

FRANCE

1870<sup>1</sup>

Not dead,—oh no,—she cannot die!  
Only a swoon, from loss of blood!  
Levite England passes her by,  
Help, Samaritan!<sup>2</sup> None is nigh;  
5 Who shall stanch me this sanguine<sup>o</sup> flood? *bloody*

Range the brown hair, it blinds her eyne,<sup>o</sup> *eyes*  
Dash cold water over her face!  
Drowned in her blood, she makes no sign,  
Give her a draught of generous wine.  
10 None heed, none hear, to do this grace.

Head of the human column, thus  
Ever in swoon wilt thou remain?  
Thought, Freedom, Truth, quenched ominous,  
Whence then shall Hope arise for us,  
15 Plunged in the darkness all again?

No, she stirs!—There’s a fire in her glance,  
Ware,<sup>o</sup> oh ware of that broken sword! *beware*  
What, dare ye for an hour’s mischance,  
Gather around her, jeering France,  
20 Attila’s own exultant horde?<sup>3</sup>

Lo, she stands up,—stands up e’en now,  
Strong once more for the battle-fray,  
Gleams bright the star, that from her brow  
Lightens the world. Bow, nations, bow,  
25 Let her again lead on the way!

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<sup>1</sup> In July 1870 the Emperor of France, Napoleon III, declared war on Prussia (a confederation of states in northern Germany). Dutt’s sympathies were wholeheartedly with France. By early September the war was over, for all intents and purposes. Napoleon III surrendered along with half of the French army on September 2, and just a few days later he was deposed by a new republican government (The Third Republic). During the spring of 1871 radicals in Paris established their own revolutionary government (The Paris Commune) for two months before The Third Republic resolidified its power.

<sup>2</sup> These lines refer to the parable of the Good Samaritan told by Jesus in Chapter 10 of the Gospel of Luke (in response to the question, “Who is one’s neighbor?”). In the story, two important members of the Jewish community (one of them a Levite) pass by without helping a Jewish man who had been left for dead by the side of a road. When a Samaritan comes along, he helps the man, even though Jews and Samaritans were not on good terms. A Levite is a descendant of Levi, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Moses was the great-grandson of Levi.

<sup>3</sup> Attila the Hun was the emperor of a vast empire in the fifth century that spanned from Central Asia all the way to modern-day Germany. His armies did in fact invade modern-day France at one point.