

*Janees Kardinian*

AL/54

35, Gordon Square,  
London, W.C.

Jan. 22. 1895.

Dear Madam,

I have sufficient sympathetic respect for the motives and aims of your Society to be sorry that I cannot profess more than a qualified concurrence with the wise & excellent men whom you are able to cite as witnesses on your behalf. I have signed, and would again sign, petitions for extending the suffrage to independent women having the same qualifications that, till recently, were required of men. On the mere ground of sex I would make no

distinction. But I cannot resolve  
a civilized State into an aggregate  
of individual persons without  
regard to their natural groupings  
in families, with the graduated  
dependencies & responsibilities  
arising thence. I look upon the  
family as the unit of the State.  
And in and for the family I think it  
essential that there should be one  
responsible head, charged with the  
obligation of creating an adequate  
common fund and having, with the  
duty, also the power, of administering  
it. Married life would be quite  
unworkable, were it a mere  
dual partnership without a casting  
vote: it would need an impossible

legal definition of the charges  
incident on each. Hence, I cannot  
but approve of the old usage of  
counting the political elements by  
heads, and not by lives, and  
decline to reckon "one household =  
two votes". I do not care a fig; whether  
the man or the woman gives  
the vote. The presumption is in favor  
of the former, as usually the bread-  
winner; but, on proof of his unworthiness,  
I would have it transferred to the  
latter.

With these convictions I find it  
impossible to accept the unlimited  
propositions enunciated by your Society.

I remain, dear Madam,  
Yours & my respectfully,  
James Martineau.