



PEOPLE'S POET

BHARATHIAR

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KIRUBA AP

BY. C.N. ANNADURAI

NEW JUSTICE PUBLICATION... No

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PRICE

PEOPLE'S POET

(BARATHIAR)



BY

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NEW JUSTICE PUBLICATION

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PREFACE

Ever since our inspirer and guide Com. C. N. Annadurai, delivered his first english speech in the A.I.R. on "PEOPLE'S POET" letters were Pouring into our office from students here and abroad asking us to reproduce the same in the columns of our weekly 'New Justice' and we could not satisfy the wants of our readers for several reasons.

In these days when 'Anna' has become a very familiar and lovable name, whose penetrating thoughts, and revolutionary outlook magnetises the entire youths an attempt is made to carry his thoughts on 'People's Poet' (Bharathiar) to the masses.

His acclaimed unique position as to-day's top-most Tamil speaker and his unparalleled style, matchless mastery over language, commendable Cicero's oration and above all Antonian delivery in Tamil; is quite significant and undiminished in English. In fact it is no exaggeration. He is the best english speaker in the Dravidian Federation. This speech on 'People's Poet' brings to the credit of Dravidians a fine feather to the shining crown.

We are quite sure this book will be of great avail to the readers.

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PUBLISHERS,

'NEW JUSTICE'

PEOPLE'S POET

PEOPLE'S POET! Charming and significant as the term is, it is a warm tribute not only to the poet but also to the people - for the people had had their monarchs and ministers, their warriors and saviours, their seers and saints, miracle-mongers and priests, but had no poets - and from ages past there were poets in abundance, poets who supplemented the scriptures or who polished the palaces by their poetry, but poets who sang for and about the people, in the people's tongue, were very very rare. The poet's voice did the function of the temple-bell or the palace drum but rarely did that voice represent the innermost thoughts of the people and

when at times poets spoke about the people, it was to point out to them, how greedy and worldly they have become, how impermanent and illusory this world is, how sinful is silver and how ungodly is gold, and such like sermons - sermons that supplemented the royal rod and the whip of the aristocrat. Poets became in due course one more important item in the Royal paraphernalia, one more policeman, who filed the case here and asked the high heavens to deliver the Judgment later on. These poets spoke in a different tongue altogether and were far from the people. They despised the crowd from where they rose, and used their poetic genius to gain

admission in the royal palace, and when once there, they went on weaving wordy wreaths for monarchs of all sorts, provided his gold was pure. The poets of the Sangam period, are noble exceptions to this sorry rule, and they are the poets least known to the people of our days.

Poets either became vendors of virtue in verses or became pleasure-merchants, and they found it hard and unprofitable to become the People's Poet. That is the reason why we find no outstanding people's poet after the Sangam Age, in Tamil Nad.

POETS OF YORE

Virtue itself came to be considered as an investment for a happy life in another world hence, poets who came after the advent of this false and pernicious theory began to extol the

particular bank of dispensation for which they were the self-appointed agents. Like the clever banker, or the active insurance agent, these poets began to pour forth rhymes in abundance, about the soundness of their Bank, about the delightful dividends and the bright prospects. If one poet gave the people a sweet song about the powers of Garuda of Maha Vishnu up rose another to supply us with a sacred sonnet about the stately bull of Siva, or the beautiful peacock of Muruga or even the ugly buffalo of the all powerful God of Death, Yama. All these poems were of the highest order, looked at from the artist's point of view - there was rhythm, diction, similies, metaphors, parables, - all in abundance except reason. These poets thought that the temple bell did not work well and thought i

their duty to lend their poetic strength to supplement the sound - duty or no duty, it was such a paying job that there was a rush in that direction. Poets assumed an attitude of superiority - they enjoyed the common - man's confusion, they tried to compromise contradictions and beautify absurdities - they were loud in their denunciation of things worldly ; the worthlessness of human life, the littleness of mankind and they presented a poetic picture of the unknown world heaven up above the clouds, and the hell underneath the earth - the Telescope was in the womb of science hence heaven existed, and the poets entertained the people with imaginary descriptions about the theological worlds ! The ignorant stood amazed and the intelligent adored the art and not the thought.

