

# A SHEAF GLEANED IN FRENCH FIELDS: FRENCH NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS LATENT FORCE OF FRENCH NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN TORU DUTT'S A SHEAF GLEANED IN FRENCH FIELDS



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## ABSTRACT

Toru Dutt spent some time in France read French poets and translated some poems into English with her sister Aru Dutt. This collection of translated poems was published as A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields in 1876. The present study critically examines the poems in this collection with memories of one's native place and remembering French legends which act as a latent force of French national consciousness. "The Emigration of Pleasure" expresses the feelings of an emigrant who misses his native place and his mind remains preoccupied with the thoughts of returning to his motherland. "The Memories of the People" celebrates Napoleon's fictional return. Napoleon has been portrayed as the protector of France and the hope of the people to avenge the defeat of France. "Roland" is an epic to the French as the Iliad was to the Greeks. It revives the collective memory and identity of the French and generates pride in lineage and French nationhood. "The Retreat from Moscow" is based on a historical account of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in 1812. Memories of legends, historical battles and emotional attachment to native things are evident as a latent force of French national consciousness in A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields.

**Keywords:** Emigrant, French Legends, Memories, Napoleon, National Consciousness, Ronald.

## INTRODUCTION

Toru Dutt along with her parents and sister Aru Dutt travelled to Europe between 1869 and 1873. According to Harihar Das, Aru and Toru Dutt were the first two Bengali women to travel to Europe (19). They spent a few months in the south of France, at Nice, where Toru and her sister went to school, at a French pensionnat (19). Toru Dutt, along with her sister Aru Dutt, started the translations of French poems. After Aru's death, Toru Dutt

completed the translation and “is the only work she published in her lifetime” (Dutt & Das, 1921). Toru Dutt’s translation not only renders the original in French but offers a new way of symbolization due to very specific word choices (Boutaghou, 2018) Rawal et. al (2021), Poongodi M et. al(2022), Poongodi M et. al (2021), Dhiman P et.al (2022), Sahoo S.K et.al (2022), K.A et. al(2022) , Dhanraj R.K et. al (2020), Poongodi M et. al (2019), Poongodi M et. al (2020), M. M. Kamruzzaman et. al (2014), M. M. Kamruzzaman et. al (2021), Md Selim Hossain et. al (2019), Mingju Chen et. al (2019). According to Paul Tenngart, “Every work in realist literary fiction, constructs an idea of a cultural and geographical setting where events occur and characters act and think” (Tenngart, 2020).

Toru Dutt’s choice of poems “implies a history of French poetry that is uncommon” and “is one made from the peripheries, through the lens of a young Bengali poetess born in Calcutta in 1856 and who fell in love with the French poetry” (Boutaghou, 2018). The present paper critically analyses her translated poems that reflect the love for the nation, attachment and memories of native place, landscapes, symbols and the French legends. Revival of the memories and legendary acts of national heroes germinates French national consciousness.

### **Memories as a Strong Bond of Love for Motherland**

“The Emigration of Pleasure” is taken from Gustavo Masson’s *Le Lyre Francaise* and was written by Madame Voit (Dutt 192). The poem was translated by Aru Dutt. The poem expresses the feelings of an emigrant who leaves France to Germany, Spain, Russia, Rome and returns to France. The unpleasant circumstance of France due to wars forces emigrants in search of a better life. Though the emigrant acquires wealth and power in foreign countries he does not find satisfaction and misses his native place. The journey to Germany and Spain is very tiring. The Germans and Spaniards treat the immigrants indifferently. After this, the emigrant travels to Russia. A week’s journey to Russia through the extreme cold benumbs and sickens the travelers. From Russia, the emigrant travels to England where he was treated well but does not find peace. The emigrant leaves for Rome. The literary environment of Rome is fertile for poets but, even in Rome, the emigrant was not satisfied. His memory and love for his nation are such that, despite the fun and comfort in Rome, he misses his native place. The thoughts of returning to his motherland occupy his mind. However, by now, he has become poor and it seems difficult to travel without money. Nevertheless, the emigrant manages to return to France, which gives him a sense of liberty. His national consciousness and love for his motherland have forced him to return to his nation. The eyes of the emigrant fill with tears as he kneels on reaching France, like a child in front of his mother. The closing stanza needs to be mentioned.

