

**Margaret Fuller *The Great Lawsuit. Man versus Men. Woman versus Women. The Dial, IV, July 1843.***

For Students assigned #1-4, place your FOOTNOTES FOR INTRODUCTORY MATERIAL NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO TEXT **HERE** (#s 1-4)====>>'<sup>1,2</sup>

Where the thought of equality has become pervasive, it shows itself in four kinds. The household partnership. In our country the woman looks for a "smart but kind" husband, the man for a "capable, sweet-tempered" wife.

The man furnishes the house, the woman regulates it. Their relation is one of mutual esteem, mutual dependence. Their talk is of business, their affection shows itself by practical kindness. They know that life goes more smoothly and cheerfully to each for the other's aid; they are grateful and content. The wife praises her husband as a "good provider," the husband in return compliments her as a "capital housekeeper." This relation is good as far as it goes.

---

<sup>1</sup>Godey's Lady's Book, was not just a place women looked for fashion tips and trends, it was a place where the whole role of the female was defined and described. For example Queen Victoria was the first woman to wear white to her wedding. An image was printed in Godey's Lady's Book, within two decades a white wedding had always been the proper color for a wedding because it symbolized the "purity of the bride". It was as if it had always been that way. Godey's Lady's Book had massive popular sway in defining the realm of women as the home and placing her firmly in the "private" sphere. We see reoccurring images of motherhood, of women faithfully standing by the side of their husbands, women always projecting an aura of "ladyhood". "Ladyhood" as defined primarily in the pages of Godey's. Another example of the magazine tremendous influence is the Christmas tree, before the magazine published an image of Queen Victoria (they were pretty big fans of Queen Victoria as the perfect "lady") and her family around a fir Christmas tree in 1850 this tradition did not exist in the United States, suddenly every women had to have a Christmas tree in her household. The idea of a female sphere is something Fuller is highly critical of, Godey' was critical to creating and maintaining this strict idea of "place" for women. Even the fashion designs that appear in Godey's are very restrictive and are constructed to keep women in a sphere. Fuller states that women's "especial genius" is to be "electric in movement", if that is true Godey's fashion went along way to try and restrict that genius.

<sup>2</sup> American Transcendentalism was a literary, political and philosophical movement that was developed in the early to middle half of the 19th century. Starting in New England the Transcendentalists worked from the mind-set that America was in a new era and it was time to rethink old Puritan views. They believed in the goodness and equality of all human beings and stressed for the individual to develop a personal and unique relationship to God and the world around them. Their social and political commentaries were intended to spark the individual intellect and the use of common sense to break away from the decaying conformist society. Transcendentalists were some of the first well known and notorious proponents for women's rights and laws against slavery. Margaret Fuller, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau were some of the leading minds of the movement.

Next comes a closer tie which takes the two forms, either of intellectual companionship, or mutual idolatry. The last, we suppose, is to no one a pleasing subject of contemplation. The parties weaken and narrow one another; they lock the gate against all the glories of the universe that they may live in a cell together. To themselves they seem the only wise, to all others steeped in infatuation, the gods smile as they look forward to the crisis of cure, to men the woman seems an unlovely syren, to women the man an effeminate boy.

The other form, of intellectual companionship, has become more and more frequent. Men engaged in public life, literary men, and artists have often found in their wives companions and confidants in thought no less than in feeling. And, as in the course of things the intellectual development of woman has spread wider and risen higher, they have, not unfrequently, shared the same employment. As in the case of Roland and his wife, who were friends in the household and the nation's councils, read together, regulated home affairs, or prepared public documents together indifferently.

It is very pleasant, in letters begun by Roland and finished by his wife, to see the harmony of mind and the difference of nature, one thought, but various ways of treating it.

This is one of the best instances of a marriage of friendship. It was only friendship, whose basis was esteem; probably neither party knew love, except by name.

Roland was a good man, worthy to esteem and be esteemed, his wife as deserving of admiration as able to do without it. Madame Roland is the fairest specimen we have yet of her class, as clear to discern her aim, as valiant to pursue it, as Spenser's Britomart, austere set apart from all that did not belong to her, whether as woman or as mind. She is an antetype of a class to which the coming time will afford a field, the Spartan matron, brought by the culture of a book-furnishing age to intellectual consciousness and expansion.

Self-sufficing strength and clear-sightedness were in her combined with a power of deep and calm affection. The page of her life is one of unsullied dignity.

Her appeal to posterity is one against the injustice of those who committed such crimes in the name of liberty. She makes it in behalf of herself and her husband. I would put beside it on the shelf a little volume, containing a similar appeal from the verdict of contemporaries to that of mankind, that of Godwin<sup>3</sup> in behalf of his wife, the celebrated, the by most men detested Mary

---

<sup>3</sup> William Godwin was a British novelist, journalist and political philosopher. For numerous reasons, he was considered something of a radical in his day (1756-1836). He was one of the first advocates of anarchism as a political philosophy. In 1793, he published *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Morals and Happiness*, an anarchist critique of state that would go on to influence William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. He was married to Mary Wollstonecraft, one of the forerunning

Wollstonecraft. In his view it was an appeal from the injustice of those who did such wrong in the name of virtue.

