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# Hemans and Home: Victorianism, Feminine “Internal Enemies,” and the Domestication of National Identity

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IF ANY PHRASE still evokes Victorianism as conceived early in this century, surely the first line of Felicia Hemans’s “Casabianca” does. “The boy stood on the burning deck” conjures up a familiar vision of unconscious ironies and lost innocence. Calling to mind drawing rooms where parents comfortably weep to the recitation of earnest or sullen children, the line revives the mockery, nostalgia, and anxiety with which early-twentieth-century critics approached Victorian writing. To quote “the burning deck” raises a smile; to suggest that Hemans’s verse be studied seriously raises the specter of creeping Victorianism. Wendell V. Harris worries that unless we admit works such as “Casabianca” to be beyond the literary pale—the “real, if unstated, limits” of canonicity—we may be driven to “defend the sentimental description and inspirational storytelling that delighted our grandparents” (117). More dramatically, Virgil Nemoianu warns feminists that recuperation of “marginalized” women’s literature could “backfire cruelly”: what if the likes of Felicia Hemans were unleashed on unsuspecting classrooms (240)?<sup>1</sup> At points, the survival of critical literary study seems to depend on twentieth-century critics’ power to relegate to the parlors of the past the complacent Victorian pleasures represented by Hemans and her patriotic verse.

That Hemans’s verse should thus symbolize Victorianism, and particularly Victorian patriotic feeling, is both fitting and ironic. Perhaps no single poet’s work better expresses the power of Victorian domestic patriotism, which sought to cast warriors as tender homebodies and children’s playing fields as military training grounds. Enlightenment patriotism might tend to invoke liberty, whether defined by reason or constitutional monarchy, and Romantic patriotism might call on the organic unity of the folk nation.<sup>2</sup> But

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Victorian culture tells soldiers that they fight for home, and it often does so in the voice of Felicia Hemans. Hemans's verse is never simply Victorian, however; and where it is most Victorian, it is perhaps least simple.

### The Burning Deck: Patriotic Passions and Instabilities

Few poetic careers can have been more thoroughly devoted to the construction of national identity than was that of Felicia Hemans. From her first mild critical success, *England and Spain; or, Valour and Patriotism*, to her dying dream of composing a great patriotic work, Hemans positioned herself as a national poet. Her fascination with patriotism and her "engrossing" if ambivalent "delight in military glory" (Chorley 1: 21–22) were central to her work and inseparable from her famous melancholy and her concern with defining womanhood.

Ironically, what led Hemans to anticipate (if not, indeed, partially to effect) the Victorians' assumption of an intrinsic connection between the values of domestic sanctity and of imperial domination may have been her attempts to reconcile Romantic concepts of organic national identity with earlier thought. For Hemans was deeply committed to a form of Enlightenment thinking that envisioned the glory of nationalism as international. Like William Hazlitt, she believed that "patriotism is . . . a law of our rational and moral nature," a "broad and firm basis" on which "collateral circumstances" such as "language, literature, manners, national customs" are merely a "superstructure" (Hazlitt 68). She thus won fame not only as a poet of English patriotism but also as the author of "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers" (*Poetical Works* 431–32), and she glorified the courage both of Crusaders and of their Arab opponents. She wrote bloodthirsty British victory and battle songs, but her martial verse also celebrated (carefully chosen) armies of Greeks, Germans, Moors, Norwegians, Spaniards, and Welsh, among others. However Anglicized and homogenized, Hemans's protagonists are nothing if not diverse in "collateral circumstances."<sup>3</sup>

All the same, Hemans was steeped in Scott and

Wordsworth; she dreamed of nations united not merely by reason but also by mythic folk identities inseparable from relations to the land. While Hazlitt envisioned patriotism that could not be "in a strict or exclusive sense, a natural or personal affection," Hemans's patriotism attempted to unite such an affection to "reason and reflection" (Hazlitt 67), thus creating a stable, satisfying feminine position that inextricably connected nation and family.<sup>4</sup> By her own account, she failed in this endeavor. Like many Romantic poets, she never produced the unified, monumental work of which she dreamed; her great regret, she said on her deathbed, was that she had never created "some more noble and complete work . . . which might permanently take its place as the work of a British poetess" (Chorley 2: 213).

Even aside from conflicts between Enlightenment internationalism and what Marlon Ross calls "the romance of Wordsworthian organicism" ("Romancing" 65), Hemans's national project may have faced insuperable obstacles. As the daughter of an Irish father and a part-German, part-Italian mother and as a resident of Wales for most of her life, Hemans herself might well have wondered precisely what a "British poetess" was; and as a woman, she faced major challenges to her ambition of writing patriotic poetry altogether. By 1808, the year in which her first book, *Poems*, was published, Hemans was already aware of her quandary. "My whole heart and soul are interested for the gallant patriots" of the Peninsular War, she wrote an aunt, "and though females are forbidden to interfere in politics, yet as I have a dear, dear brother . . . on the scene of action, I may be allowed to feel some ardor . . ." (Chorley 1: 25).<sup>5</sup> Hemans's strategy seems transparent, and indeed throughout her career the poet was to "plac[e] her political interest behind the veil of domesticity and writ[e] political poems that take as their immediate concern the trials of feminine affection" (Ross, *Contours* 285). In the end, however, the domestic veil may have been as destabilizing as the political interests it sought to feminize.

In 1812 Felicia Dorothea Browne married a soldier, Alfred Hemans, and though the mar-

riage failed, she retained her “ardor” for military subjects. If, as Norma Clarke asserts, Hemans’s most successful work, “Records of Woman,” continually “return[s] to and rework[s] the central event in her life as a woman artist: her husband’s desertion of her . . . and her continuing literary fame” (80), it may also be true that the book returns to and reworks central issues in her life as a female patriot, including ambivalence about the connections between domestic happiness and military glory. Given the continuing critical tendency to read women’s intellectual commitments as the result of their romantic experiences, it might be tempting to attribute such ambivalence to Hemans’s marriage. This explanation would be a mistake, however, for the unmarried Felicia Browne was fully conversant with the patriotic positions of her time and was already grappling with (or seeking to evade or mediate) conflicts within their constructions of femininity and of domestic values. In *Poems*, published when Hemans was fifteen, the dialogue “The Spartan Mother and Her Son” (13–14) casts war purely as a chance to win either honor or a “glorious grave / Crown’d with the patriot-honours of the brave.” “My noble Isadas,” the Spartan mother says, “to me what pride, / Were thou to die—as thy brave father died!” The remainder of the volume seems consistent with this position: the tear called up by the hero’s death in “Sacred to the Memory of Lord Nelson,” for example (55–56), is “sweet” and “enthusiastic.” Nevertheless, as a note in “*The Domestic Affections*,” and *Other Poems* points out (89), in the same year that *Poems* was published Hemans composed a work in which self-division with respect to patriotism is unmistakable: “War and Peace: A Poem” (“*Domestic Affections*” 89–121).