Heaven-helpt, he returned the country dear,

And there, at last, saw Liberty;

What has a pet spoilt-child to fear

Who falls with tears at his mother’s knee? (Dutt 9)

The poem suggests that emigration in search of fun and pleasure is a myth, it brings many hardships and one has to face indifference. The love for one’s nation occupies the thoughts and makes it difficult to be satisfied with the nation to which one migrates. The desire to return to the native place becomes stronger as time and age pass and eventually becomes the sole purpose of life. The desire to return precedes all the other pleasures of life. On returning to the motherland, the feelings arise of uniting a child with its mother, and the poet’s heart fills with joy and his eyes are filled with tears. National consciousness in the form of memories of native place is the latent force behind these emotions, which supersedes all the worldly pleasures of life. The poem also contains autobiographical elements as Toru Dutt and Aru Dutt migrated from India to France and England. The memories of their home country kept their minds captivated. The verses of Madame Viot (Marry Anne Henriette Payan de L’Estang) appealed to Aru Dutt “who led a migratory life, from Bengal to Bombay and back, and thence to the south of France, to London and Cambridge and Hastings” (Gibson, 2014).

### **Love and Emotional Attachment to the Nation Over Worldly Comforts**

“Sonnet XIV” is translated by Toru Dutt from Joachim du Bellay’s “The Regrets”, which earned him the surname of the “French Ovid” (Dutt 193). Joachim du Bellay spent four years in Rome as a secretary to Cardinal Jean du Bellay (Du Bellay, 2006). The desire of the poet to return to his native place is mentioned in the poem. National consciousness is comparative and it becomes stronger while in another country, which brings strong feelings of his love for his nation. The worldly pleasures in a foreign nation fail to subdue his desire to return to his native place. The sonnet considers these feelings. The line “When shall I turn again to life’s first page” shows the desire to return to birthplace (Dutt 13), and “And greet the village, and the home of peace” expresses his strong bond with and his love for his motherland (Dutt 13). The love and emotional attachment to the nation over the worldly comforts are

expressed in the following:

Dearer to me that home my grandsires build,  
 Than Roman palaces with pillars brave,  
 Dearer those roofs of slate than marble gilt,  
 Dearer my Loire than Tiber's sacred wave,  
 Dearer my Lyré than the Palatine,  
 And oh how dear, thou climate Angevine! (Dutt 14)

The Loire is a river in France while the Tiber is in Rome. The Loire River of France is dearer than Rome's Tiber to the poet. His ancestral home with the slate roof is more precious to the poet than the Roman palaces with marble. The home built by his ancestors remains dearer than the Roman places with grand pillars, and the slate roofs of his native home are more cherished than the marble gilt in a foreign nation. The sacred waves of the Tiber in Rome are nothing compared to the Loire in his native France. The high position of Palatine as a government officer in a foreign country is not satisfying and the poet desires the life of a normal person in his native country. The dormant force of national consciousness compels him to return to his motherland. The love and attachment to the native things make him feel alienated in a foreign country, despite the worldly comforts.

"My Normandy" is a "patriotic poem" by Frédéric Bérat, translated by Toru Dutt (Prasad, 2002). Toru Dutt's translations are "at once exact and free, and endeavors to recapture the spirit of the original to a maximum. She, however, did not hesitate to twist or twang the original whenever necessary" (Sharma, 2013). This poem was written by Frédéric Bérat in 1836 and it was so popular that it became the "unofficial anthem of Normandy" (Davis, 2007). The beautiful landscapes of Normandy are described in the opening stanza. Love for one's nation and a desire to revisit the native place is expressed in "on our well-loved France" and "I visit Normandy again/ Where first these eyes beheld the light" (Dutt 36). In the second stanza, the other great and beautiful things of foreign countries are compared, such as the hills of Switzerland, its chalets, glaciers and Italy's clear skies. He admires all of them, however, one place on earth is lovelier to him—Normandy, where the poet was born. According to the poet, no place on earth is lovelier than Normandy. In the last stanza, the poet expresses his desire to be buried at Normandy on his death. In life, after a certain age, all dreams end and individuals start introspecting their lives. At this stage, the memories of life are revived and the soul craves being reunited with the native place. The love for and attachment to the native place is poetically expressed as "May I behold my Normandy, / The favoured land I love the best" (Dutt 36).