Were this little book interesting for no other cause, it would be so for the generous affection evinced under the peculiar circumstances. This man had courage to love and honor this woman in the face of the world's verdict, and of all that was repulsive in her own past history. He believed he saw of what soul she was, and that the thoughts she had struggled to act out were noble. He loved her and he defended her for the meaning and intensity of her inner life. It was a good fact.

Mary Wollstonecraft<sup>4</sup>, like Madame Dudevant (commonly known as George Sand) in our day, was a woman whose existence better proved the need of some new interpretation of woman's rights, than anything she wrote. Such women as these, rich in genius, of most tender sympathies, and capable of high virtue and a chastened harmony, ought not to find themselves by birth in a place so narrow, that in breaking bonds they become outlaws. Were there as much room in the world for such, as in Spenser's poem for Britomart, they would not run their heads so wildly against its laws. They find their way at last to purer air, but the world will not take off the brand it has set upon them. The champion of the rights of woman found in Godwin, one who pleads her own cause like a brother. George Sand smokes, wears male attire, wishes to be addressed as Mon frère; perhaps, if she found those who were as brothers indeed, she would not care whether she were brother or sister.

We rejoice to see that she, who expresses such a painful contempt for men in most of her works, as shows she must have known great wrong from them, in *La Roche Mauprat*<sup>5</sup> depicting one

---

feminist authors. His marriage to her was a point of contention with his peers. Fuller utilizes him as a shining example of a husband's devotion to his wife. Strangely enough, their daughter Mary Godwin would go on to marry Percy Bysshe Shelley. During their time together, she wrote horror classic *Frankenstein*.

<sup>4</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft, an 18th century feminist, was the author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*; which also was her most famous work. In it, she argues for equal rights between men and women, bringing up interesting points such as the fact that women are the ones educating the children so why not educate the women? At the time women were not allowed an education and Wollstonecraft argued that that is why women seemed inferior to men. She also argued that with an education, women could be companions to their husbands, not just wives. The approach of pandering to men by highlighting how women's rights would benefit them probably played a large role in the success of this writing. *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* was a major step towards the women's rights movement that would take place over the following years until coming to a head in the 1920's.

<sup>5</sup> *Mauprat* is a story written by French novelist Amantine Lucile Dupin better known by her stage name George Sand. *Mauprat* is a story that people often compare to the *Beauty and the Beast*. This is a romance novel, but also touches on education as well. Sand enriches education more than the romance between the two main characters.

raised, by the workings of love, from the depths of savage sensualism to a moral and intellectual life. It was love for a pure object, for a steadfast woman, one of those who, the Italian said, could make the stair to heaven.

6

Women like Sand will speak now, and cannot be silenced; their characters and their eloquence alike foretell an era when such as they shall easier learn to lead true lives. But though such forebode, not such shall be the parents of it. Those who would reform the world must show that they do not speak in the heat of wild impulse; their lives must be unstained by passionate error; they must be severe lawgivers to themselves. As to their transgressions and opinions, it may be observed, that the resolve of Eloisa to be only the mistress of Abelard, was that of one who saw the contract of marriage a seal of degradation. Wherever abuses of this sort are seen, the timid will suffer, the bold protest. But society is in the right to outlaw them till she has revised her law, and she must be taught to do so, by one who speaks with authority, not in anger and haste. If Godwin's choice of the calumniated authoress of the "Rights of Woman," for his honored wife, be a sign of a new era, no less so is an article of great learning and eloquence, published several years since in an English review, where the writer, in doing full justice to Eloisa, shows his bitter regret that she lives not how to love him, who might have known better how to prize her love than did the egotistical Abelard.

These marriages, these characters, with all their imperfections, express an onward tendency. They speak of aspiration of soul, of energy of mind, seeking clearness and freedom. Of a like promise are the tracts now publishing by Goodwyn Barmby (the European Pariah as he calls himself) and his wife Catharine. Whatever we may think of their measures, we see them in

---

<sup>6</sup> Alexander Pope's poem *Eloisa to Abelard* is based on a love story from the twelve century. In the story, a female student and male teacher fall in love. They become secret lovers, get married, and have a baby. When the female student's parents find out about the relationship, they become outraged. For vengeance, the male teacher, whose name is Abelard, is castrated by the female student's parents. They become separated because of religious reasons. The female student, whose name is Eloisa, finds it difficult to ignore her feelings toward Abelard. Later in life they begin exchanging letters to rekindle their love, but come across difficulties. Their opposing views and thoughts due to gender differences made it difficult to have smooth interactions. The letters they wrote to each other concerned divine love. They were discussing God's love for them and their love for God. Their differences in personality made their conversations painful.