ROLE OF PEOPLE'S POET

It is not easy to take up the role of a people's poet - Bharathi rose equal to this stupendous task. It is easy to become the poet of the classes, some sweet sonnets about the silvery moon swimming in a sea of blue, some poems about the twinkle of the stars, fine poems about the fragrance of the flower, the rhythm in rivers, lyrics about love and verses about valour - these are enough to secure a place of honour in the poets gallery. But to discharge the duties of a people's poet one has to cross hurdles of hatred, take many a dive in to dangers and should not think about patronage and popularity. Though a select circle of friends knew and spoke about the poetic genius of Subramania Bharathi, the people as a whole were almost unaware of

their poet till at a later stage, and then too, it was the poems of a political colour that was presented to the people, and not the poems, which a people's poet alone can conceive and deliver. We had had poets in abundance. The shepherd sleeping inside a temple forgetful of his home and vocation, the goddess returning after her midnight supervision, the smile on her lips on seeing the simpleton, her curious idea to make him a poet. the gentle pat and the touch of the divine rod, the wonderful result - these were known to the people. One becomes a poet, because of the divine touch, and it is his duty to sing devotional songs to a particular deity or to all - this theory held the ground so strongly, that the people were not prepared to meet the people's poet, even when one came forward. The people

will cast a look of contempt and suspicion on one who says boldly "I am the people's poet, I sing for them and about them, because I am one of them." There would be no recognition and the more radical his poems are, the more vehement will be the opposition. And in this dangerous ground, we find Subramania Bharathi taking steady steps victoriously.

BHARATHI'S AGE

Bharathi was born on the frontier of two eras--the feudal order was in full force in his homeland, Ettayapuram had a palace surrounded by huts, age-old castes were still in power, he himself was a Brahmin by birth-but side by side with feudalism and Sanathanic order of Society, modernism was peeping in, industrial revolution was dawning-the old order met

the new with sorrowful and scornful eyes, and there was challenge in the look of the new era. Bharathi was born during that period and more could have imagined that he will become the warrior in the duel between the old order and the New-for in the old order of things his was a comfortable place.

BHARATHIAR'S CLAIM TO GREATNESS

He was born moreover in this land of paradoxes a land where arrogance and humility, cruelty and kindness march together-where there is energy in abundance and absurd contemplation strong enough to dissipate the energy, a land of some dazzling ideas and millions of mute people, a land where there is apoplexy at the centre and anamia at the extremes, the land of courage as well as fear, the

land of faith as well as despair. Byron and Burke landed here just then, only to meet Bharatham and Bagavatham. The booming of the gun became familiar to the ears of the people and the age-long temple drum was not silent in such a land of paradoxes and perplexities, Bharathi was born, and in such a land history moves but slowly and it needs a strong push if it should move at all. Bharathi's claim to greatness rests chiefly on this he gave the push, as the people's poet.

Bharathi was not merely the bard of Nationalism he was certainly the morning star of reformation only because he was the people's poet. He was angry with the foreigner, and wanted his country to become free but that was not his goal that was not to be his end. It was but the beginning - he

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wanted to free his country, men from all shackles, wanted them to rise up in the estimation of the world, wanted to see, a new land peopled by men and women of a new type altogether. He found the people enveloped in fear. Fear was written on their very faces. They were afraid of anything and everything, not only did they fear the foreigner and his gun but their own brethren chanting some slogans-they were afraid of ghosts and phantoms.

FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

Such a people, cannot become the standard bearers of freedom, and a land peopled by such cannot lift its head high, and look straight at the world, even if the foreign power is driven out. Hence Bharathi wanted his countrymen, to drive out fear from

their mind-to shed off inferiority complex. He instilled into their minds hope and courage, he placed before them their own hidden powers and pointed out to them, how that innate power is being wasted, the slumber of the masses, their gross ignorance and superstition, their inferiority complex and their caste prejudices-Bharathi saw clearly, and he determined to root out these evils, and none but a people's poet could have been so deeply interested in these problems. But Bharathi knew full well, that it was the age of the common man - the era of democracy - and he wanted the people to fight for freedom-he did not deliver mere devotional hymns to the divinities, nor did he send poetic appeals to the princes of the land - he addressed the man with the

plough, the woman at the cradle, and even the children at the play-grounds. He did not, like the poets of a bygone age, pointing out, ancient scripts in support of freedom, but placed before the masses, the world events of importance the freedom movements of distant lands. He announced to the people, the dawn of freedom in Italy through the marvellous resurrection of the masses, thanks to Mazzini the patriot - he painted in glowing colours, the picture of France after the revolution, and placed a brand new picture about Russia, free from the shackles of Czardom. Free Belgium, free France, Red Russia - these were the pictures that he placed - not the theological lands of Indra or Brahma and having placed these pictures, he also presented them with a pen picture of