"My Village" is from Gensoûl's book *Nos Souvenirs*, meaning our memories. The sentiments expressed in it echo Toru Dutt's sense of loss of her dear ones (Ali & Azhar). There is "nostalgia for home" and "for the native village" (Prasad, 2002). National consciousness is reflected in the opening stanza by expressing emotions of attachment and the sense of missing one's native place in "Oh fair sky of my native land, /How much I miss thee here!" (Dutt 40). People leave their native place in search of better fortunes and to earn a name for themselves. Such migration teaches bitter lessons and it brings out national consciousness in the form of strong emotions of loss of native place and attachment to it. National consciousness is a force that remains latent while living at home in the native place. It is activated slowly when one moves away from one's home and nation. National consciousness is comparative, and it becomes distinct when other places are compared to the native place. The most common way to express national consciousness is by remembering one's native place, expressions of attachment and feelings of superiority with native things, memories of landscapes. A surge of national consciousness arises during the troubled times in a nation and a stay in a foreign country. National consciousness is progressive. It becomes strong with time and strongest during the last days of life in a foreign land. It develops into the ultimate desire to be reunited with the native place during the last days of life. The same feelings are expressed in "My Village". The poet regrets his decision, to leave his village in search of fortune. Now, he seeks to be with childhood friends in his village, and where the remains of his mother are there; his friends are waiting for him. The memories of childhood friends and ancestors make his heart heavy and fill his eyes with tears. The poet's last days of life are near and his body is fragile. He is waiting for his last breath, hoping that he will find peace when in the grave. The poet left his native place at a young age to a country with a cold climate, where he was "Benumbed and chilled with cold" (Dutt 41). He wakes up every morning with the memories of his native place, longing to be there. The last wish of the poet is to die in the village in which he was born and where the journey of his life started.

"The Captive to the Swallows" is a translation of Pierre-Jean de Béranger's song *Les Hirondelles* by Toru

Dutt. It expresses the feelings of a French patriot in captivity somewhere in northwest Africa. The captive, who was a French soldier, is in heavy chains. He communicates with the swallows coming from France and flying over him. The patriot sees some hope even in their track of migration. He wants to know about his beloved France and asks the swallows to tell everything they know about it, as he has been in captivity for three long years. He asks the swallows about his home near a shallow channel. The swallows coming from France revive his childhood memories of his home. He attempts to find a common bond with the swallows, saying “Who knows, but some of ye were born/Upon the roof, beneath whose shade/I first beheld the light of morn” (Dutt 44). He remembers his mother in the next lines and asks the swallows about her:

My mother! To her last sad hour,

She waited for my foot-fall’s sound,

Then withered like a storm-crushed flower;

Speak of her love, while wheeling round. (Dutt 44)

He wants to know about his loved ones, how many have left this world, and whether his sister is married now. He asks about his friends who joined as soldiers like him, and how many are alive, living a normal life after recovering from the shadow and setbacks of war. He wants to know about his fellow soldiers, how many are alive, how many sacrificed their lives in war and who are now lying side by side. How many are exiled and living in woe? The feelings of attachment to home, friends, relatives and country are very strong. In the last lines, the birds are even addressed as “My country’s birds” (Dutt 44). A message evolves in the poem that the freedom enjoyed by the people of any nation is at the cost of the freedom and sacrifice of many patriots and sons of the soil. If someone enjoys freedom in daily life, it has been earned by the sacrifices of many near and dear ones. Our ancestors secured freedom by laying down their lives in the war with the enemy and many of them lost their freedom as captives. This is universally applicable to nations.

