

From Thomas Hardy

AL/144

MAX GATE,
DORCHESTER.

Nov. 30. 1906

Dear Mrs Pawcett:

I have been suffering from neuralgia in the face, which I often get in winter, or I should have replied to you inquiring sooner.

I have for a long time been in favour of woman-suffrage. I fear I shall spoil the effect of this information (if it has any) in my next sentence by giving you my reasons. I am in favour of it because I think the tendency of the woman's vote will be to break up the present pernicious

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conventions in respect of manners,
customs, religion, illegitimacy,
the stereotyped household (that it
must be the unit of society), the
father of a woman's child (that it
is anybody's business but the woman's
own, except in cases of disease or
insanity), sport (that so-called
educated men should be encouraged
to harass & kill for pleasure feeble
creatures by mean stratagems),
slaughter-houses (that they should be
dark dens of cruelty), & other matters
which I got into hot water for

touching on many years ago.

I do not mean that I think all women, or even a majority, will actively press some or any of the first mentioned of such points, but that their being able to assert themselves will loosen the tongues of men who have not liked to speak out on such subjects while women have been their helpless dependents.

You may disapprove of many of these reasons for woman-suffrage, or think them mistaken, but I am sure you will forgive my stating them.

Always sincerely yours
Thomas Hardy.