The overall argument of “War and Peace” is irreproachably conventional: although war is evil, “if ever conscious right, / if ever justice arm’d [God] for the fight,” it is in the battle between “Albion” and France, the “Typhon of the world” (115, 106). At points, Hemans’s imagined victory song seems to usher in nothing less than the millennium:

“Goddess of th’ unconquer’d isles,  
“Freedom! triumph in our smiles!

“Blooming youth, and wisdom hoary,  
“Bards of fame, and sons of glory;  
“Albion! pillar of the main!  
“Monarchs! nations! join the strain!  
“Swell to heav’n th’ exulting voice;  
“Mortals, triumph! earth, rejoice! (119)

And yet, close to halfway through the poem, something happens. On one page, Hemans celebrates Sir John Moore’s victory at Corunna, promising him “high on [his] native shore a Cenotaph sublime” (101); on the next, she introduces figures of mortal mourners, successors to her earlier personification of Britain as a “Queen of Isles” whose “sorrow” over lost heroes merely “paled the kindling cheek of pride” (97, 98). “Near the cold urn th’ imploring mother stands! / Fix’d is her eye, her anguish cannot weep! / There all her hopes with joyful virtue sleep!” The mother will die of “soul-consuming grief” that “[m]ourns in no language, seeks for no relief” (102). So will the “fair lovely mourner o’er a Father’s tomb,” deprived of the chance to offer “filial sweetness” at the “hour of death.” “Ah! who can tell the thousands doom’d to moan, / Condemn’d by war, to hopeless grief unknown!” “Thou, laureate Victor!” Hemans apostrophizes her country,

when thy blazon’d shield,  
Wears the proud emblems of the conquer’d field;  
When trophies glitter on thy radiant car,  
And thronging myriads hail thee from afar;  
. . . . .  
Then could thine eyes each drooping mourner see,  
Behold each hopeless anguish, caus’d by thee;  
Hear, for each measure of the votive strain,  
The rending sigh that murmurs o’er the slain;  
See, for each banner fame and victory wave,  
Some sufferer bending o’er a soldier’s grave;  
How would that scene, with grief and horror  
fraught,  
Chill the warm glow, and check th’ exulting  
thought! (104, 105)

This passage seems meant as a bridge: having chastened England’s victory celebrations, Hemans proceeds to evoke Napoleon as “Ambition,” exercising the “Power of the ruthless arm, the deathful spear, / Unmov’d, unpitied in [his]

dread career" (106). Yet by characterizing England's exulting "laureate Victor" as blind to the human costs of war, Hemans implicitly connects his figure to that of Napoleon. The apparent bridge comes to seem more like the loop in a roller coaster: the passage turns the givens of military glory on their heads, offering a glimpse of the two armies as parallel in destruction.

In some senses, this near reversal is paradigmatic for Hemans's patriotic verse. Throughout her career, she ransacked extensive readings in literature, folklore, and world history for exemplary narratives in which the threatened or actual dissolution of family ties intersected with the exercise of feminine national heroism. The result was a kind of vital, fragmented, and self-subversive catalog of feminine patriotic subject positions—a body of work whose development often seems more centrifugal than linear and whose force seems to derive from its erratic course among and through contradictions, whether they are domestic and military values, Romantic and Enlightenment interpretations of patriotism, Christian pacifism and delight in military glory, or what John Lucas would call epic and pastoral modes of national poetry (4–7, 16–17).

What Victorian readers found in Hemans, then, was a fragmented, compelling, and complex range of patriotic positions, and the verses this audience favored—such as the silly, sinister, and explosive "Casabianca" (*Poetical Works* 398)—were often among the most disturbing. Like much of Hemans's work, "Casabianca" commemorates an actual event. By setting the tactically unnecessary death of a child at the heart of Britain's victory in the Battle of the Nile, the poem suggests the powerful, unstable fusion of domestic and military values that helped render Hemans's poetry influential. For despite this poem's idealistic emphasis on filial loyalty and chivalric family honor, "Casabianca" never fully defuses the horror of the history it evokes.

Young Casabianca, begging his unconscious father for release from a courageous, suicidal, and perhaps pointless exercise of military honor, is both patriotic martyr and senseless victim. The poem's didactic high point is its final lines: ". . . The noblest thing that perished there, / Was that young faithful heart." The child embodies

patriarchal family honor in the highest, most chivalric sense. Noble young Casabianca, "beautiful and bright," is "as born to rule the storm— / A creature of heroic blood, / A proud, though childlike form." Indeed, the courageous child is father to the warlike man: while practical considerations of national political power or of personal ambition may taint the father's courage, the son brings to the battle only his "young faithful heart." His death thus upholds and extends the family—and the national—honor, by restoring military endeavor to its originary purity and innocence, its sources in the child's love of and blind faith in home and family. The more strategically useless such a willing death in battle, the more pure and poignant its symbolic significance. Surely young Casabianca's heirs rode in "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

The poem's emotional center lies elsewhere, however, in the desperate child's reiterated "Speak, Father!" and his question "Must I stay?" Here the fusion of familial and national loyalties works on a different level. The child's futile cry for his father evokes an experience of abandonment that is both primitive and deeply domestic. By terming Casabianca's heart the "noblest thing" lost, Hemans divides this domestic embodiment of familial agony from the rest of the battle's costs and uses it to challenge, if not discredit, the "nobility" of the battle's conscious, adult actors—and victors. The scene is a damning enactment of the brutal waste of war, of the deadly implications of patriarchal honor, and of the betrayal of familial ties by adults intent on that honor. For a few moments, Casabianca is the ultimate orphan of war, yet he is also in some sense its unwitting propagator, just as his father is his unwitting murderer.