The emotional state of a patriot in captivity is also expressed. His feelings, memories of home and playmates and love for the nation are vividly expressed. The loss of fellow soldiers in war is also highlighted. The effects of war result in loss of life, exile and pain of parting with family, friends and native place.

“Nice” is a translation of Louise Victorine-Ackermann’s poem. It reflects the attachment of the poet to the city of Nice in France. Madame Ackermann moved to Nice after the death of her husband, Paul Ackermann, just after two years of her marriage (Dufour, 2017). Madame Ackermann was “a scholar of the first order” and was “acquainted not only with all the modern languages but with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Sanskrit, and (so it is reported) Chinese” (Dutt 210). She loved and admired India in one of her poems as follows:

Ind pleases me, not that I’ve seen as yet

With my own eyes, it shores renowned in story,

But I can read, appreciate, and have met

Its bards in spirit, with their brows of glory. (Dutt 210)

The poet identifies with the city of Nice as her home. Identifying a city as the home is based on the national consciousness. Memories and attachment to home strongly bind people to their roots. It provides a common identity to the people, which in turn reinforces national consciousness. The memories of Nice are revived by the poet remembering the landscapes around her home in Nice as “At the foot of the hills see my garden in shelter, /My fig-tree, my home, /The valley evergreen, and the sea-waves that welter, /Blue, silvered with foam” (Dutt 60). The circumstances under which the poet arrived at Nice are also recalled. A shipwreck killed her husband and her life was barely saved. Though the present is dreary and there appears to be an ill future, life continues by remembering the good times spent with her husband and by waiting for death without any anguish.

### Reviving the Legend of Napoleon as the Protector of France

“The Memories of the People” is a translation of Pierre-Jean de Béranger by Toru Dutt, which celebrates “Napoleon’s fictional return” (Day-Hickman, 1999). It describes the figure of an old woman who lays aside her distaff and points out the bust of Napoleon to her extended family, seated about the table (Day-Hickman, 1999). The old woman describes her “unexpected meeting” with Napoleon dressed in his legendry hat and overcoat as “the emperor entered her cottage with a small escort, sat beside the fire, and demanded something to eat” (Day-Hickman, 1999). The old women hope that Napoleon has returned to avenge his enemies. The people’s devotion to the

emperor is also evident. The poem was published in 1828, just two years before the French Revolution of 1830 and “raised the ire of patriotic groups who wanted to avenge France’s humiliating defeat at Waterloo” (Day-Hickman & Barbara, 1999, p. 30). French people respected Napoleon as the protector of France as expressed in the lines:

In the days when our country to strangers

Was given for a spoil and prey,

It was he, who despising all dangers,

Upheld us, and kept them at bay. (Dutt 32-33)

Napoleon is the hope of the people to avenge the defeat of France. The motivating and inspiring words uttered by Napoleon on his departure from the hut, express a similar sentiment in “Hope on, he cries, ‘and have no fears;/ Misfortunes have come, - it is chance;/To Paris, an avenger of France” (Dutt 33). The French preserved the memories of Napoleon and have faith and respect for him. They regard him as their “Warrior” and “The wise, and brave, and the true” (Dutt 33). Anything related to Napoleon is precious and the wine-cup in which she serves him wine becomes a treasure for the old lady, as described in the lines “This wine- cup, ‘twas his, that I fill. / A treasure to be kept to the last”/ “Oh mother keep that wine- cup still” (Dutt 33). The sympathy and love of the people for him is described in the lines “On a rock, with the sea for a barrier, / Broken-hearted he pined, and for you” (Dutt 33). It is difficult for the people to believe that their national hero died and they believe that someday he will return, as expressed in the following lines:

He whom the father Pope had crowned,

Deserted, exiled, and dethroned!