The reason that Margaret Fuller refers to this poem is to predict the outcome of relationships between men and women. When Fuller refers to the poem, she is using it to demonstrate that throughout history women have been less authoritative than men. Abelard was egotistical, and this contributed to some of the troubles that he had with Eloisa. The general idea of the essay is that women and men will one day be on the same level, the poem demonstrates that currently they are not on the same level.

wedlock, the two minds are wed by the only contract that can permanently avail, of a common faith, and a common purpose.

We might mention instances, nearer home, of minds, partners in work and in life, sharing together, on equal terms, public and private interests, and which have not on any side that aspect of offence which characterizes the attitude of the last named; persons who steer straight onward, and in our freer life have not been obliged to run their heads against any wall. But the principles which guide them might, under petrified or oppressive institutions, have made them warlike, paradoxical, or, in some sense, Pariahs. The phenomenon is different, the law the same, in all these cases. Men and women have been obliged to build their house from the very foundation. If they found stone ready in the quarry, they took it peaceably, otherwise they alarmed the country by pulling down old towers to get materials.

These are all instances of marriage as intellectual companionship. The parties meet mind to mind, and a mutual trust is excited which can buckler them against a million. They work together for a common purpose, and, in all these instances, with the same implement, the pen.

A pleasing expression in this kind is afforded by the union in the names of the Howitts. William and Mary Howitt we heard named together for years, supposing them to be brother and sister; the equality of labors and reputation, even so, was auspicious, more so, now we find them man and wife. In his late work on Germany, Howitt mentions his wife with pride, as one among the

constellation of distinguished English women, and in a graceful, simple manner.<sup>78</sup>

In naming these instances we do not mean to imply that community of employment is an essential to union of this sort, more than to the union of friendship. Harmony exists no less in difference than in likeness, if only the same key-note govern both parts. Woman the poem, man the poet; woman the heart, man the head; such divisions are only important when they are never to be transcended. If nature is never bound down, nor the voice of inspiration stifled, that is enough. We are pleased that women should write and speak, if they feel the need of it, from having something to tell; but silence for a hundred years would be as well, if that silence be from divine command, and not from man's tradition.

While Goetz von Berlichingen<sup>9</sup> rides to battle, his wife is busy in the kitchen; but difference of

---

<sup>7</sup> 11. William and Mary Howitt were the perfect example of a successful marriage.

Working together, they were well known writers and raised four children. As popular as they were together, individually they were even more so.

William was more known for his travel and educational books. Writing several works regarding Australia, while he was gold mining there with his son. He also wrote books on nature and religion, which were received well.

Mary Howitt published well over a hundred titles. Her passion was poetry and children's literature. Her most famous piece, "*The Spider and the Fly*," is one of the more quoted poems of all time. "'Will you step into my parlor?' said the spider to the fly." (<http://holyo.org/poetry/howitt.htm>). She was also well known for translation. She translated Hans Christian Andersen's works.

William and Mary were married from 1821 until William's death in 1880. In their final years they explored their spirituality together and William published his "*The History of the Supernatural in All Ages and Nations and in all Churches, Christian and Pagan, Demonstrating a Universal Truth*" (1863).

Margret Fuller uses this couple as an example to effectively underline the point "...instances of marriage as intellectual companionship. The parties meet mind to mind, and a mutual trust is excited which can buckler them against a million. They work together for a common purpose, and, in all these instances, with the implement, the pen." Using William and Mary Howitt was a stroke of genius; she couldn't have found a better example.

8

<sup>9</sup> Götz von Berlichingen is a play written by German artist and writer, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and published in 1773. It is loosely based on the autobiography of Gottfried "Götz" von Berlichingen, a German knight and mercenary who lived between the years 1480 and 1562. The play focuses on the decade between 1518-28, which was part of a larger period of increasing centralization in the Holy Roman Empire. During this time Götz was involved in numerous wars and feuds between rival duchies, even as the princes of the Holy Roman Empire sought to lessen the autonomy of these vassals. He also played a leadership role in the Peasants Rebellion, though he professes not to have been in support of it himself. In the play itself, Götz is celebrated as a force for individual

occupation does not prevent that community of life, that perfect esteem, with which he says, “Whom God loves, to him gives he such a wife!

Manzoni thus dedicates his <sup>10</sup>Adelchi.

“To his beloved and venerated wife, Enrichetta Luigia Blondel, who, with conjugal affections and maternal wisdom, has preserved a virgin mind, the author dedicates this Adelchi grieving that he could not, by a more splendid and more durable monument, honor the dear name and the memory of so many virtues.

