

DACCA SUNDAY MARCH 19/1978

Works of a Pioneer

IT is a great misfortune on the part of our authors that they seldom find publishers are novels with sex appeal or are detective stories. Often their books die before their death and their very names are well nigh forgotten after a fate of all our by gone authors including Siraji, Kaikobad, Moulana Islambadi, Dr. Lutfur Rahman, Mr. Abul Hussain, Mir Musharaf Hussain, Sheikh Fazlul Karim, Habibur Rahman and many others. Most of their previous works have gone out of print and even a complete list is not available with best endeavours. Yet these great figures were pioneers of our literary struggle and it behoves us to keep their achievement alive. It is a great pleasure that Bangla Academy has undertaken this noble task and the present volume is an instance of this.

The book consists of an epic, to wit Kahinoor Kaya, and five hv'r'cs namely Parifat, Gulshan, Banshari, Abe Hayat and Bhuter Baper Shradha. Many of the poems reflect original thought while many others are based on Sadi, Hafiz, Amir Khusru, Mainuddin Chisti, Shams Tabriz and other Sufis. A sub Inspector of Makhtabs, he was himself a pious devotee. It was therefore not unlikely that his mind should be swayed by philosophical thought. His mystic leanings with a craving for knowing the creator and defining his relation with Him. Parifat, Gulshan and Banshari are partly philosophical and partly descriptive.

In fact philosophy is the main theme of his poetry. The influence of Siraji, Kaikobad, Rabindranath Tagore, Nabin Chandra Sen and Nazrul Islam poem for his rebellion against

Sheikh Habibur Rahman Grant/aball Vol-I. Published by the Bangla academy Dacca. Board bound demy 1171 pages. price Rs. 18.00 only.

who is taunted by him in a Allah is noticed in some of the poems. But nobody can avoid such influence unless he is an epoch-making poet and though undoubtedly bestowed with considerable poetical genius, Habibur Rahman was not an epoch-making poet. It must also not be forgotten that it was the age of Muslim Renaissance in Bengal and that all our poets were imbued with the ideas of inspiring and rousing the nation. Hence his originality which manifested itself in his poems describing the beauties of nature etc. should not be doubted by similarity of sophical thought and forced to ideas. But engrossed in philosophical keep himself off from political arena. His national songs are very few compared with other varieties of poems including some elegies.

The lyrics are written in Pavar and Tripodi etc except Abe Hayat where in blank verse has been followed. It deals with the creation of Adam and in other words it is a replica of Milton's Paradise Lost. Eve and their fall from Heaven in Bengal.

Though he was usually thoughtful, reflective and grave Bhuter Baper Shradhaya shows that he could be light and humorous too. At times to compose nicesatires which would always give pleasure to children and their parents alike. In fact his love for satire is also observed in some of his other poems e.g. 'Dhamar Mahima' which might have better been included in this book.

His 'Jadukarer Khela' of this group is really a master piece as well as a few others such as 'Dhuknao Amare' and 'Amita kichai nai' which carry the readers at once to the thought of the other world.

Though not much liked by the younger generation, Habibur Rahman's poems were highly appreciated by the elder section of the people of his days and I think the same position holds good even today. Written in simple and lucid give pleasure and food for chaste Bengali many of them will thought to the saner section of the people though ultramodern groups may perhaps hold them somewhat in derision.

It is a wonder that though a main constantly on the move touring officer he had to rehe could spare time to compose so many poems at Railway stations or steanar/ghat and some even on board the steamer. None but one endowed with a real poetical soul could do this.

The worth of the book has been much enhanced by a valuable preface from the pen of Dr. Anisuzzaman containing a brief life sketch of the immortal poet and a review of his poems.

I hope the book will receive readers and the part played by the Bangla Academy in this respect will be highly appreciated.

The paper binding and title page of the book are excellent. Though the printing seems to a bit indistinct. The price is rather very cheap. But it would have been better if each book to show its separate a leaf had been prefixed to identify for want of which they seem to be part and parcel of the same volume. —Dr. M. Abdul Oader