#### **From Spartan Mothers to Internal Enemies: Hemans's Patriotic Heroines**

Within what Helen Cooper, Adrienne Munich, and Susan Squier term the "war narrative of the sexual trope, in which love figures as both sexual congress and sexual productivity" ("Arms" 9), twentieth-century criticism has tended to position Hemans's patriotic heroines somewhere between the Spartan mother and Tennyson's

sweetly bloodthirsty Maud. Many of Hemans's verses bear an affinity to Maud's "passionate ballad gallant and gay" (1052); they offer ample evidence of the extent to which the phrase "arms and the woman" evokes activities that may be at once military, maternal, and erotic (Cooper, Munich, and Squier, "Arms" 9–10). While Hemans's verses deploy such a trope, however, they also point beyond it. In the poems most beloved by Victorians, the military struggle is often finished; what resonates is not a battle cry but the voice of a lone "sufferer bending over" a soldier's body or "grave" ("War and Peace"; "Domestic Affections" 105). This feminine patriotism still stands in primary relation to soldiers' bodies, but that relation, which need be neither maternal nor erotic, is mediated by death rather than birth. In reaching out toward the dead—whether to hold, accuse, or mourn them—Hemans's heroines and speakers give the phrase "arms and the woman" new meaning.

In *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel explores the cultural connections between femininity and the military dead, in terms of classical tragedy and of nineteenth-century conceptions of the state's relations to domesticity. The power of "divine law" is governed by femininity, he asserts, and it is this law that rules burial. Alive, soldiers belong to the state; dead, they must be "wed" to the "lap of the earth," returned to "elementary, eternal individuality."<sup>6</sup> For Hegel, the central feminine national figure is Antigone. If considered in the context of nation, he asserts, her rebellion would take on a new significance for the relations between femininity and the power of the state:

Taken in this form, [Antigone's action], which had been conceived as a simple movement of individualized pathos, discloses another aspect, and both the crime and the resulting destruction of the community disclose the actual form of their existence. Thus, human law in its general existence, the community, which in its effectivity altogether is masculinity and in its actual effectivity is the government, moves and maintains itself by wrenching into itself the special status of the household gods or the autonomous individuation into families, of which femininity is in charge, and by holding them in the continuity of its fluidity. Simultaneously, however,

the family is its element altogether, and the individual consciousness is its general operative basis.<sup>7</sup>

To assert its communal, impersonal jurisdiction, the law governed by masculinity ("human law," in Hegel's terms) must forcibly absorb and subdue its own "element." Masculinity may not allow the "divine law" governed by femininity to exercise autonomous authority but dare not deny its power altogether.

To the extent that the community retains its existence only through the disruption of familial happiness and through the dissolution of self-awareness within the general [awareness], [the community] engenders itself through what it oppresses and through what is at the same time essential to it—[and thus engenders] in femininity altogether its internal enemy.<sup>8</sup>

The "fluid" state contains feminine authority as if by chemical suspension, immersing and yet not dissolving it. As the representative of "divine law" and of the "law of weakness and darkness," femininity is both sacred and dangerous.<sup>9</sup> Like civil law in wartime, it must be remembered and revered, but for safety's sake it cannot be obeyed. Whereas martial law is theoretically an anomaly of national history, however, masculine law may represent history itself. In Hemans as in Hegel, masculine law has always already "suspended" feminine authority. Life is war: the weak, dark, divine law of femininity must await the peace of the millennium. Until then, femininity must remain the "eternal irony of the community," a site of resistance that is as symbolically indispensable as it is practically futile.<sup>10</sup>

At points in her work, Hemans seems allied with Hegel. These moments glorify, mourn, and accept the need of the state to engender itself by what it oppresses: they attempt to mobilize the "domestic affections" to the service of militaristic patriotism. At other points, however, often in confrontations with the real or imagined bodies of the dead, such attempts seem to falter. Hemans may collapse distinctions between the powers of domesticity and of war, creating chillingly ruthless heirs of the Spartan mother, or she may chart a deadly collision course between female

figures and a state whose brutality is implicitly unveiled as senseless. Poems in which despair jostles with energetic expressions of straightforward militarism, of feminist sexual politics, and of pacifism raise the specters of feminine “internal enemies” who refuse either to continue fighting for “divine law” or to reconcile themselves to failure.

Nineteenth-century women poets’ grappling with issues of national identity has yet to be fully explored, but the verses of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Frances E. W. Harper, Alice Meynell, and Lydia Sigourney indicate that Hemans’s mournful patriotism is central to a complex poetic tradition.<sup>11</sup> As Hemans’s work demonstrates, the “complementary but more often contradictory awarenesses” of national identity and of gender are inseparable (Lucas 7). Hemans’s work suggests that national awarenesses are paradoxical and inescapably gendered and that gender is shaped by its own contradictory awarenesses, including conceptions of national identity. Establishing feminine melancholy as something akin to a patriotic duty, Hemans’s verse endows the “nightingale’s burden” of nineteenth-century women’s poetry with national meaning (Walker 21–27). Her heroines’ Victorian heir is less Tennyson’s joyous Maud than the lachrymose Amelia of William Makepeace Thackeray’s *Vanity Fair*.<sup>12</sup>

Hemans’s deeply international (if culturally homogenized) patriotic heroines can be efficiently, if somewhat arbitrarily, divided into three groups.<sup>13</sup> Each group derives in some sense from the “lofty” Spartan mother whose “heroic worth” Hemans’s early poems repeatedly praise (*Modern Greece* 28), and each establishes a connection between femininity and patriotism only to undermine it. The most striking, given Hemans’s Victorian reputation for decorous calm,<sup>14</sup> are the desperate protagonists of narrative poems that recount cleared-cut actions resembling those in newly recovered folk ballads. These poems explore and exoticize feminine modes of what Lucas would call epic heroism: violent, revolutionary, disruptive—and, not incidentally, ambiguously related to patriarchal power.

As purely righteous as religious martyrs, fig-

ures such as the Suliote mother, the wife of Asdrubal, the bride of the Greek isle, or the widow of Crescentius commit murder, suicide, or both as an ultimate expression of duty (“*Forest*” 179–81; *Tales* 189–96; “*Records*” 21–34; *Tales* 1–49). Their deadly energy derives from the political disruption of merged domestic and national order. As Asdrubal’s wife cries before stabbing her children, “[T]he arms that cannot save / Have been their cradle, and shall be their grave” (*Tales* 196). These women have no choice: for them, as Hemans writes in *Modern Greece*, “all [is] lost—all, save the power to die / The wild indignant death of savage liberty” (26). Yet the exhilaration with which they enact as well as avenge their families’ dissolution often blurs the line between self-sacrifice and rage. The Suliote’s leap is perhaps too much like that of Hemans’s Sappho, for example (*Poetical Works* 532); Asdrubal’s wife, for all her noble classical motives, looks suspiciously like the allegedly more primitive protagonist of “Indian Woman’s Death-Song” (“*Records*” 104–08), who drowns herself and her child to escape “woman’s weary lot” (107); and while the bride of the Greek isle, last seen on a burning deck, avenges the death of her compatriots and groom, she also brilliantly reenacts her earlier anguish at separation from her mother, who must watch the conflagration from shore (“*Records*” 32–34). Indeed, Hemans’s evocation of suttee in this poem suggests that the bride may stand as a torch to marital misery, an embodiment of preemptive self-sacrifice.<sup>15</sup>

These are figures in extremis; they are heroines, but for Hemans they are also women whose sanity, and perhaps even humanity, is questionable. Asdrubal’s wife, for example, is “frantic . . . frenzied,” a “being more than earthly, in whose eye / There dwells a strange and fierce ascendancy”:

The dark profusion of her locks unbound,  
Waves like a warrior’s floating plumage round;  
Flush’d is her cheek, inspired her haughty mien,  
She seems th’ avenging goddess of the scene.