The relation could not be fairer, nor more equal, if she too had written poems. Yet the position of the parties might have been the reverse as well; the woman might have sung the deeds, given voice to the life of the man, and beauty would have been the result, as we see in pictures of Arcadia the nymph singing to the shepherds, or the shepherd with his pipe allures the nymphs, either makes a good picture. The sounding lyre requires not muscular strength, but energy of soul to animate the hand which can control it. Nature seems to delight in varying her arrangements, as if to show that she will be fettered by no rule, and we must admit the same varieties that she

---

freedom. Though the historical Götz lives to an old age, in Goethe’s dramatization, he struggles against, and ultimately succumbs to the rising absolutism and modernization. He represents the submission of the individual to society.

In the context of Fuller, Goethe’s Götz von Berlichingen serves to exemplify the importance of the individual maintaining their autonomy against the pressures towards conformity imposed by society. The characters do not behave, or dress, or think in the manner that is expected of them by society. Like the vision that Fuller proposes for the intellectually independent woman, the characters created by Goethe are not beholden to convention, but seek their own truth.

<sup>10</sup> Adelchi by Alessandro Manzoni

Alessandro Francesco Tommaso Manzoni was an Italian poet and writer born in Milan on March 7, 1785 and died May 22, 1873. He is most famous for a novel entitled *The Betrothed*. During his life he wrote many poems including a series of religious poems entitled *The Sacred Hymns*. The last of these “Pentecost” was published in 1822, the same year that *Aldechi* was first performed. *Aldechi* is a play described as a poetic drama, circling around the overthrow of the Lombard king by Charlemagne, and the following conquest of Italy. Though he was raised in a highly religious time Manzoni jumped from being a follower of Voltaire, to marrying a Calvinist woman and a subsequent Roman Catholic conversion for her, and a return for him. His work is widely thought to be resigned to the inherent evils of religion as a whole as well as the places that it is integrated with government. Manzoni was appointed a Senator to Victor Emmanuel II, and after his death the composer Verdi wrote his funeral Requiem.

It is clear to all who wrote about him that the beginning of Manzoni’s greatness was his *Sacred Hymns*. They were written after his wife’s conversion and his return to Catholicism. It seems that the interpretation of *Aldechi* is that he laid his successes at the feet of his wife, without her his transformation would not have occurred.

admits.

I have not spoken of the higher grade of marriage union, the religious, which may be expressed as pilgrimage towards a common shrine. This includes the others; home sympathies, and household wisdom, for these pilgrims must know how to assist one another to carry their burdens along the dusty way; intellectual communion, for how sad it would be on such a journey to have a companion to whom you could not communicate thoughts and aspirations, as they sprang to life, who would have no feeling for the more and more glorious prospects that open as we advance, who would never see the flowers that may be gathered by the most industrious traveler. It must include all these. Such a fellow pilgrim Count Zinzendorf<sup>11</sup> seems to have found in his countess of whom he thus writes.

“Twenty-five years' experience has shown me that just the help-mate whom I have is the only one that could suit my vocation. Who else could have so carried through my family affairs? Who lived so spotlessly before the world? Who so wisely aided me in my rejection of a dry moralit?! Who so clearly set aside the Pharisaism<sup>12</sup> which, as years passed, threatened to creep in among us? Who so deeply discerned as to the spirits of delusion which sought to bewilder us? Who

---

<sup>11</sup> Nicholas Ludwig, or Count Zinzendorf, was a German born in 1700, and proved to be a controversial figure for his unique take on religion, and the opinion that Christ had died for all, and thus every person was equal (regardless of race or gender). He was widely known in both Europe and America, both by royal and religious leaders. He believed in “heart religion”, which took an emphasis on the individual's relationship with Christ to receive personal salvation, rather than the Lutheran emphasis that centered on specific doctrines. During his life he started the Protestant World Mission movement, sending missionaries to preach the Gospel.

When Zinzendorf visited America, he sought to unify the German Protestants in Pennsylvania, seeking to bring them all under a council of churches that would have them work in cooperation, despite any specific denominations of their religion. Here, he founded Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and his daughter organized Moravian College, still in existence today. (He'd sheltered and assisted some Moravians in Germany, and had become intrigued by their theology). Zinzendorf's “heart religion” was profoundly about the emotional relationship with Christ, rather than about an intellectual analysis of the Bible. For his time, he was thought to be creative and innovative for his thoughts on theology, although controversial, especially considering that he thought women should have a more substantial role in religion and the church. He allowed women to preach, and hold office, and be ordained.

With all of his controversy and travelling, Count Zinzendorf must have had a very supportive wife, of whom Margaret Fuller mentions in this context, from some of Zinzendorf's writing. Zinzendorf had married his cousin long before he'd started his missionary work, and it seems evident that she was a large part of his life throughout. It is no accident that Fuller would quote Zinzendorf, who, as mentioned early, set women as equals in his church.

