



Fountains of Hopes

S. L. Peeran

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*Dedicated to
All my friends and few relatives
who have stood by me during
my thick and thin*

Foreword

I hold that poetry creates an intense, inspired experience in language chosen and arranged to fashion a specific emotional response through its meaning, sound, and cadence. Mr. Peeran has been writing verses in English since long and has written to date seven volumes of his collections. He is widely published and acclaimed poet. Dr. Krishna Srinivas, himself a poet of world repute, finds in Peeran's poetic philosophy a parallel with that of William Blake's poetic philosophy. Mr. Gordon Hindley calls him "a worthy *Lakshana* or sign post of the best in all of us and in the Indian English poetry." For Patricia Prime, he is "a master hand at the art." And Bernard M. Jackson finds in his poetry "sincerity with craftsmanship".

In comparison to all these stalwarts in the domain of poetry criticism, I find myself a little diffident and incompetent to comment upon Peeran's poetry; yet I have no courage to repulse his request. The present book, 8th in the sequence of his poetic output, has poems embracing varied themes: from "Building castles in dreams" to "Tears", "slippery love" to "glittering love", "absence rings" to "Eternity", poems written on the eves of new years – 2003 to 2006; poems lamenting the wicked deeds of "Talibans" and horrendous, blood-curdling spectacles left by the "Tsunami". In his poems, he resonates between hope and despair (though he calls his poems "**Fountains of Hopes**"); celebrates and laments; is glad and sad; meditates upon "war and peace" and "truth and beauty"; sometimes nostalgic and then rejoices in Indian "unity in diversity". These poems cater to various tastes and moods not only of the poet but also of the readers.

The poems are topical in consonance with the mood of the poet at its best in his moments of imaginative gleamings from the moods of the inspired world. The poet partakes them with his readers: it is here a poet moves into the minds of his readers and lets them experience, for themselves, the same joy and sorrow, hope and despair that he has felt in his moments of ecstasy.

I congratulate Mr. Peeran, and hope this collection will also be welcomed by the readers, for this venture. I wish him still greater success and would like to remind him of Robert Browning's advice.

"Grow old along with me
The best is yet to be."

D. C. Chambial
Editor: POETCRIT
Maranda – 176 102 (HP).

Introduction and a humble appreciation

“Believe the poem; not the poet”, is a well-known saying, drawing attention to the written poem and the poetic word, and dismissing the detailed prosaic confessions of the poets, written as their introductions, prefaces, forewords, afterwords, appendices, notes and so on. It is in such a mood of confession that I put forth some much sustained thoughts which have troubled me and “preoccupied” my time, awake and asleep.

Those who are familiar with the world of the “occult” know the evolutionary levels of the ritualistic religious, the practiced spirituality and the inexplicable and mysterious mysticism. This evolving trend is also true of poetastry, verse and poetry. The poetaster evolves into the versifier, the versifier evolves into the writer or composer of poetry and becomes the evolved poet. It is this heightened consciousness functioning effectively in the poetic mode that the reader is looking for, to get the aesthetic delight from the read experience.

This brings us to the most important element of poetry, the content or the subject matter. Poetry cannot survive being just jingle, verbosity, a puzzle of words, a circus or jugglery. The content or subject matter gives the message, “is” the message, through the poetic medium. Here I would like to confess that the anxieties, anguishes and despairs of our present times have much influenced my life. This I also find true of the verse of S. L. Peeran. No modern poet can afford to live in an ivory tower escaping from reality, building castles in the air and gathering mere dust. We need to deal with the various cruel aspects of world matters. And what more appropriate a mood, tone and attitude to deal with reality than that of HOPE? Therefore, S. L. Peeran has taken the liberty and the poetic license to coin a (hopefully) new word – “HOPES”. Hope is an abstract noun always used in the singular. It cannot be seen, as it is abstract, but we can “feel” it, develop it, (with sustained effort) and see its many faceted manifestations.

“Hopes”, in plural, expresses a further positive thinking, it implies an enthusiasm necessary for the present modern times. “Hopes” is not one, but many. It is a panacea for all ills, all problems of the world.

Water (and “fountains”) are symbolic of life itself. It is a life force. Therefore, “Fountains of Hopes” is an epitome of enthusiasm, positivity and patience.