(*Tales* 194)

The widow of Crescentius is scarcely more reassuring. A sinister answer to the cross-dressing

“Cesario” of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, she uses her minstrel disguise to serenade and then poison the man who is her country’s enemy and husband’s killer. “Oh! there are sorrows which impart / A sternness foreign to the heart,” she warns:

And rushing with an earthquake’s power,  
That makes a desert in an hour;  
Rouse the dread passions in their course,  
As tempests wake the billows’ force!

The widow is a Byronic figure:

“He died, and I was changed—my soul,  
A lonely wanderer, spurn’d control.  
From peace, and light, and glory hurl’d,  
The outcast of a purer world,  
I saw each brighter hope o’erthrown,  
And lived for one dread task alone.”  
(*Tales* 28, 29, 36)

Seeing himself bereft of “freedom to fight for at home,” Byron went off to fight for the freedom of his “neighbors.” For Hemans, in contrast, revolutionary nationalism remained either the neighbors’ business or the subject of nostalgia or of fantasy.<sup>16</sup>

Closest to many Victorian critics’ hearts was another group of heroines—women like Ximena of “The Siege of Valencia: A Dramatic Poem” or Frau Stauffacher, the title character of “The Switzer’s Wife” (“*Records*” 37–43). Meek, devout, and Madonna-like, the Switzer’s wife mediates between epic and pastoral modes. Armed by the “sweet memory of our pleasant hearth,” her husband has “strength—if aught be strong on earth”; her (good) name is “armour” for his “heart” (42, 43). Hemans is closing her Byron here. Behind a series of such poems stands her admiration for Goethe’s glorification of women who send their warriors off with prayers and tearful smiles and often then languish and fade alone. Through the Switzer’s wife, Hemans also edges toward home, for as her letters and verses make clear, the poet felt a strong bond to the Swiss. She paralleled their mountain independence with that of the Welsh; she identified their famous *Heimweh* ‘homesickness’ with her

own (Owen 172); and perhaps above all, she seems to have seen in Switzerland a small, safe model of the interconnecting traditions of national independence and individual liberty that she envisioned for “Albion.”<sup>17</sup> Intellectually and structurally, the Switzer’s wife is an intermediate figure between revolutionary and domestic heroines. Indeed, she may have helped to mediate not only between pastoral and epic poetry but also between conceptions of Britain as an isolated, independent folk entity and as an imperial power (Ross, “Romancing” 56–57). Certainly mid-century readers failed to register any difference between the Swiss woman’s release of her husband to protect a family home and a British woman’s sacrifice in sending her husband off to defend an empire. Never mind that Switzerland was the nonimperial country par excellence (despite the Swiss mercenaries in whom homesickness was first diagnosed [Hobsbawm 137]); never mind that Frau Stauffacher’s prayerful surrender of domestic happiness springs from the same revolutionary grounds as the actions of Hemans’s violent heroines. The Switzer’s wife could be appropriated by Victorians as an honorary English national heroine—an association that gave domestic courage a touch of glory, even while annexing the moral force of the local freedom fighter to imperial ends.

Where Frau Stauffacher acts, other heroines of domestic patriotism endure. Their narratives often begin with the warrior gone and cast women’s national loyalty as synonymous with more or less passive acquiescence to the suffering caused by separation through war. Often that suffering is fatal. Once the poet and soldier Körner lies in a “hero’s tomb,” for example, his “faithful-hearted” sister seeks only “[d]eath, death, to still the yearning for the dead” (“Körner and His Sister”; “*Records*” 246–49). “Thou hast thine oak, thy trophy:—” Hemans assures Körner, “what hath she?— / Her own blest place by thee!” In “Troubadour Song,” such fading takes on a more sinister aspect (*Poetical Works* 383). A warrior, having eluded “a thousand arrows,” returns home to find that his beloved has died “as roses die”: “There was death within the smiling home— / How had death found her there?”

Here, too, however, Hemans's poems undercut one another. Just as the patriotic violence of Asdrubal's wife has its subversive counterpart in the Indian woman's killing of herself and her child, so the sacrifice of the Switzer's wife has an exotic counterpart in nonpatriotic submission: that of the heroine of "The Hebrew Mother," who surrenders her son to be educated by the male authorities of her religion (*Poetical Works* 400–01). Like the Indian woman, the Hebrew mother appears in a context that stresses the sexual-political implications of her action rather than the patriotic ones.

Hemans also provides a deadly, if sympathetic, exoticized counterfigure to the Switzer's wife: a pious, dovelike Muslim woman whose eloquence and maternal passion lead to the senseless devastation of an idyllic city in India ("The Indian City"; "Records" 83–96). To be sure, this heroine's actions do not precisely parallel those of her more famous sister. Had she not left home in pilgrimage, the Indians would not have slaughtered her son; and had she not sought vengeance, the lost Indian city would have continued to stand. Still, this mother is a disturbing reminder that good women may support or even inspire bad wars.

Hemans's famous "Woman on the Field of Battle" features a member of the poet's final group of heroines ("Songs" 123–26). "Strangely, sadly fair," the protagonist lies beside a "banner and shiver'd crest," proof that "amidst the best / [Her] work was done."

Why?—ask the true heart why  
 Woman hath been  
 Ever, where brave men die,  
 Unshrinking seen?

Unto this harvest ground  
 Proud reapers came,—  
 Some, for that stirring sound,  
 A warrior's name;

Some, for the stormy play  
 And joy of strife;  
 And some, to fling away  
 A weary life;—

But thou, pale sleeper, thou,  
 With the slight frame,

And the rich locks, whose glow  
 Death cannot tame:

Only one thought, one power,  
 Thee could have led,  
 So, through the tempest's hour,  
 To lift thy head!