<sup>12</sup> Pharisaism is a term that refers to the Jewish political sect (discussed in the Bible) called the Pharisees. It refers to hypocrisy (as the Pharisees were accused by Jesus as being hypocrites), and elitism and separatism. Popularly, it seems to refer mostly to hypocrisy, as that is the New Testament legacy left by Jesus' accusations. In this reading it simply shows that the husband (Count Zinzendorf) who is praising his wife in this section trusted her to discern hypocrisy in the people he was leading, and in the people whom he dealt with on a daily basis.

would have governed my whole economy so wisely, richly, and hospitably when circumstances commanded? Who have taken indifferently the part of servant or mistress, without on the one side affecting an especial spirituality, on the other being sullied by any worldly pride? Who, in a community where all ranks are eager to be on a level, would, from wise and real causes, have known how to maintain inward and outward distinctions? Who, without a murmur, have seen her husband encounter such dangers by land and sea? Who undertaken with him and sustained such astonishing pilgrimages! Who amid such difficulties always held up her head, and supported me? Who found so many hundred thousands and acquitted them on her own credit? And, finally, who, of all human beings, would so well understand and interpret to others my inner and outer being as this one, of such nobleness in her way of thinking, such great intellectual capacity, and free from the theological perplexities that enveloped me?"

An observer adds this testimony.

We may in many marriages regard it as the best arrangement, if the man has so much advantage over his wife that she can, without much thought of her own, be, by him, led and directed, as by a father. But it was not so with the Count and his consort. She was not made to be a copy; she was an original; and, while she loved and honored him, she thought for herself on all subjects with so much intelligence, that he could and did look on her as a sister and friend also."

Such a woman is the sister and friend of all beings, as the worthy man is their brother and helper.<-- -->

[THE GREAT RADICAL DUALISM]

The especial genius of woman I believe to be electrical in movement, intuitive in function, spiritual in tendency. She is great not so easily in classification, or re-creation, as in an instinctive seizure of causes, and a simple breathing out of what she receives that has the singleness of life, rather than the selecting or energizing of art.

More native to her is it to be the living model of the artist, than to set apart from herself any one form in objective reality; more native to inspire and receive the poem than to create it. In so far as soul is in her completely developed, all soul is the same; but as far as it is modified in her as woman, it flows, it breathes, it sings, rather than deposits soil, or finishes work, and that which is especially feminine flushes in blossom the face of earth, and pervades like air and water all this seeming solid globe, daily renewing and purifying its life. Such may be the especially feminine element, spoken of as Femality. But it is no more the order of nature that it should be incarnated pure in any form, than that the masculine energy should exist unmingled with it in any form. Male and female represent the two sides of the great radical dualism. But, in fact, they are perpetually passing into one another. Fluid hardens to solid, solid rushes to fluid. There is no wholly masculine man<sup>13</sup>, no purely feminine woman.

---

<sup>13</sup> 18. Hercules is a greek son of the gods, he is depicted as a creature with multiple faces, and contradictory characteristics. Hercules is viewed in history as being a strong perfect depiction of a man, but the story shows that he is easily manipulated by evil. Because Hercules was created due to his father cheating on his first wife, Hercules is followed his entire life by her to bring upon evil and try and kill

History jeers at the attempts of physiologists to bind great original laws by the forms which flow from them. They make a rule; they say from observation what can and cannot be. In vain! Nature provides exceptions to every rule. She sends women to battle, and sets Hercules spinning; she enables women to bear immense burdens, cold, and frost; she enables the man, who feels maternal love, to nourish his infant like a mother. Of late she plays still gayer pranks. Not only she deprives organizations, but organs, of a necessary end. She enables people to read with the top of the head, and see with the pit of the stomach. Presently she will make a female Newton<sup>14</sup>, and a male Syren<sup>15</sup>.

---

hercules. The evils that are “placed” upon hercules, drives him to kill his first wife and their children. This old story shows women as either manipulating and dark or victims of men’s strength rather than beings themselves.

<sup>14</sup> Sir Isaac Newton was a British philosopher and scientist. Most famous for the legend in which he discovers and formulates the theory of gravity after an apple fell on his head, he was perhaps the most influential early scientist and the Einstein of his day. His father died before he was born, and he hated his stepfather, but was raised in relative comfort despite having been born in the 1600s, the most turbulent century of English history. He was born in 1642, the year that the English Civil War began, and grew up through the course of that war, the reign of Cromwell, and the eventual restoration of King Charles II.

Newton wrote on a variety of subjects ranging from theology, alchemy, mathematics, astronomy, and the growing field of physics. The wealth that he and his family possessed allowed him to publish and perform his work without patronage, something that was often necessary in the days before research grants and governmental funding.

His most important work, relatively speaking, was in the areas of physics, optics, and mathematics. The theory of gravity is the discovery for which he is best known, but he also came up with discoveries in the area of optics. His interest in astronomy happened later, but he was influential in studying the orbits of the Earth and other bodies, primarily the Moon. In math, he was one of the discoverers of calculus, though he pursued a bitter quarrel with the German mathematician Gottfried Leibniz, who was the other pioneer in that area, over whom should get the credit. He also contributed inventions, such as the reflecting telescope.

