

The Bird of Time

Songs of Life, Death & the Spring

By Sarojini Naidu

With an Introduction by
Edmund Gosse
And
Portrait of the Author



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SAROJINI NAIDU

Born: February 13, 1879

Died : March 2, 1949

She was the first Indian woman to become the President of the Indian National Congress and the first woman to become the governor of a state in India. Sarojini Naidu was a distinguished poet, renowned freedom fighter and one of the great orators of her time. She was famously known as Bharatiya Kokila (The Nightingale of India). Sarojini Naidu was the first Indian woman to become the President of the Indian National Congress and the first woman to become the governor of a state in India.

Those who have enjoyed the earlier collections of Mrs. Naidu's poems will find that in "The Bird of Time" the note of girlish ecstasy has passed, and that a graver music has taken its place. She has lived-and this is another facet of her eminent career-in close companionship with sorrow; she has known the joy and also the despair of consolation. The sight of much suffering, it may be, has thinned her jasmine-garlands and darkened the azure of her sky. It is known to the world that her labours for the public weal have not been carried out without deep injury to her private health. But these things have not slackened the lyric energy of Sarojini; they have rather given it intensity. She is supported, as the true poet must be, by a noble ambition. In her childhood she dreamed magnificently; she hoped to be a Goethe or a Keats for India. This desire, like so many others, may prove too heavy a strain for a heart

that

"s'ouvrit coming une fleur profonde
Dont l'auguste corolle a predict l'orient"

But the desire for beauty and fame, the magnificent impulse, are still energetic within this burning soul.

These few words I venture to bring to a close with a couple of sentences from one of her own latest letters: "While I live, it will always be the supreme desire of my Soul to write poetry - one poem, one line of enduring verse even. Perhaps I shall die without realising that longing which is at once an exquisite joy and an unspeakable anguish to me" The reader of "The Bird of Time" will feel satisfied that this her sad apprehension is needless.

-Edmund Gosse