The power, of course, is love, which wrenched this figure, like young Casabianca, from domestic safety to death in battle. Domestic affection justified not only military ardor but also action: love won the heroine "a place" in the "harvest" of the "haughty Dead," the "reapers" who beat the Grim Reaper himself by grasping honor, sport, or surcease from weariness. So far, this poem seems merely to unite the virtues of Hemans's desperate and domestic heroines. The final verse, however, strikes a new and disquieting note. What drove the heroine to the battlefield was love of a particular kind:

Only the true, the strong,  
 The love, whose trust  
 Woman's deep soul too long  
 Pours on the dust!

Instead of being mutually reinforcing, the sacrifices of domesticity and of nationalism become mutually subversive. Is this a Christian scene? Certainly no pacific afterlife arises to redeem the spilling of this figure's blood or of her love. As both are poured out "on the dust," apparently in vain, families and empires implicitly blend in an image of pagan ritual (self-)slaughter "too long" retained.

This point leads to the heart of a nineteenth-century critical controversy: does Hemans's overwhelming melancholy cast doubt on her faith in redemption, whether of soldiers' blood or of women's love (including love of poetry)?<sup>18</sup> Proponents of both sides might well have turned to the third group of Hemans heroines for support. Faltering or failed Spartan mothers, the protagonists of Hemans's dramas and of associated works such as "The Abencerrage" (*Tales* 51–156) are torn apart by conflicts between national loyalties (including adherence to patriotically defined family honor) and bonds of familial or romantic love; the characters' posi-

tion as Hegelian internal enemies is agonized and perhaps unstable.

At their most helpless, these heroines may be fully disoriented and victimized, like Moraima, in “De Chatillon” (*Poetical Works* 611–37), who says in confusion, “Who leads the foe? . . . I meant—I mean—my people” (618). At their most aggressive, they may echo Elmina, in “The Siege of Valencia” (“*Siege*” 91–247), who curses not only the Moors, for holding her sons hostage, but also her husband, for being willing to sacrifice the captives. She tells him that she hopes he comes to sit alone “within [his] vast, forsaken halls” and to learn too late that “dim phantoms from ancestral tombs, . . . all—all *glorious*”—can never “people that cold void” left by the loss of living children. Elmina’s rebellion is explicitly feminine:

Oh, cold and hard of heart!  
Thou shouldst be born for empire, since thy soul  
Thus lightly from all human bonds can free  
Its haughty flight!—Men! men! Too much is yours  
Of vantage; ye, that with a sound, a breath,  
A shadow, thus can fill the desolate space  
Of rooted up affections, o’er whose void  
Our yearning hearts must wither!—So it is,  
Dominion must be won! (122, 112–13)

Though traitorous, Elmina’s cry echoes throughout Hemans’s work, most often in the voice of an internal enemy whose feminine pacifism resigns itself to war on earth by hoping for a peaceable kingdom to come.<sup>19</sup>

In “The Image in Lava,” a particularly powerful example of Hemans’s feminine antiwar writing (“*Records*” 307–10), the discovery at Herculaneum of the stone imprint of a mother’s breast inspires an overt competition between the powers of the state and of the home:

Temple and tower have moulder’d,  
Empires from earth have pass’d,—  
And woman’s heart hath left a trace  
Those glories to outlast!

And childhood’s fragile image  
Thus fearfully enshrin’d,

Survives the proud memorials rear’d  
By conquerors of mankind.

What could have been a simple moral becomes increasingly complex as the brief poem progresses. Hemans’s Herculean mother, whose form was set as “a mournful seal” by “love and agony,” may have chosen death. “Perchance all vainly lavish’d / [Her] other love had been”; she might have found it “far better . . . to perish” than to risk losing the only person she had left to love. Thus, what imprinted itself “upon the dust,” outliving “the cities of renown / Wherein the mighty trust,” may be an expression of isolation and deprivation as well as of maternal love. Perhaps domestic affections have been no real alternative to the powers of empire, after all. Perhaps the image in lava memorializes not only the triumph but also the inadequacy of such love:

Immortal, oh! immortal  
Thou art, whose earthly glow  
Hath given these ashes holiness—  
It must, it *must* be so!

It must be so, Hemans seems to imply, because it would be too terrible if it was not. “The Illuminated City” (“*Records*” 283–85), a poem much admired by Victorian critics, offers a more secular echo of Elmina’s feminine suspicion of military glory. Drowned in the “music of victory,” which shakes its streets “like a conqueror’s car,” Hemans’s dazzling city is an emblem of the “proud mantle” obscuring both the dead on the battlefield and their mourners at home, “[t]he things thou shouldst gaze on, the sad and true.”<sup>20</sup> In her intimate tone, the isolated, wandering speaker in “The Illuminated City” unmistakably resembles the Cassandra-like speaker of “Second Sight” (“*Songs*” 249–51). The confessional opening line of the poem, “A mournful gift is mine, O friends!” proposes that the ability to pierce the veil of military glory is less a skill than a curse. Just as the speaker hears

the still small moan of Time,  
Through the ivy branches made,

Where the palace, in its glory's prime,  
With the sunshine stands array'd

she sees the "blood-red future stain / On the warrior's gorgeous crest" and "the bier amidst the bridal train / When they come with roses drest." "Second Sight" juxtaposes the deaths of empires, soldiers, and brides in the visions of a speaker who must remain homeless, short of heaven.

### Domesticating the Empire: The Powers of Patriotic Graves

Much of this catalog of heroines belongs to the Romantic Hemans, from whose complex, passionate body of patriotic verse were winnowed the works that mid-century admirers made "British classics," grown "deep into the national heart" (Archibald Alison, qtd. in Moulton 260). Collected and genteel, this Victorian verse constitutes the pastoral Hemans, the Hemans whose Englishness is both stable and exemplary. It also represents the imperial Hemans, whose poetry helped put to rest what Ross calls "a specter haunting Britain at the verge of the nineteenth century . . . on the threshold of Britain's modernization of itself as a nation-state": the question of how to consolidate the notion of Englishness as an organic, indigenous national identity while simultaneously justifying imperial expansion beyond British home territory ("Romancing" 56, 57). Paradoxically, Hemans's attempt to mediate between rationalist and organic notions of national identity may have given rise to one of the greatest sources of her power as a Victorian patriotic poet: her emphasis on reverence for patriots' graves.

On the battlefield, soldiers' corpses may mock or challenge Hemans's victory celebrations, but in the (symbolically) domestic settings of her heroes' graves, military honor and family loyalty meet in peace. No longer at odds, mothers and military authorities join in reverence for the dead and in obedience to "divine law." Here alone the martial law of earthly existence may be safely superseded.