Long, Long the tale was disbelieved,

‘He’ll come again’ some said who grieved. (Dutt 33)

“The Retreat from Moscow” is based on a historical account of Napoleon’s retreat from Moscow in 1812. The defeat of Napoleon and his catastrophic retreat changed the future of France. The devastating effect of this retreat resulted in the defeat of Napoleon in the battle of Waterloo, which precipitated the downfall of Napoleon. This event is a part of the collective consciousness of France. The poem starts with Napoleon’s retreat from Moscow. Their army is wandering through a blizzard, and the barren and desolate landscapes stretch out for miles. Nature destroys the French army more than the enemy does and the army tries to find its way back. Cossacks, the roving horsemen of the Russian steppes, attack and weaken the French army, deteriorating their morale. This is Napoleon’s first defeat, which demoralizes him, as mentioned in the line “For the first time the eagle hung down its head” (Dutt 134). Chaos ensued in the French army. Visibility was poor due to blizzards, and the extreme cold killed the horses. There were no tents and the dead horses and the carts were piled to make shelters for the wounded, which highlights that Napoleon was not prepared for the extreme cold. It was so cold that the copper trumpets gave no sound and the lips of the trumpeters froze like stone.

The Cossacks also attacked as “Bullets, grape-shot, and shells, mixed with the snow, / Rained as from heaven upon the troops below” (Dutt 135). The bravery of the French soldiers is appreciated. They were bold and never trembled with fear but the cold made them, which is vividly described as “Surprised to find themselves trembling with cold/ Who ne’er trembled from fear, those veterans bold” (Dutt 135). The sea of snow trapped the army, leaving them without any bread and shelter. The devastating effect is described as follows:

It snowed, - it snowed continuous. The chill breeze

Whistled upon the glazed frost’s endless seas;

With naked feet, - on, on they ever went,

No bred to eat, and not a sheltering tent. (Dutt 135)

The army was enveloped with the snow. The wooden frames of the cannons were used as firewood. “Those who lay down woke not or woke to die” conveys the scale of death among the soldiers, who did not wake up and died due to extreme cold. The fearful soldiers fled, but the snow desert engulfed the groups of soldiers. “Neath the white folds, the blinding snow had raised/Whole regiment slept” describes the situation vividly (Dutt 135). Every night, thousands of soldiers died from fatigue, cold and attacks by the Cossacks, as “Ten thousand men lay down



fatigued to sleep, /And then perhaps a hundred woke, - a heap of corps had the rest became” (Dutt 136). The army perished in this way and the defeat is considered a loss of glory. Napoleon is compared to an oak tree, and the destruction of the army is compared to chopping the branches of the oak tree with an axe. The loyalty of the remaining army is appreciated, as they always believed in their commander. Napoleon looks at his crushed and defeated army, and it shakes his confidence and ego. While standing in front of his command tent, he asks, “Is this the vengeance God of Hosts?” He envisages his downfall in “Is this the vengeance? Must my glory set?”(Dutt 137).

### **Legend of Roland: Symbol of French Collective Identity**

“Roland” was written by Napoléon Peyrat under the pen name Napol Le Pyrénéen. This 19<sup>th</sup>-century French poem is “a symbolic element of the memorial heritage” of the French community (Gibson, 2014). It was an “epic to France similar to what the Iliad was to Greece—at once a glorious military legend, an exposition of core ethical values” (Gibson, 2014). The song was “invoked in wartime to symbolize and galvanize French resistance; during the siege of Paris in 1870” (Gibson, 2014). It expresses a “patriotic attachment to a romantic conception of France” and the poem’s heroes are “combative, passionate, pious, unwavering to their commitment to France”, personifying “virtues fundamental to French collective identity” (Gibson, 2014). The poem reminds the reader of “the obligations of commander to men, men to the commander, comrade to comrade” and generates “a pride in lineage and nationhood”(Owen & Ray 1).