countrymen at Fiji islands, and like Shakespeare he asked, look at this picture and at that! That is the people's poet. One who is not afraid of pointing out the follies and foibles of his own people, one who is not afraid of showing to his own people, how slow they are in thought and action whereas peoples of other lands were moving fast and faster to a nobler sphere of activity and life. He was not afraid of the privileged class, and did not falter to place the full facts before the people. As the people's poet it was his duty to unmask cant and hypocrisy wherever it was to be found, and he did that with remarkable courage and enthusiasm.

CONSERVATISM CONDEMNED

There is an attempt by interested parties to enlarge

the portrait of Bharathi the National Bard, not entirely because they love that portrait but - because, they think that that portrait's immensity will conceal from the public eye, the other portrait, the portrait of Bharathi the people's poet. Bharathi's poems are no mere hornests. The people's poet, was not afraid to lay bare the absurdities of ancient systems and thoughts, and in almost infuriated tone, he asks those who champion the cause of conservatism in very strong words, 'Fools ! Do you argue, that things ancient ought on that account be true and noble ! Fallacies and falsehoods there were from times immemorial, and dare you argue that because these are ancient these should prevail ?'.

LIVE IN THE PRESENT SHAPE THE FUTURE

In ancient times, do you think that there was not the ignorant, and the shallow-minded ! And why after all should you embrace so fondly a carcass-dead thoughts. Live in the present and shape the future, do not be casting lingering looks to the distant past, for the past has passed away never again to return - so says Bharathi - and therein we meet. He gave a moral code for the masses, not unrelated to life, as some of the ancient codes were, he boldly differed from the ancient codes and placed before the people, a new vision altogether. He refused to allow the thought of Maya philosophy to have a hold on the people - he ridiculed that theory, strongly and infuriated the Asramites, but he was not

afraid of the consequences.

A people immersed in such a thought, Bharathi said, will become inactive, unprogressive and such a people will become worthless.

HIS RELIGION

Hunger and poverty and ignorance, he will not tolerate, and he raises his powerful voice against the tyranny of the rich, and threatens the whole world with dire consequence even if a single individual is made to starve. He wants the people to lead a full life - develop their faculties - improve their commerce - industrialise their land - and enjoy all the benefits of the new era. His religion, is not to be priest - craft and slogan - shouting - his religion is service to humanity and brotherhood in the broadest sense.

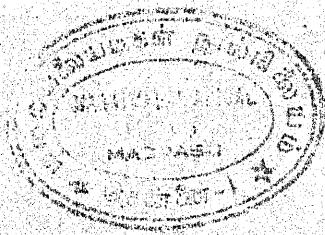
TASK UNFINISHED WILL BE FINISHED

The task that lies before the people's poet, is a mighty one. It is his task to make the people realise new truth, take a new path, and get a new process of valuation altogether. It is his task to release the people from the clutches of the Astrologer, and place before them the Astronomer, his is the task to drive out the Alchemist from the people's mind so that the chemist can come in. His is the task to push aside the priest so that the teacher can get a place. The people's poet has the mighty task of driving out the influence of the Miracle monger so that the Medical man can find a place in the order of things. Superstition is to be fought out, so that science can flourish. In short the people's poet has

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the task of a revolutionary-
and more difficult than that
of the revolutionary, for the
people are apt to mistake
the tyrant for the saviour
and the saviour for the
tyrant. He fought with
courage, and though the
battle is not over yet, and
though he is no more alive,
he has given an armoury of

thought, enough for the
successful termination of
the fight, and the best and
lasting tribute that one
can pay to this people's
poet, is to continue the
fight - the fight for freedom
of the people, in its fullest
and noblest sense. And
there are men for the job
and it will be finished.



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பெரியாரின்

திராவிடர் போர் முக



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மக்கள் மறுமலர்ச்சிபெற திராவிடர்க
ளின் திட்டங்கள் சீரிய கொள்கை
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தனிபெரும் தலைவர் பெரியார் அவர்
கள் இப்புத்தகத்தில் விரிவாகவும்
தெளிவாகவும் விளக்கியிருக்கிறார் ஒவ்
வொரு திராவிடரும் சுயமரியாதைக்
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