Conceived both as metaphors and as concrete objects, the graves of what Hemans loved to call the "honored dead" could symbolize the general fact of loss and the specific battles of national heroes; these sites could render the rational and universal impulse of patriotism local and spiritual. Unambiguously marking the merging of a people and a place, they served as points at which patriots literally became one with the land. Even one's "rational and moral nature" (Hazlitt 67) might well demand specific attachment to a plot where "earth's most glorious dust, / Once fired with valour, wisdom, song, / Is laid in holy trust" (Hemans, "The English Boy"; *Poetical Works* 502–03). In focusing local reverence for the literal and symbolic remains of patriotic heroism, then, heroes' graves not only unified distinct national folk communities but also bound those communities to the rest of the world by evoking the universal love and sorrows of liberty.

Capable of uniting local loyalties with rationalist internationalism and of joining the state with its feminine internal enemy, graves in Hemans could also serve as the sources of national poetry. Lying on a mountain that is both the Welsh Parnassus and "the birth-place of phantoms," the first-person speaker of "The Rock of Cader-Idris" (*Selection* 12) risks madness to face the "deep presence" not merely of the embodied "powers of the wind and the ocean" but also of the "mighty of ages departed." Only after looking the dead in the eye does the speaker awaken, "as from the grave . . . to inherit / A flame all immortal, a voice and a power!" If there is a "sense" that "gives soul to" nature's beauty, investing a landscape with mythic power, Hemans suggests, that soul arises from human connections with the dead.

Is Hemans the poet on the Welsh rock? If memory and graves claim a land, as she often implied, she claimed Wales, the ground of her "childhood, [her] home, and [her] dead" ("A Farewell to Wales"; *Poetical Works* 474). Yet she was not born there, and she did not think of herself as Welsh. In fact, even as she celebrates the Welsh bards' national identity, constituting herself as their heir, Hemans colludes in the

dispersion of that identity. To Mary Russell Mitford, for example, she describes the “Welsh character” as not “yet merged in the English” character (Chorley 1: 127)—rather as if any regional specificity were doomed; and even her nationalistic “Welsh melodies” implicitly assign a “brighter lot” to Wales during the period of England’s predominance (“The Mountain-Fires”; *Selection* 54).

As Hemans’s relation to Wales suggests, then, while her attempt to bind abstract nation, physical land, and human affection through graves may indeed resolve some of the issues raised by efforts to unite rationalist and organic visions of patriotism, it poses other problems. Does honoring of the national dead constitute identity? By tending a country’s graves, metaphorically and actually, may one claim to be a true heir to its bards? And if the English love a land they have colonized—even honor the valor of those who fought against them in defense of that land—have they thereby assumed or appropriated the country’s national identity? Perhaps the graves of the honorable dead help dissolve national identities into mythic forms that are endlessly capable of appropriation. If so, it is not strange that Hemans’s conception of graves as sites for the establishment and maintenance of national identity should have found tremendous resonance within Victorian imperialist discourse. “We cannot be *habitually* attached to places we never saw, and people we never heard of . . .,” Hazlitt writes. “Are the opposite extremities of the globe our native place, because they are a part of that geographical and political denomination, our country? Does natural affection expand in circles of latitude and longitude?” (67). Hemans’s poetry offers a clear answer to Hazlitt’s skepticism, for if anything can create a habitual attachment to a place one has never seen, it is the grave of a loved one.

It is probably no accident that in 1823, some six years before Christopher North made his famous assertion that the sun never sets on the British empire, Felicia Hemans wrote that “wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep, / Where rest not England’s dead” (“England’s Dead”; “*Siege*” 308–10). Nor should the similarity be-

tween the titles of two of her most popular patriotic poems, “England’s Dead” and “The Homes of England,” come as a surprise. For just as domestic mourning makes the empire into a home, expanding affection in terms of latitude and longitude, until it reaches and symbolically appropriates the final resting place of the beloved and honored dead, so domestic love makes the home into an empire.

“The Homes of England” is Hemans’s most famous work on this subject and one of her best-known pieces altogether (“*Records*” 169–71). When the poem first appeared, in the April 1827 edition of *Blackwood’s*, it had an epigraph from Joanna Baillie beginning, “A land of peace. . . .” In volume form, however, “The Homes of England” has a new epigraph, from *Marmion*: “Where’s the coward that would not dare / To fight for such a land?” Sentimental, reactionary pastoral fantasy at its crudest, “The Homes of England” links “stately,” “merry,” and “cottage” dwellings within a harmonious national hierarchy whose unity of “hut and hall” seems as much defensive as organic. Hemans’s verse constitutes domestic harmony, whether national or familial, as not only a form of defense but also an incentive for aggressive striving after glory, be it in the battlefield or the marketplace. Woman’s empire is the hearth, as one of Hemans’s great admirers notes (Preface, 1836, ix), and in an imperialist country, Hemans suggests, the hearth must be an imperialist site.

Hemans’s engagement in the elaboration of such discourse is far from inadvertent. Though the word *imperialist* was not used to designate an advocate of imperialism until after Hemans died, by the time she was fifteen she had constructed an Albion whose world domination was moral, military, economic, and perhaps sexual. “Hail ALBION,” she writes in *England and Spain*,

hail, thou land of freedom’s birth!  
Pride of the main, and Phoenix of the earth!  
Thou second Rome, where mercy, justice, dwell,  
Whose sons in wisdom as in arms excel!  
Thine are the dauntless bands, like Spartans brave  
. . . . .  
Hail, ALBION, hail! to thee has fate denied

Peruvian mines and rich Hindostan's pride;  
 . . . . .  
 Yet fearless Commerce, pillar of thy throne,  
 Makes all the wealth of foreign climes thy own;  
 . . . . .  
 Look down, look down, exalted Shades! and view  
 Your ALBION still to freedom's banner true!  
 . . . . .  
 See her secure in pride of virtue tow'r,  
 While prostrate nations kiss the rod of pow'r!