To understand the poem, a summary of the French legend Roland is needed. In 778, Charlemagne, the king of the Franks, also known as Charles, suffered a military reverse in the Pyrenean pass of Roncevaux (Owen & Ray 4). He divided his army into columns. As the army proceeded through the passes of the Pyrenees, drawn out in a long file in the narrow pass, the Basques had prepared an ambush on the crest of a mountain. They swooped down on the last section of the troops of the rearguard, forced them into the valley below, engaged them in battle and slew every man. Then, under the cover of falling darkness, they scattered rapidly in all directions. In this battle, Ronald, the commander of the Franks, was slain (Owen & Ray 6). The legend is based on this event, known as the Battle of Roncevaux. According to a surviving epitaph of Seneschal Eggihard, it was fought on 15 August 778. “The Song of Roland” is available in several versions. It is “universally acknowledged as one of the masterpieces of western literature” and is preserved in a manuscript in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (Brault xiii).

The poem “Roland”, translated by Toru Dutt, opens with a romantic description of French fields and cities. Love for one’s nation is expressed in the lines “Brown beauty Toulouse, in thy sight to be prancing, /On thy plains that none can forget” (Dutt 82). There is also an indication of some movement towards Southern France and the people have been addressed as “dear friend”, giving a sense of brotherhood and nationhood (Dutt 82). After travelling through many towns and mountain passes, it is sought to stop for a moment as they have arrived near the city occupied by the enemy. The city is described as “your birthplace” and the identity of the enemy is also disclosed in the line “To see the fair plain where the Moslem has planted” (Dutt 82). Again, the beauty of the landscape of the city is described vividly. The historical importance of the city is mentioned as the French King Charlemagne and his fearless Paladin Roland fought here against the Moors.

The French city in the foothills of the Pyrenees Mountain range was attacked by the Moors. The war was given religious sanction and the invading forces invoked religion to attack the city as:

Sons of Allah! Unsheath your bright swords! Sons of Allah/

Mount your fleet steeds! Paradise, Eden, Valhalla,

Are nothing, are nothing to France. (Dutt 83)

The purpose of religion is to propagate the peace and welfare of humanity. Peace, religion and humanity are interrelated. However, there is also a dark side to religion. In the name of religion, people have been killed through time across the world. Conflict with other religions and conflict within sub-sects of religion has killed more people than any other cause or calamity. Since ancient times, there have been many religious conflicts in the world to establish superiority, and have resulted in the loss of life and the destruction of peace, with no gains. The poem also refers to the war between Christians and Muslims. The Christian hero, Roland, is glorified while the Muslim attack is demonized. It should be noted that both sides have used religion to establish a separate identity. This religious appeal has been used by both sides to unite people against their opponents, which has worked at all times. This resulted in the creation of binary opposition. On one side, it promotes unity in a particular society and nation, on the other hand, it creates hatred for the other group.

The National consciousness of the French has been aroused by a romantic description of the landscapes as

“The olive grows there by the grape and red cherry, /’Tis a garden in blossom, the abode of peri,/A rose-bush in summer’s warm glance” (Dutt 84). This revival of memories of natives generates a sense of identity among themselves and alienates them from invaders. The effects of the attack are described as the destruction of natural resources. This also creates a sense of belonging to the native resources and antithesis towards invaders as the root cause of the problems. The destruction of natural resources is described with a condemnation of the enemy as “These miscreant Moors, these cursed sons of Mahound,/Drank up all our wells, ate or destroyed all around,/Our pomegranates, our grapes and our figs” (Dutt 84).

