

Telephone: 1960 VICTORIA.

Telegrams:
VOICELESS LONDON.

Eddy, W.

Inquiries.

AL/426

Central Society for Women's Suffrage.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

*Mistaken address.
Sent Sept. 12th with
explanatory note.*

President:
THE LADY FRANCES BALFOUR.
Secretary:
MISS EDITH PALLISER.

25, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER,
LONDON, S.W.

August 4th, 1908.

Dear Madam,

Pray forgive the delay there has been in answering your letter of July 23rd. I am very much interested in your objection to signing our membership form and of course I fully understand your point of view.

The claim that we make as a Society is that sex should not be taken into consideration in this question of citizenship and it is this claim we define in the words you take exception to.

A large number of our members believe with you that the vote has been mistakenly granted to uneducated men; they did not in any large numbers demand it and it was given upon the ground that the possession of the vote is both a protection and in itself an education to the ignorant. We maintain that if this is held to be true for men it must be for women also, and that it is unjust to withhold the privilege of that protection and of that educational power from the women of the country.

Our Society is a genuinely non-party one and contains members of every shade of political opinion.

If we were called upon to reform the present electoral system the diversity of opinion among us would be very marked. Many like yourself, would wish to restrict the present franchise for men while many would wish to extend it to the furthest possible limit and others would be found to represent every intermediate view. The one great point upon which we are united is that the right to the vote can no longer justly be held to depend upon sex. Possibly you will see from what I have said that from the point of view of justice for women it is important for us to adhere to our formula, but in any case I shall be very glad indeed to hear from you again on this subject.

I am afraid that you will hardly feel inclined to join us as a member of our Society, but I hope we may still have your help as a supporter of our principle, and that we may perhaps receive from you as a donation what you would not feel justified in giving as a member's subscription.

I hope very much to see you here some day and have the pleasure of continuing this discussion.

Yours truly,

P. S.