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LETTER FROM LAVINIA GOODELL. Janesville, Wis., Nov. 2, 1875. (read at Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Woman Suffrage Association held in New York in November 1875)

Mrs. Lucy Stone, Chairman Ex-Com., A. W.S.A.

It would give me great pleasure to meet the friends of Suffrage at the Annual Meeting in New York, this fall; but, since this is impracticable, I must content myself with a word of greeting by note.

I cannot remember the time when I did not think women ought to vote. The old Anti-Slavery struggle, which was the educator of so many of us, was at its height in my childish days; and the arguments for the freedom and equality of all men before the law which I heard so frequently at home, in public meetings, and through the press, were my earliest intellectual stimulus. Instinctively I applied the same reasoning to women. Hence the equal right of Woman to social, civil and political equality, has always been to me like an axiom which it were as idle to dispute as to undertake to controvert the multiplication table. According to my earliest recollections of the "Woman's Rights" movement, as it was called, Suffrage was but one among many of the rights claimed, and stood rather in the background. The propriety of Woman's speaking in public before a promiscuous assembly, was the most hotly and fiercely contested of any of her new claims. Her claim to equal wages for equal work; to broader fields of industry; to the right to hold her property, after marriage, in her own name; to enter the professions; to obtain higher education, even to perform literary work, were all questions in issue, and combated with such bitterness and prejudice that few women had the moral courage to declare themselves in favor of any of these innovations. But, now, all these battles have been fought and substantially won excepting that of Suffrage. Propriety is no longer shocked at beholding a woman on the rostrum. The problems of wages and of industry are rapidly being solved. The heavy, barred gates of the professions creak on their hinges, and by persevering pushes they are opening to Woman. The married woman's property laws are constantly changing for the better. College doors are opening. The field of literature is wide open and full of busy gleaners. Is not this noble progress for a quarter of a century? If in the next quarter we gain the Suffrage—the last stronghold of the enemy—the last "ditch" in which they have taken their stand and which they will fiercely contest, we shall do a grand work. And yet, I believe we shall gain it in less time than that. The fields are already white for the harvest. In speaking to the people in different parts of my own State on temperance during the last few months, I have been surprised and encouraged to find that my most radical Woman Suffrage expressions have been listened to with the greatest interest, and received with enthusiastic applause. There is not a subject before the people to-day, which excites more earnest, attentive interest or stronger feeling than that of Woman's claim to the ballot. All that is needed is further enlightenment. If we could but send a sufficient number of wise and judicious speakers throughout our States, to speak not only in cities and large towns, but in the smaller places where they would reach the masses of quiet, thoughtful country men and women, distribute tracts, and obtain subscribers to the Woman's Journal, a plenteous harvest would be gathered.

The temperance work is doing much toward showing women their need of the ballot. The awakened interest of women in legal questions is another hopeful sign. As they come to understand the laws, they will see more than ever, how helpless they are without a voice in legislative halls. Our Woman's State Temperance Alliance, at its recent Annual Meeting, voted to petition the Legislature for a prohibitory law, and to ask a hearing on the subject before the Legislature, through a committee of ladies. Last year, my good temperance sisters could with difficulty be restrained from passing a resolution to the effect that they did not advise "meddling with politics." Is not that encouraging progress? Next year I hope to be able to report an auxiliary Suffrage Association for Wisconsin.

Yours cordially, Lavinia Goodell. Attorney at Law.