The protagonist in the poem “Glittering Love” (and quite logically, the poet S. L. Peeran) is an ardent votary of love with an attitude of humility, submission and supplication.

“Let me bow and place my brow

On the altar, where love oozes”.

In “Pass On”, he wishes to be “a pilgrim in a caravan” but the punch line is in the last line where “hungry children’s cry rends the chill air”.

“Mastani Ma” – The Green One is an interesting account of a real life woman saint, who lives an ascetic life in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh. Her hopeful advice is:-

“In low tone, she blessed me with sagely advice.

To be true to Lord and recite His Names.

To love all His creatures with Compassion.

To shun being enemy of my soul.”

----- in tune with the title of the collection bringing us to a hopeful frame of mind.

In “Raining Fire and Brimstone”, the poet dares to question the Creator:

“O Heaven! Where is Thy promised Mercy?

Thou art Stupendous and Tremendous!

Does Thou destroy what Thou create?

To raise new gardens, with new hopes

To give fresh lease to a decaying land?"

These lines are preceded by an account of "mighty brothers" bullying their "younger ones". The questioning attitude of the poet shows his shocked mood at terrible happenings of the cruel world and brings out his true nature of asking for protection and divine justice.

A slow and detailed reading of poem after poem sometimes belies the title of the book and gives the reader a depressing and dismal account of phenomena quite acceptably based on reality. In the poem "Dive Down", the "deep subconscious mind" is expressed in the metaphor:

"The soaring skylark dives down

To be hunted and encaged

The short lived freedom, mirth and joys

Gets drowned in mire"

The last line expresses the dismal condition of the subconscious mind. The main thought is about the forefathers and their desolatory living in parched lands. It is their difficulties (unmindful of the blistering fiery sun) that has such a tremendous effect on the subconscious mind that it is capable of bringing the person to stark reality, when he is immersed in "heavenly pleasures", "mirth and joys". It is a rare poem of in-depth psychology and therefore, noteworthy.

This struggle between hopes and despairs is not the only mainstream of the exceptional collection of poems. The various hues, moods, anguishes, hopes, disappointments, joys of union, sorrow of parting and separation and other aspects of romantic and other types of love occur on and off in the book, proving the poet to be an ardent devotee and genuine votary of love. This is one of his important poetic strengths and the poignant lines sometimes cause much

contemplation and often bring tears to the readers eyes. For example, “Absence rings” is about lost love.

“Ah! Where now the warmth of my beloved”. The absence of the beloved is touchingly brought out by the last stanza:

“Spring has dawned sans fragrance

The gardens are all desolate

The nightingale’s sweet songs are missing

My beloved’s absence adds to my woes”

The very next poem “slippery love” continues the mood of sorrow – “Yes, we sing tearful songs. Songs to cheer the desolate heart”.

The above line “Songs to cheer the desolate heart” is not only about “slippery love” but is an epitome of the real message of the title of the book “Fountains of Hopes”. “Songs to cheer” suggests positive hope, “The desolate heart” indicates a sad and cruel condition of romantic reality “Where now the silvery lining? “and “Whither the fragrance of rose?” asks the disappointed lover.

The concern for feminine protection and the gallant attitude of a chivalrous heart and mind (of the poet) is depicted with sharp images in “Amidst Vultures”.

Time itself is an important idea and image in many poems. “Dismal future”, “Bells of oblivion” are some such.

Though the depressing details of the cruel world like war, terrorism, violence, natural calamities, unrequited or disappointed love and so on are often presented in striking but depressing detail; S. L. Peeran is essentially a positive thinking, genuine poet of hope and enthusiasm as is shown by the lines:-

“Let’s give a break

To this unending chain of blues”.

from the poem, “Lets give a break”.

The positive attitudes of the poet is effectively and clearly brought out in the poem on the motherland “Mera Bharat Mahan” and especially in the lines :-

“O! Bharat Mahan
Thou have lived from antiquity
Thou shall live for eternity”.

The title poem “Fountains of Hopes” has striking images. The first line is not a mere exaggeration but a desperate poet’s hope for the impossible. Blood shed moves his heart to want to sow stars:

*“Oh! Only could I sow stars
Moons on the galaxies, where,
Now is littered with blood.”*

This is an exceptional poem of positive images, juxtaposed by negative images or vice versa. The poet is concerned about “blood shed”, “turbulent floods”, “love-starved generation”, “flaming deserts” and “decaying souls”. He wishes to “sow rainbows, roses”, “create founts”, “bring fragrance” and so on.