(4-8)

Hemans's conception of the home as both separate empire and the prerequisite for empire was also early and explicit. By 1812, in "The Domestic Affections" ("*Domestic Affections*" 148-72), she personified "domestic affections" as a female figure who "dwells, unruffled, in her bow'r of rest, / *Her* empire, home!" while "war's red lightnings desolate the ball, / And thrones and empires in destruction fall" (150). Here homesickness is already a soldier's essential ration. Domestic memories alone "cheer the soldier's breast / In hostile climes, with spells benign and blest," arming him to face the dangers of "victory's choral strain," as well as of the "ensanguin'd plain" and the "armour's bright flash" (154). The "spells of home" (a favorite Hemans phrase) thus both fuel victory and temper the callousness triumph can instill; they endow soldiers with the power to kill enemies and to sympathize with the mourners whose love, memories, and sorrow hold together the home empire and its extension in the graves of the beloved, honorable dead.<sup>21</sup>

By the end of the century, deployment of the dead as outrunners of empire had become self-conscious enough to be the source of cynical humor. In Anthony Hope's *The God in the Car* (1895), for example, an investor reporting on the progress of his central African scheme comments, "Everything's going very well. They've killed a missionary." "[R]egrettable in itself," he says, the action is "the first step toward empire" (Brantlinger 182). Rudyard Kipling's verse testifies, however, that the dead retained much of their imperial force. "Never the lotus closes, never the wild-fowl wake," reads his popular "The English Flag,"

But a soul goes out on the East Wind that died for  
 England's sake—  
 Man or woman or suckling, mother or bride or  
 maid—  
 Because on the bones of the English the English  
 flag is stayed. (146)<sup>22</sup>

In its combination of the grisly and the celebratory, Kipling's verse outdoes even Hemans's. For her, in "Casabianca," for instance, the connection between reverence for the courage of the dead and sanctification of the circumstances of their deaths remains only implicit; for him, critics of imperial actions are worse than hyenas, unearthing corpses they cannot eat ("Hyenas"). In other respects, however, Kipling is as far from Hemans as is his Kim from young Casabianca; indeed, Kipling's view of empire as what Daniel Bivona calls a "privileged realm of play" can be fiercely antidomestic (36). If Hemans has a patriotic heir, it is rather Rupert Brooke, whose speaker in "The Soldier" returns not merely to dust but to "a richer dust . . . a dust whom England bore," creating a "corner of a foreign field / That is for ever England."

Even before Brooke, however, the Victorian discourse of imperial domestication was crumbling, along with the title character of Thomas Hardy's "Drummer Hodge," who, no longer English in any sense, is laid to rest in an unmarked South African grave where "his homely Northern breast and brain / Grow to some Southern tree." Indeed, "The Soldier" may mark both the culmination and the beginning of the end of Hemans's vision of domesticating patriotic graves. Such glorifications were powerless against attacks from the likes of Siegfried Sassoon, whose "doomed, conscripted, unvictorious ones" rise to deride their memorial at Menin Gate as a "sepulchre of crime" ("On Passing"), and whose speaker in "Glory of Women" might be addressing admirers of "Casabianca" when he says accusingly, "You believe / That chivalry redeems the war's disgrace."

The number of new editions of Hemans's work dropped off suddenly with the end of the Victorian era (Reiman). It is only fair to Hemans, however (and perhaps to some of her Victorian

admirers), to note that her role as a poet of imperial mourning is no more stable than any of her other patriotic positions. “The Indian with His Dead Child,” for example (“*Songs*” 48–51), acknowledges the violence and racism of imperialism, even the domesticating imperialism of the dead. Having sat “alone, amidst [the] hearth-fires” of white settlers, who are indifferent to his sick “child’s decay,” the speaker must raise his son from the “grave-sod . . . defiled” by the colonists and carry him hundreds of miles to escape the “spoiler’s dwellings.”

A community that attempts to prevent its members from returning the dead to the “lap of the earth,” to “elementary, eternal individuality,” destroys itself, Hegel writes (*Phänomenologie* 258).<sup>23</sup> For all Hemans’s piety, what her speakers sometimes suggest—though do not endorse—is a fear even greater than the thought that they are living in such a community. What if no philosophical or religious principle makes order of such destruction? What if the virtuous power of the internal enemy is not guaranteed? What if it is not enough?

In her tremendously popular “The Graves of a Household” (“*Records*” 299–301), Hemans evokes a vacant British family graveyard that is the mirror image and perhaps the inevitable corollary of the burial ground in Hardy’s “Drummer Hodge.” “Sever’d, far and wide, / By mount, and stream, and sea,” the graves of the family’s children are flung throughout the empire and perhaps beyond. These dead are explicitly linked neither to imperial glory nor to one another: geographically separated, they may have lost even their connection in the memory of a “fond mother.” Perhaps the Resurrection will reunite them; certainly Hemans’s Christian faith would insist on this. And yet the poem makes no promises. “Alas! for love,” read its final lines, “if *thou* wert all, / And nought beyond, oh earth!” The true title of “The Graves of a Household” might be “The Grave of a Family,” for the poem signals the end not only of the possibility but of the memory of living domestic love. On the other side of Hemans’s imperial appropriation through burial stands the dissolution of domestic identity, familial and national.

And with this, one returns to “Casabianca,” for a final reminder of what is left at the end of that poem: fragments, a paradigm of chivalric self-sacrifice, and the story of a courageous child’s futile call for release.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>For Nemoianu, Hemans’s “obsolete ideologies” and unremitting noncanonical “conservatism” could thwart radical pedagogy and endanger more canonical writers’ tradition of critical thinking (240, 246).

<sup>2</sup>On liberty and eighteenth-century patriotism, see Lucas 23–32, 39–48, Cunningham 57–62, and Colley. See Ross, “Romancing” 56–57, and Woodring on “English poetic nationalism” (Woodring 45).

<sup>3</sup>Jeffrey, for example, praises Hemans for omitting the “revolting or extravagant excesses” of countries and periods besides her own and for retaining “much of what is most interesting and peculiar” in their legends (35).

<sup>4</sup>When I refer to femininity, I mean a condition that is not biological but culturally constructed and historically contingent. In dominant nineteenth-century British and American writings on the subject, womanhood is only truly embodied by married or marriageable “Anglo-Saxon” gentlewomen—and not even by all of them.

<sup>5</sup>“Some” was an understatement. As her biographer Henry Chorley notes, Hemans’s “mind wrought incessantly upon scenes of heroic enterprise and glory” (1: 21).

<sup>6</sup>“[D]ie Familie . . . vermählt den Verwandten dem Schoße der Erde, der elementarischen unvergänglichen Individualität” (*Phänomenologie* 245). This translation, like all the English versions of Hegel, is my own. For a translation of the context, see Hegel, *Phenomenology* 271.