War is a curse on humanity as it results in the destruction of life and leads to atrocities against women. The atrocities against French women by the Arabs are described. The invading Arabs treated French women abysmally. They took them as sex slaves. This treatment of women by the enemy serves as a spur to unite against the enemy to avenge. It also generates strong emotions of dislike towards the enemy, thus unifying against them for a common cause i.e., to avenge. The following lines of the poem are particularly noteworthy:

For them were our beauties, for them their brown bosoms,  
 For them their long lashes, their mouth like red blossoms,  
                                     For them their fair oval faces,  
 And when they wept, crying out, - “Oh sons of the demons!”  
 They were put on the croup and carried as lemans  
                                     Away at fabulous paces. (Dutt 84)

The French legends, Charlemagne, Roland and Renaud of Montauban, are mentioned. Charlemagne, also known as Charles the Great and Charles I, appealed to protect the women and to defeat the enemy. The response of his men shows their motivation to fight and defeat the enemy in “No sire, -no cursed unbelievers. /Shall bear off your virgins, we’ll hunt the bereavers,/If your majesty but allows” (Dutt, 1876, p. 84). The blessings of Saint Rocamadour were sought. All these legends revive historical consciousness. The historical battle is mentioned in the next lines. “The enemy forces were on the hilltop, a safer position with an advantage”. However, this advantage did not demoralize Ronald and his men. They kept their morale high and motivated themselves by saying, “Dogs, bite not the ears of leopards rough-breasted, /Nor trouble the lions though few” (Dutt 85). The fierce battle took place on the hills in which Roland fought with exceptional bravery, which immortalized him in French literature and the hearts of the French people. These hills still remember his presence though he died centuries before, as mentioned in the lines:

But thou fell’st at last Roland, - the hills keep- oh wonder!  
 Thy bones, thy steps, thy voice, thy horn’s deepest thunder,  
                                     And on their summits always new,  
 They show with clouds turbaned a Saracen gory,  
 His belt the cascade, and the scarf of his glory,  
                                     In sunshine the streamlet bright blue. (Dutt 85)

The emotions of the French people are stirred by reviving the brave acts and sacrifices of their ancestors in the lines:

Our fathers bronzed by suns, by dust and gunpowder,  
 Died sword in hand, as cannon louder and louder,  
                                     Rolled wild o’er these rocks of old Spain! (Dutt 85)

The last lines of the poem invoke in the French people a desire for the freedom of the nation and Napoleon III, the nephew of Napoleon I, is reminded of his great uncle. The poem ends with a patriotic appeal that the freedom of France is greater than anything else.

## CONCLUSION

The poems in *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields* with memories of the native place and remembering

French legends acts as a latent force of French national consciousness. A vivid picture of love for one's nation is portrayed in "The Emigration for Pleasure" when the emigrant kneels, with tears in his eyes like a child in front of his mother, on reaching his country. The Loire River of France has been compared with Rome's Tiber and the sacred waves of the Tiber in Rome are nothing compared to the Loire in his native France. Ancestral home with the slate roof is shown as more precious to the poet than the Roman palaces with marble. "The Memories of the People" depicts peoples' devotion to the emperor as the protector of their nation. "My Normandy" expresses the craving of the soul to reunite with the native place. Feelings of national consciousness are expressed in "My Village" by reflecting attachment to native things and memories of landscapes. "The Captive to the Swallows" reflects the pathetic condition of the patriot and his inquisitive state to know about his parents, friends and siblings. "The Retreat from Moscow" reminds a historical account of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in 1812 which is part of the collective consciousness of France. "Ronald" is about a French legend that is a symbol of bravery, loyalty and sacrifice to the French people.

Napoleon has been portrayed as the protector of France and the hope of the people to avenge the defeat of France. Memories of legends, historical battles and emotional attachment to native things are evident as a latent force of French national consciousness in *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields*. The desire of an emigrant to return to his native place is mentioned. The love and emotional attachment to the nation over worldly comforts are expressed in the poems. The other great and beautiful things of foreign countries are compared, such as the hills of Switzerland, its chalets, glaciers and Italy's clear sky. The last wish of the captive is to die in his native village. He remembers his mother and asks the swallows about her. It reflects the attachment of the poet to the city of Nice in France. French people respected Napoleon as the protector of France. It is difficult for the people to believe that their national hero died and expect that someday he will return. The emotions of the French people are stirred by revisiting the brave acts and sacrifices of their ancestors. Feelings of Love and belongingness with the motherland, memories of the native place and stories of legends remain a latent force and its revival generates national consciousness.

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