fact, many of the fittest to vote among the men are unfittest to fight. As physical inability to fight does not deprive the one sex of a vote neither ought it to deprive the other. As for police, a few women police would be a good thing.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBI



SA Register, 30 May 1889, p7 f

Female suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir —So Mr. Ward sets up to be Sir Oracle and calls "female suffrage a silly craze." Mr. Ward may see fit to oppose, but he has no right to call that a silly craze which has had the active support of far purer, far abler, and by far more renowned men than himself. Does he pretend to match himself with John Stuart Mill, who said—"Under whatever conditions, and within whatever limits, men are admitted to the suffrage, there is not a shadow of justification for not admitting women under the same." Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Abraham Lincoln, Wendell Phillips (in two magnificent orations), Lloyd Garrison, Longfellow, Whittier, W.H.Seward, Charles Sumner, Chief Justice Chase, Emerson, Quincy Adams, Theodore Parker, Garfield, Lord Salisbury, Stafford Northcote, the Earl of Carnarvon, Mr. Balfour, Stansfield and John Morley, all have given public support to the enfranchisement of women; and is Mr. Ward carried away by such an inflated vanity as to think that he is so superior to these great men that he can call a cause they uphold a silly craze? The Rev Charles Kingsley was also a great supporter of women's franchise and will Mr. Ward claim to be a purer-minded man and better fit to judge what befits pure women than Charles Kingsley? Among women Mrs. Josephine Butler, Mrs. Millicent Garrett Fawcett, Mrs. H. Beecher Stowe, Miss Cobbe, Miss E. S. Phelps, Miss Jane Cobden, and Miss Nightingale all support women's suffrage. Is Mr. Ward really entitled to speak with contempt of a cause for which these women labour? Has he lived a life of superior devotion to humanity, has he exercised a greater self-control, has he made a greater mark upon the age? Is Mr. Ward aware that last session the Parliament of Great Britain gave votes to the women in the election of members of the County Councils, and that as many as sixty thousand women are on the roll of electors for the County of London? Moreover, the new County Government Bill for Scotland gives the franchise to women. There was no division on giving the County Suffrage to women. Is Mr. Ward really entitled to speak of a cause which has had such enormous practical endorsement by the Imperial Legislature, as a silly craze? The ladies who support the women's suffrage movement in South Australia are quite willing to have the manner in which they fulfil their domestic and family duties compared with the manner in which Mr. Ward fulfils his. They have felt bound to seek a voice in the choice of lawmakers, so that the homes of people and the purity of family ties may receive more serious and thorough attention; they believe that women's vote will result in a higher moral order of legislator, in a fairer representation of all interests, and in the production of laws which shall reflect the will of the majority of the people, not as at present, laws which express the will of a minority of the people.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIAS.

The "Englishwoman's Review" for April says:— "We regret to record the loss of the Woman's Suffrage Bill, through the selection of Mr. Woodall of the Wednesday before Good Friday for the second reading. This is a date on which the House is usually adjourned



for the Easter recess, and it is difficult to understand the reasons which led to its selection. The Bill, if passed into law, would add about 800,000 electors to the register, and although this is a small proportion compared to the five millions of men, it is a sufficiently large body to make a Government hesitate to enfranchise in the middle of the life of a Parliament.

The Droit des Femmes says that the success of Russian lady medical students abroad has made the Government take the question of their education seriously into consideration. It is supposed that a law will be passed that women doctors are to attend none but women and children. The school for women surgeon assistants in St. Petersburg is to be turned into a Female Medical School. At the recent Medical Congress in St. Petersburg 162 women doctors were present.

SA Register 27 Jan 1891 p7 h

Women's franchise

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—In a speech made by the Hon. George F. Hoar, an active American statesman, he made the following weighty remarks with reference to giving a vote to women in the election of members of Parliament:—"Whatever of study, of reflection, of experience, of observation of men and women, and of the practical conduct of Government the last twenty-five years have brought to me has confirmed the opinion which I formed twenty-five years ago. I agree with Chief Justice Chase, one of the greatest and wisest of the practical statesmen of modern times, who declared:—"I think there will be no end of the good that will come by woman suffrage on the elected, on elections, on Government, and on woman herself." I (G. F. Hoar) agree with the judgment of the wisest, profoundest, and surest thinker who has considered social questions in modern times (Ralph Waldo Emerson), who says:—"It is very cheap wit that finds it so droll that a woman should vote. If the wants, the passions, the vices, are allowed a full vote through the hands of a half brutal, intemperate population I think it but fair that the virtues, the aspirations, should be allowed a full voice as an offset through the purest of the people." If the cause of woman's suffrage had these two advocates alone their authority would be enough to command for it the respectful attention of mankind. Contempt, sneers, ridicule, arrogance, impatience, must give way to serious and respectful reasoning in the presence of the practical wisdom of Chase and the insight of Emerson. Yes, Mr. Editor, Emerson is right, if the passions and vices are allowed a full vote so should the virtues and the aspirations. To give virtues, aspirations, and conscience a vote we must have the women at the ballot-box. The twenty years' experience of Wyoming shows that Chief Justice Chase is right. There is no end of good to the elected, the elections, the Government, and to woman herself by the operations of woman's vote. Let women rouse themselves, and by active labours seek the vote, and let all who love justice and purity and temperance and Christ lend them a hand.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBI



SA Register 12 Feb 1891 p7 g

Women's suffrage

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—Mr. Justin McCarthy is one of the champions of the woman-suffrage movement in the House of Commons. In one of his speeches lately published he makes this excellent point—"We have had no woman poet like Shakespeare or the Greek poets; no woman painter like Michael Angelo; no women musicians like Beethoven or Mozart. In all these departments man stands so far absolutely supreme, and he has never had an equal and never a rival in woman. But there is one department in which woman has, in several cases shown herself the peer and equal of man, and that is the very department of politics with which we are told she has no capacity to deal. There are certain great Queens—Elizabeth of England, Catherine of Russia, and some of the Indian Princesses, who were the equals in every way of any man who ever held the same position. It certainly seems curious that in this country, at all events, there should be any doubt as to the right of woman to take her equal part in the political movements of the world, seeing that in Great Britain we have prospered and thriven under the reign of great Queens, both in former times and in the present. I suppose prosperity and greatness in Britain never reached such heights as in the days of Queen Elizabeth, Queen Anne, and Queen Victoria." To the above famous names we may add Maria Theresa, the Empress of Austria, nor whom no greater ruler ever sat on the throne of the Hapsburgs. Frederick the Great of Prussia, her great foe, often expressed his sense of the great political capacity of Maria Theresa. Isabella of Spain was at one time a good woman and a great ruler. Zenobia ruled Palmyra with great ability till crushed by the overwhelming forces of Rome. In politics and rule women have risen to the highest ranks of proved capacity, and have thus indicated that politics are not alien to their constitution.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIAS.

SA Register 20 Feb 1891 p7 g

Women for women's work

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—The Labour World in a September number tells a story of certain male guardians of the poor who visited and inspected a workhouse for fifteen years, and thought the Matron the pink of propriety and the soul of goodness until a sad thing happened. In process of time a lady was elected a member of the Board of Guardians, and so when she went with the other guardians to inspect she varied the usual questions to the girl children, and asked, do you know how to darn? She was answered by a look of blank astonishment upon the foundlings' faces. Her woman wit brought her quickly to the conclusion that something was wrong. She ordered first one and then another to take off their shoes. This resulted in



the dismissal of the Matron, for at considerable advantage to herself she had during all those years provided her charges—the children—with footless stockings. Depend upon it all institutions like the Lying-in-Hospital, the Destitute Asylum, the Adelaide Gaol, the Lunatic Asylum, the Hospital, in which there are women and girls, are liable to the footless stocking business, and should have women entitled to visit, inspect, and report; and in the case of charities there ought to be a proportion of ladies on the Board, as we are aware gentlemen acting alone have, in the case of the Adelaide Hospital, proved their incapacity to manage its internal economy properly. The condition of things when the late Matron took charge was distressing. There was improvement as the result of her advent, but who shall say what further improvement would be made if one-third of the Board were women. The fact is that there is a feminine side of things best understood by women, and a male side of things best understood and dealt with by men. Therefore women ought to have co-ordinate authority with men. The sooner the men come to know that the better for themselves, for men can only blunder when they try to do the women's half of things, or try to look at matters through women's eyes. The Trades and Labour Council have found out this truth, and so by the mouth of its President when he welcomed the shearers they announced that they were supporters of adult suffrage. Mr. Spence also, on behalf of the shearers and G.L.U., expressly favoured the possession of votes by the women. When the women vote they will be asked to sit on Hospital Boards, and will there no doubt do efficient work, as do the ladies on the State Children's Council.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIAS.

SA Register 6 Mar 1891 p7 d

Democracy

TO THE EDITOR

Sir—The Rev. Mr. Milne, M.A., in his sweet simplicity thinks that South Australia is democratic. Now, being a great Oxford scholar, Mr. Milne, M. A., should know better. South Australia is not a democracy. Democracy means government by the people. The people consist in about equal proportions of men and women, but the women are excluded from voting; they have no share in the government of the country. Half the people are shut from the elective power, and yet the Rev. Mr. Milne, M. A., speaks of this as a democratic community. Government by men only might be called anercracy, or, to mix languages, mulecracy; but Mr. Milne, being an Oxford scholar and a severe critic of South Australia, ought to know better than call it democracy. I advise this young clergyman not to be led by the nose by mere words, but to develop a little power to see facts. He from his reading is led to view, he says, democracy with great scorn. What he has read about has been anercracy, and certainly government by men only has been a gross failure in all past ages, and what he should scorn is anercracy; but he is grossly wrong in his reading of history, and remarkably juvenile when at this time of day he confounds it with democracy. The democratic age lies immediately before us, when all adults irrespective of sex, will have equal suffrage. We may look forward to that age with fervent hope, for there is profound

Mary Lee 1821 - 1909

by Elizabeth Mansutti



truth in the old saying, "The voice of the people is the voice of God." For the whole mass of the people are more likely to order things according to the essential and God-given instincts and God-given fundamental interests of humanity than any mere section of them. Government by males only is a dead failure. It has been tried in many forms,—hereditary despots, oligarchies, Republics, and male priests in the form of theocracy—but failure is writ large in all the efforts of men to govern alone while excluding and subjecting the women. One would think that the men had made such an amazing success of governing when one sees the cool way in which they assume that they have the sole right to govern. Read your New Testament, Mr. Milne, and you will find that the woman is a part of the people. Look at things not from the standpoints of heathen classics, but of Christ and the apostles. Then how erroneous will your assumption that women are not people appear. The Rev. Mr. Milne may not believe in that "adult suffrage" which the Trades and Labour Council have resolved to support, but still he should use terms in their real sense. He may assuage his fears, for if real democracy comes, and all women vote, there cannot be anything more foolish done than has been done by Emperors, Kings reigning by divine right, Republics, and parliaments of men.

I am, Sir, &c.,

ZENOBIA