<sup>7</sup>“In dieser Form genommen, erhält das was als einfache Bewegung des individualisirten Pathos vorgestellt wurde, ein anderes Aussehen, und das Verbrechen und die dadurch begründete Zerstörung des Gemeinwesens die eigentliche Form ihres Daseyns. — Das menschliche Gesetz also in seinem allgemeinen Daseyn, das Gemeinwesen, in seiner Bethätigung überhaupt die Männlichkeit, in seiner wirklichen Bethätigung, die Regierung ist, bewegt und erhält sich dadurch, das es die Absonderung der Penaten oder die selbständige Vereinzlung in Familien, welchen die Weiblichkeit vorsteht, in sich aufzehrt, und sie in der Continuität seiner Flüssigkeit aufgelöst erhält. Die Familie ist aber zugleich überhaupt sein Element, das einzelne Bewußtseyn allgemeiner bethätigender Grund” (*Phänomenologie* 258). See also Hegel, *Phenomenology* 287–88.

<sup>8</sup>“Indem das Gemeinwesen sich nur durch die Störung der Familienglückseligkeit und die Auflösung des Selbstbewußtseyns in das allgemeine, sein Bestehen gibt, erzeugt es sich an dem, was es unterdrückt und was ihm zugleich wesentlich ist,

an der Weiblichkeit überhaupt seinen innern Feind" (*Phänomenologie* 258–59). See also Hegel, *Phenomenology* 288.

<sup>9</sup>Divine law is "das Gesetz der Schwäche und der Dunkelheit" (Hegel, *Phänomenologie* 257). See also Hegel, *Phenomenology* 286. "What Hegel defines as 'Divine Law,'" Solomon notes, derives from "the structure of bourgeois society at the turn of the nineteenth century" (542).

<sup>10</sup>Femininity is "die ewige Ironie des Gemeinwesens . . ." (Hegel, *Phänomenologie* 259; see also his *Phenomenology* 288). Cooper, Munich, and Squier write that classical epic also presents "the dualities of man/woman, war/peace" and in so doing "both establishes the conception of the war narrative informing Western literary tradition and allows a questioning of those dualities" ("Arms" 10). *Arms and the Woman* strongly suggests how such dualisms may still authorize war narratives' reliance on a domesticity whose feminine representatives accept responsibility for preserving familial bonds and for submitting to the military destruction of those bonds. Bound as it is to what Hegel calls divine law, femininity both ensures the continuity of pacifist ideals and accedes to or assists in the downgrading of pacifism to weak utopianism. Freeman asserts, for example, that contemporary feminist pacifists who attempt to shift full responsibility for war to men or masculinity may merely participate "in the framework that allows, indeed is indispensable to, the conflict in the first place." Femininity, even in its association with pacifism, remains "the secondary term that copulates with . . . and enables" masculinity (308).

<sup>11</sup>Browning, the former "poet laureate of Hope End," mockingly imagines herself laureate of England, "cursing the Czar in Pindarics very prettily" (*Letters* 171), but she echoes Hemans in taking the national (and international) duties of womanhood seriously. An African American, Harper speaks as an internal enemy in poems such as "Home, Sweet Home" or "Do Not Cheer . . ." but her "Appeal to My Countrywomen" challenges that stance's racial and political limits (185–86, 197–98, 193–95). Meynell, whose patriotic poetry was inspired by World War I, also appropriates and alters mournful patriotism, though for reasons different from those of the other poets named. See Baym, "Reinventing," on Sigourney.

<sup>12</sup>In the hours before Waterloo, Mrs. O'Dowd, in *Vanity Fair*, appears as a comic Venus outfitting her Mars, while Becky Sharp evinces "quite a Spartan equanimity" (363, 365). Amelia, however, has no classical model. In spotless white, with a crimson sash bleeding down her breast, she embodies the new patriotic femininity of the Hegelian internal enemy: though she is useless to her husband for practical purposes, she embodies an innocent pain whose symbolic force is capable of driving him to remorse, to prayer—and to the battlefield (359–60, 371–72).

For a revealing (and hilarious) evocation of the mid-century association of Hemans with feminine patriotism and melancholy, see Thackeray, *Newcomes* 253–70.

<sup>13</sup>Such a division must remain rough. It creates no clear space, for example, for the title character of "The Sicilian Captive" ("Records" 172–79), who sings herself to death from homesickness, or for the shepherd-poet's sister, who leaves

off pining at home to lead her people to battle ("The Shepherd-Poet of the Alps"; *Poetical Works* 485–87).

<sup>14</sup>See the unsigned preface to the 1836 edition of Hemans's *Poetical Works* for early praise of her calmness (Preface vi). The anonymous preface to the 1854 *Poetical Works* contains a good mid-century example (Preface 3–8).

<sup>15</sup>As Baym notes, nineteenth-century glorifications of feminine self-sacrifice could deny "that women are submissive by nature and assert . . . that submission is the means by which a woman can overcome or at least check her chief adversary, God" (*Woman's Fiction* 166). If destruction was inevitable, one could at least seize the sacrificial moment, positioning oneself as martyr rather than victim.

<sup>16</sup>Revealingly, Hemans's celebrations of Welsh (and Scottish) patriotism all concern the past actions of men. "Savage liberty" seems no longer required, especially of British women. See Lucas, esp. 4–5, 16–17, on historical distancing from epic virtues in English poetry as a whole.

<sup>17</sup>The significantly entitled "The Spells of Home" ("Records" 286–88), for example, more or less generically associates the "freeman" with "the mountain-battles of his land." Homesickness is a recurrent theme in Hemans's personal writing and verse. For a discussion of the "tautological turn by which the domestic encapsulates nostalgia for itself" (288), see Brown.

<sup>18</sup>"Felicia Hemans" 75; "Religious Character" 25–30. See also Browning's "Felicia Hemans," which attempts to refute Letitia E. Landon's "Stanzas." Landon, whose readings of Hemans's melancholy could be ambiguous ("Character" 428–32), offers her own bleak vision of life as war in "The Battle Field."

<sup>19</sup>See Ross's revealing discussion of conflicts between familial and state values in "The Siege of Valencia" (*Contours* 274–85).

<sup>20</sup>In *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray provides a famous Victorian version of this stance (381, 385).

<sup>21</sup>See Browning's opposing alignment of domestic and national virtues in the preface to *Poems before Congress*.

<sup>22</sup>"If blood be the price of admiralty," sing the English dead in another of Kipling's verses, "Lord God, we ha' bought it fair!" ("Song" 187).

<sup>23</sup>"Der Todte, dessen Recht gekränkt ist, weiß darum für seine Rache Werkzeuge zu finden. . . . Diese Mächte sind andere Gemeinwesen, . . . Sie machen sich feindlich auf, und zerstören das Gemeinwesen, das seine Krafft, die Pietät der Familie, entehrt und zerbrochen hat" (Hegel, *Phänomenologie* 258; see also his *Phenomenology* 287).

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