

Perseus

AL/34

Indexary.

FAWCETT LIBRARY
27 WILFRED STREET
LO DOY, S.W.1.

Dec. 7th 1891

Dear Mrs Fawcett.

I have been intending to write
to you for some time to ask
if you were pleased with
what passed at the Birmingham
meeting W. S. and if you
succeeded in getting an M.P.
to take it up during this next
session. The length of the
5th session I believe, what
I hear, will be most doubtful

Before Birmingham when
I was at Hatfield, Arthur
was talking of the 'I. d. gov-
Bill', & the then growing hos-
tility to it. The gist of what
he said was this, tho' of course
I tell it you privately. He
believes the Bill to be a
safe one, & only asks that
he sh. be allowed to produce it,
then if it is not liked & there
seems to be going to be great
opposition "it is always easy to
drop it, there is plenty else to do!"

As a probe of the wrath of time being
the great difficulty, the Irish Edu-
cation Bill will come first, whi-
has to do with supply, then Scotch
business, & then we all know how
late they begin, and how early
they are likely to leave off. I don't
believe that they have ^{decided} or can
have decided as to the actual time
of the dissolution, it will turn on
what happens during the session,
but what will be obviously most
convenient & agreeable to the ma-
jority will be that it sh. take
place in July or thereabouts.
Under these circumstances I don't
think private members will have
many days left to them. I can't
help feeling that in some ways
we are further off than we were
from it, because Salisbury has
distinctly said that if they try
'one man one vote,' he will

see W.S. & the reduction of the franchise in Ireland & Scotland is introduced unless the Gladstonians come in 'very strong, I very much doubt if they will dare to move in the matter, & however much Salisbury wishes to improve the suffrage all round, supposing he comes in, I doubt if he aims connected with what I have just said, that he will touch the matter - The extending the suffrage to women is so much a matter of far-seeing policy, that I despair of ~~fixing~~ ^{getting} the average M.P. to take much interest in it, till it becomes a government question.

I had a letter from Miss Blackburn telling me the Committee had elected me a member & I shall be very glad to serve. I don't

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approve of some of the courses
wh. I have watched fr. a dis-
tance! Just before I left town
Mr. Vernon came to me about
getting up a subscription bill
of expenses, I think that sort of
expedient is open to many ob-
jections. If subscriptions are
wanted I believe the Committee
wd do well to write a letter to
the papers, signed with yr name
& one or two names of moderation
& weight. The drawing room
meetings sub. committee I wd
serve on if I were in town but
I do not expect to be there till
early in January, the date I
am not yet sure of. I suppose
drawing room meetings do good?

any I attend always fill my
soul with gloom! I believe
in nothing much except getting
an actual M. P. or those
who were pulled & return them -
I saw with amusement that
the Birmingham revolution had
been opposed by Geo. Brown
of Leeds. Gerald's first chair
man there an Irishman, &
the only man in Leeds when
I first went there who took
a woman much use in politics,
& who made Gerald send for
me from here in the election
of '85. I admit it was
not to work but to adorn
the situation! What was
felt about the Tower conduct

with regard to the Irish d. f.
Bill? Events wh. touched our
family life so closely, in the
death of poor Auntie happen-
ed just at that date, and
I heard nothing of what passed
at the time except just what the
^{papers told me} papers told me.
Finally I much ^{or} enjoyed
the enjoyment of smothering in
F. Harriman's face in the Fort-
night of death, think you ever
did a better piece of work
& that is saying much. Is it
printed separately? What it
ought to be, is printed with F.H.'s
platitudes, they enraged me
all the autumn, especially as
they were read aloud by some
of the visitors at Whittingham
& highly commended! If
to be had separately please
let me have one or two -

Mrs Courtenay tells me she is
to be away in Jan. & wishes to
propose me as Hon. Sec. during
her absence, if the Committee
approves I am quite willing
to attempt to be Jack in office
I can't go far as to tray considering
my surroundings I think.
My father is marvellous, he
has renewed his youth like
two eagles -

We are waiting today for news
of the D. of Devonshire. Are
we to lose the 3rd leader with
in the half year of the House!
My father is full of the grave
anxiety as to the holding
together of the Unionist party
by any one but Hartington.

Yours sincerely

Francis Balfour