FOR

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PREFACE

Master Tara Singh's contribution to Punjabi literature is noteworthy. So far, except one dissertation dealing with his novel (by this researcher), no critical or analytical work regarding his contribution to Punjabi literature is available.

Master Tara Singh was perhaps the first autobiography-writer (in prose) of the Punjabi language. His 'Meri Yaad' was published in 1943 whereas 'Marti' by Teja Singh, which is generally referred to as the first autobiography, was published in 1952. His autobiography is also an authentic history of Punjab from 1885 to 1945.

He is one of the few travelogue-writers of Punjabi language. His 'Mera Safarnama' was written in 1935, when only a small number of travelogues had been published in Punjabi language. This travelogue presents a study of religious and cultural conflict of various communities as well as a true picture of the state of affairs of the Gurudwaras of the areas visited by Master Tara Singh during the period of his travel.

Master Tara Singh is among of the pioneer fiction-writers of Punjabi language whose novels present a realistic picture of Sikh ethnic group in the contemporary Punjabi society. He is best at presenting locales in his novels. His novel 'Baba Teja Singh' is first successful historical novel of Punjabi language.
Besides this, he is among the first writers of periodical essays in Punjabi language on the lines of Steele and Addison. He wrote a plethora of editorials, essays, articles and tracts, which cover almost every contemporary political, religious and social questions relating to the Punjab and the Sikh Path. In the sphere of mystic and moral essays, his place is no less remarkable.

Master Tara Singh has earned a distinct reputation as a politician by dint of his long association with Punjab politics. He is also well-known as a journalist as he has been associated with a number of newspapers and journals like Sacha Randori, Akali Te Partisi, Akali, Parbhat, Jathedar, Sant Singh etc.

The present research work concentrates mainly upon his literary achievements which are a significant aspect of his multi-dimensional contribution to Punjabi society.

I have divided this thesis into six chapters. The first chapter deals with the Time of Master Tara Singh. In this chapter I have discussed the political, religious and social scene, particularly that part of the age which made some impact on the writings of Master Tara Singh.

The second chapter introduces writings of Master Tara Singh. I have discussed his writings under the headings - novels, essays, tracts, editorials, autobiography...
and travelogue. The discussion in this chapter is concentrated on the contents, background and motif of the works of Master Tara Singh.

The third chapter is an analysis of the ideological concepts as revealed in his writing. The source of Master Tara Singh's writings was mainly Sikh philosophy and Sikh history, so my discussion moves on this pattern. I have covered political, religious, sociological and ethical concepts of Master Tara Singh under this heading. The fourth chapter deals with Master Tara Singh's concept of an integrated personality, his depiction of contemporary society and his views about the people of the religions other than Sikhism.

The fifth chapter deals with artistic aspect of Master Tara Singh's writings. I have divided this chapter into two sections. The first section deals with his novels from plot-construction, characterisation and language point of view. The second section deals with Master Tara Singh as an essayist, as an editorial writer and as an autobiography writer. In the conclusion I have summed up his contribution as a whole.

This thesis aims at evaluation of Master Tara Singh as a Punjabi writer. I don't claim that I have said the final words about his writings. It is, in fact, a novel effort towards evaluation of the literary work of a writer whose contribution to Punjabi society is immense.
Before stopping the movement of my pen I must acknowledge the facilitation and guidance from (Prof.) Dr. V.N. Tewari, (Prof.) Dr. Attar Singh, Dr. Darshan Singh, Dr. Naqibur Singh, Dr. Hardev Singh Sachar, Prof. Harjit Singh Sandhu, who were always ready to help me.

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