Perhaps the most important thing related to his mention here in Fuller was that he never married, giving his life to the full pursuit and study of scientific subjects instead. By this, we can see that the female Newton referenced here would be a woman who followed his path, a pure scientist and not interested in marriage. This would be a subversion of the expected path a 19th century woman would be expected to take. Her statement here, of a female Newton, represents how at this time Isaac Newton was considered a model of man as rational, dedicated, intelligent, and unfettered by familial responsibilities. An example of the last can be seen in the double standard often applied to those conducting extramarital affairs, with the woman being treated much worse by society than the man, which shows that culture did not consider family life to be a masculine occupation.

Newton, the unmarried philosopher dedicated to science and rationalism, is a classic male archetype. So by choosing him here as an example of how both sides in her Dualism flow into each other, she subverts the idea of this archetype being exclusively male, and predicts that there will be a female of this type and caliber. Her choice here was therefore probably a conscious and thoughtful one, and lends to the overall thesis of her work.

<sup>15</sup> 19: Sirens are seductive half-woman, half-bird creatures in Greek mythology. They reside on an island in the Mediterranean Sea (the location varies) and sing sweet songs that compel mariners to sail their ships towards the island, only to end up shipwrecked on its rocky coast. They are probably most

Man partakes of the feminine in the Apollo, woman of the Masculine as Minerva<sup>16</sup>.

Let us be wise and not impede the soul. Let her work as she will. Let us have one creative energy, one incessant revelation. Let it take what form it will, and let us not bind it by the past to man or woman, black or white. Jove sprang from Rhea<sup>17</sup>, Pallas from Jove. So let it be.

If it has been the tendency of the past remarks to call woman rather to the Minerva side,--if I, unlike the more generous writer, have spoken from society no less than the soul,--let it be pardoned. It is love that has caused this, love for many incarcerated souls, that might be freed could the idea of religious self-dependence be established in them, could the weakening habit of dependence on others be broken up.

Every relation, every gradation of nature, is incalculably precious, but only to the soul which is poised upon itself, and to whom no loss, no change, can bring dull discord, for it is in harmony with the central soul.

If any individual live too much in relations, so that he becomes a stranger to the resources of his own nature, he falls after a while into a distraction, or imbecility, from which he can only be cured by a time of isolation, which gives the renovating fountains time to rise up. With a society it is the same. Many minds, deprived of the traditionary or instinctive means of passing a cheerful existence, must find help in self-impulse or perish. It is therefore that while any elevation, in the view of union, is to be hailed with joy, we shall not decline celibacy as the great fact of the time. It is one from which no vow, no arrangement, can at present save a thinking mind. For now the rowers are pausing on their oars, they wait a change before they can pull together. All tends to illustrate the thought of a wise contemporary. Union is only possible to those who are units. To be fit for relations in time, souls, whether of man or woman, must be able

---

well-known from their appearance in Homer's *Odyssey*, in which they try to entice Odysseus and his crew with their beautiful singing. Odysseus has his crew plug their ears with beeswax so they can't hear the Siren's song. Odysseus then has his crew tie him up on the mast of the ship as he wants to hear their song without having to steer the ship to its destruction. Fuller's reference to the Sirens comes at a point in her essay where she gives some examples of traditional gender roles reversed. What she seems to be getting at is that aside from having traditional masculine traits, men also have the capacity to be "male Syrens"; a capacity for men to display traditional feminine qualities as well.

<sup>16</sup> Minerva was the Roman goddess of wisdom, similar to (and equated with) the Greek goddess Athena. Minerva was the goddess of many things in addition to wisdom, including the arts and war, The reference in this work is likely to the reason that her wisdom shows, a traditionally "masculine" trait. Also, the fact that she was a goddess of war as well, to rival even Mars, shows that she was a beautiful woman with masculinity in her as well, and reinforces the point that Fuller is making that the gender assignments of particular traits are largely artificial and do not take into account the fullness of the mind and heart. Fuller is arguing for an interpretation of men and women that allow them both to experience the complete range of abilities, desires, and thought; Minerva is a female example of this ideal. Source used:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minerva>

<sup>17</sup> 21 The use of Rhea, Pallas and Jove are an example of love in this part of the writing. Or conforming to the idea that it doesn't matter what the person does so long as that person is content.

to do without them in the spirit.

It is therefore that I would have woman lay aside all thought, such as she habitually cherishes, of being taught and led by men. I would have her, like the Indian girl, dedicate herself to the Sun, the Sun of Truth, and go no where if his beams did not make clear the path. I would have her free from compromise, from complaisance, from helplessness, because I would have her good enough and strong enough to love one and all beings, from the fulness, not the poverty of being. Men, as at present instructed, will not help this work, because they also are under the slavery of habit. I have seen with delight their poetic impulses. A sister is the fairest ideal, and how nobly Wordsworth, and even Byron, have written of a sister.

There is no sweeter sight than to see a father with his little daughter. Very vulgar men become refined to the eye when leading a little girl by the hand. At that moment the right relation between the sexes seems established, and you feel as if the man would aid in the noblest purpose, if you ask him in behalf of his little daughter. Once two fine figures stood before me, thus. The father of very intellectual aspect, his falcon eye softened by affection as he looked down on his fair child, she the image of himself, only more graceful and brilliant in expression. I was reminded of Southey's *Kehama*<sup>18</sup>, when lo, the dream was rudely broken. They were talking of education, and he said.

"I shall not have Maria brought too forward. If she knows too much, she will never find a husband; superior women hardly ever can."

"Surely," said his wife, with a blush, "you wish Maria to be as good and wise as she can, whether it will help her to marriage or not."

"No," he persisted, "I want her to have a sphere and a home, and some one to protect her when I am gone."

It was a trifling incident, but made a deep impression. I felt that the holiest relations fail to instruct the unprepared and perverted mind. If this man, indeed, would have looked at it on the other side, he was the last that would have been willing to have been taken himself for the home and protection he could give, but would have been much more likely to repeat the tale of Alcibiades with his phials.

But men do *not* look at both sides, and women must leave off asking them and being influenced by them, but retire within themselves, and explore the groundwork of being till they find their peculiar secret. Then when they come forth again, renovated and baptized, they will know how

---

<sup>18</sup> Robert Southey's *Curse of Kehama* is a twenty four section poem written in 1810. The story is about the evil priest Kehama who obtains significant power on his quest to become a god. Kehama's son Arvalan attempts to have his way with a peasant girl named Kailyal, but is stopped and killed by a man named Ladurlad who protects the peasant girl throughout the poem. Ladurlad is cursed by Kehama for killing his son but uses the curse to his advantage by keeping the peasant girl safe, and preventing any harm from everyone including herself.

Wikipedia contributors. "Curse of Kehama." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 26 Apr. 2012. Web. 19 Feb. 2013.

to turn all dross to gold, and will be rich and free though they live in a hut, tranquil, if in a crowd. Then their sweet singing shall not be from passionate impulse, but the lyrical overflow of a divine rapture, and a new music shall be elucidated from this many-chorded world.

Grant her then for a while the armor and the javelin. Let her put from her the press of other minds and meditate in virgin loneliness. The same idea shall reappear in due time as Muse<sup>1920</sup>, or

---

<sup>19</sup> In the earliest mythological references, there are only three Muses: one who is born from the movement of water, another who makes sound by striking the air, and a third who is embodied only in the human voice. However, in Greek and Roman mythology, the number of Muses was increased to nine, and they became known as the personification of knowledge and the arts, especially literature, dance and music and poetry. They were said to be the nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, who was the goddess of memory. As time went on, they were given individual names and each one became associated with a different form of art. The Nine Muses are now traditionally identified as follows. Calliope: the Muse of heroic or epic poetry. Her name translates to “She of the Beautiful Voice” and she is often portrayed holding a writing tablet. Clio: the Muse of history. Her name translates to “the Proclaimer,” and she is often shown holding a scroll. Erato: the Muse of lyric and love poetry. Her name means “Lovely” and she is often playing a lyre. Euterpe: the Muse of music or flutes. Her name means “the Well Pleasing” and she is usually shown playing a flute. Melpomene: the Muse of tragedy. Her name translates to “the Songstress” and she is portrayed holding a tragic mask. Polymnia: the Muse of sacred poetry or of the mimic art. Her name means “She of the Many Hymns,” and she is often shown with a pensive look. Terpsichore: the Muse of dancing and choral song. Her name translates to “Delighting in Dance,” and she is shown dancing and holding a lyre). Thalia: the Muse of comedy. Her name means “Blooming” or “Luxuriant” and she traditionally holds a comic mask. Urania: the Muse of astronomy. Her name means “Heavenly,” and she is usually portrayed holding a globe.

It is an established literary tradition to invoke “the Muse” at the beginning of a poem or sometimes a work of prose.

As it is used by Margaret Fuller, it seems to suggest that if women turn their backs on the expectations of males, and look within themselves for inspiration, they will be communing with the Muse, or alternately, through this kind of self-examination, they can establish themselves as a kind of Muse.

<sup>20</sup> The Roman Goddess **Ceres**, or as the Greeks would call her, Demeter, is the Goddess of the harvest and fertility. According to the myths, she was the first to teach humanity agriculture, and how to crop grain. Ceres is only one of many agricultural deities that the Romans looked to for worship, but she was one of the most popular, and had many “helper Gods” to call upon. She was also invoked at marriage ceremonies and in funeral rites, because she could bring life and bestow death onto the land every year. She is also looked upon as the Goddess of Motherly Relationships, because she held great love for her daughter Proserpina (Persephone), the unfortunate wife of the God of the Underworld, Dis Pater (who was later in the religion combined with the God Pluto, equivalent to Hades). Before Proserpina was married off, Ceres was the ultimate mother, doing whatever she could to make the world

Ceres<sup>21</sup>, the all-kindly, patient Earth-Spirit.

I tire every one with my Goethean illustrations. But it cannot be helped.

Goethe, the great mind which gave itself absolutely to the leadings of truth, and let rise through him the waves which are still advancing through the century, was its intellectual prophet. Those who know him, see, daily, his thought fulfilled more and more, and they must speak of it, till his name weary and even nauseate, as all great names have in their time. And I cannot spare the reader, if such there be, his wonderful sight as to the prospects and wants of women.

As his Wilhelm grows in life and advances in wisdom, he becomes acquainted with women of more and more character, rising from Mariana to Macaria.

Macaria, bound with the heavenly bodies in fixed revolutions, the centre of all relations, herself unrelated, expresses the Minerva side.<sup>22</sup>

Mignon, the electrical, inspired lyrical nature.

All these women, though we see them in relations, we can think of as unrelated. They all are very individual, yet seem nowhere restrained. They satisfy for the present, yet arouse an infinite expectation.

The economist Theresa, the benevolent Natalia, the fair Saint, have chosen a path, but their thoughts are not narrowed to it. The functions of life to them are not ends, but suggestions. Thus to them all things are important, because none is necessary. Their different characters have fair play, and each is beautiful in its minute indications, for nothing is enforced or conventional, but everything, however slight, grows from the essential life of the being.

Mignon and Theresa wear male attire when they like, and it is graceful for them to do so, while Macaria is confined to her arm chair behind the green curtain, and the Fair Saint could not bear a speck of dust on her robe.

All things are in their places in this little world because all is natural and free, just as "there is room for everything out of doors." Yet all is rounded in by natural harmony which will always arise where Truth and Love are sought in the light of freedom.

Goethe's book bodes an era of freedom like its own, of "extraordinary generous seeking," and new revelations. New individualities shall be developed in the actual world, which shall advance upon it as gently as the figures come out upon his canvass.

---

beautiful for her daughter. After her daughter's marriage, Ceres shut herself in one of her temples among humanity and hid for a year while the world died. This was remedied by Jupiter (Zeus) who decreed that Proserpina would spend three months in the spring and summer with her mother, so that Ceres' good mood would give way to the harvest in order for humankind to continue thriving.

Because Ceres embodies motherhood, she is included in Fuller's text as one of women's classic life roles that they are to uphold as a societal standard. But, women are also to understand that they are the ones who create new life and even new innovations if they can take time to be introspective, and are given the means and assistance to be productive.

<sup>21</sup>

<sup>22</sup>

A profound thinker has said "no married woman can represent the female world, for she belongs to her husband. The idea of woman must be represented by a virgin."

But that is the very fault of marriage, and of the present relation between the sexes, that the woman does belong to the man, instead of forming a whole with him. Were it otherwise there would be no such limitation to the thought.

Woman, self-centred, would never be absorbed by any relation; it would be only an experience to her as to man. It is a vulgar error that love, a love to woman is her whole existence; she also is born for Truth and Love in their universal energy. Would she but assume her inheritance, Mary would not be the only Virgin Mother. Not Manzoni alone would celebrate in his wife the virgin mind with the maternal wisdom and conjugal affections. The soul is ever young, ever virgin. And will not she soon appear? The woman who shall vindicate their birthright for all women; who shall teach them what to claim, and how to use what they obtain? Shall not her name be for her era Victoria, for her country and her life Virginia (27)? Yet predictions are rash; she herself must teach us to give her the fitting name.

[Previously inserted as a Footer instead of a Footnote.] Athena is a Greek goddess (her Roman counterpart is Minerva). She is most notably the goddess of courage, wisdom, and inspiration. She is also the patroness of Athens. The favorite daughter of Zeus, Athena was known as the Goddess of wisdom and the virgin saint of Athens. Her name is essentially the same as the city state's. The reference here is most likely describing the inspirational aspect of the goddess.

1843

*26. Queen Victoria: reigned over the British Empire from 1837 to 1901. She did very little for womens rights and believed that women were unable to protect themselves. Very few laws were passed to help women but: In 1839, a law was passed which stated that if a marriage broke down and the parents separated, children under seven years of age should stay with their mother.*

*In 1857, women could divorce husbands who were cruel to them or husbands who had left them.*

*In 1870, women were allowed to keep money they had earned.*

*In 1891, women could not be forced to live with husbands unless they wished to.*

<http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/womensrights.htm>

27. Queen Elizabeth I was known as the Virgin Queen, thus Virginia was a fitting name for the colony she commissioned Walter Raleigh to build North of the Spanish territory, or what is known today as Florida. Using the name Virginia here probably is not referring to Queen Elizabeth I, but rather how the use of the name "the Virgin Queen" came about.

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/31100/how-all-50-states-got-their-names>