S. L. Peeran’s poetic technique is successful as in the above poem.

If prolific writing is one poetic virtue, variety of themes is another. Bombarded by the dismaying news of the cruel world, the poet sharpens his sensibility aesthetically and poetically seeks solutions and comforts. One such poem is ‘A Cry in misery’ where the call of the valleys calls him to nothingness. Bereft of attitudes, he dismisses the hope, while he is surrounded by “blues and black”:-

“while blues and black surround me.”

The next poem is a major effort, which attempts successfully to bring into a concise and effective poetic experience, the essence of a professional life-time. The protagonist is a judge recounting the extremes of the experience, the travails

and turbulence of the times, the ebb and flow of life itself as seen from a warrior's perspective. The poet is a judge and a warrior reminding us of the legendary Ulysses, the Greek hero. Note the lines.

"Where sturdy warriors met with shining swords.

Where bloody battles were fought and kingdoms lost."

The poet is remembering the battles that were fought, but he is himself a warrior. Entire episodes of the past flash in the background, creating an effect to be remembered. The place is Delhi and New Delhi. The entire ethos of the historical and important place is sketched with a magical effect giving much detail. The poem can be read and re-read for enjoyment. The gratitude is expressed for a "beloved colleague on his retirement".

We are happy to note that these earnest judges are obedient to God.

"To draw from our bosoms just rulings."

The rulings are from the heart, the seat of emotion and not from the head that confuses. A Piscean by birth, the poet is strongly and correctly emotional, when necessary, adding to the poetic content increasingly. A Piscean virtue, emotion, is strong in content and effectively used throughout the verse of S. L. Peeran. I would like to recommend a reading of all his eighth volumes of verse for a fulfillment of this emotional purpose – an essential and strengthening feature of poetry.

The imaginative poet in S. L. Peeran is capable of shedding his identity – a kind of escape from his personality to unusual roles, masks, outpourings, and statements. He takes on the voice of a new character time and again, which makes an interesting feature of his poetry. The eight volumes gives a variety of roles. On such role is the "Voice of a martyr". The sad line is:

"Destiny will judge me right one day"

The suffering of the innocent is brought out.

A staunch advocate of sobriety and honest living, S. L. Peeran longs for “A pint of happiness”, when thousands are clamouring for beer. This alertness of mind is a repetitive image brought out in objects. Words upon words are cascading with an effulgence impossible to believe. S. L. Peeran is a poet who by his sincerity of purpose, brings out much contemplation and often tears to the eyes. Recommended as good bed-time reading by a respected British critic Gordon Hindley, S. L. Peeran’s verse is a considerable phenomenon. The verse is terse, when necessary. At times it is astonishing, shocking, almost. Verse after verse intensifies the effect, not without dismay, at times. S. L. Peeran is much influenced by “The Poets Pen” and the sanctity of the written word. All the sacredness of the purpose of writing is well understood, by the poet; whose family is full of saints. It may be predicted, by a study of his verse, that his much compassionate heart, moved by the happenings of the world, will soon guide him to a pure sainthood. Endowed with a good heart and mind, he is sure to evolve into a higher poet, worth watching.

Criticism should not concern itself with pointing out flaws, whether syntactical or semantic; or any other. It should concern itself with primarily recognizing the sincere purpose of the poet; his concerns; the intensity of emotion; the genuineness of his mind and the humanity of his heart.

Observe the images of S. L. Peeran. His concerns manifest in striking images, poem after poem. He has allowed the poetic thought to grow in his mind before writing it. He is crying out for help. We sympathize with him as his fellow readers. We heave a sigh of relief. We thank God for taking us closer to reality. We postpone the book for another reading to illumine the mind. Erstwhileness is in itself a much considerable virtue and poetic talent develops slowly. We talk of “growth” of a poet and that is what is happening to S. L. Peeran. Literature is an experience of art and growth is its purpose. Evolution is the result.

The higher effects are achieved by poetry, especially if it is sincere and obedient to God. S. L. Peeran is a good person; an honest man; a learned judge; with a good heart and correct understanding of his duty to God. All these can be surmised by understanding his poetic efforts correctly. The genuineness of purpose is brought out effectively in poem after poem.

We are appalled by the effect he creates sometimes. A votary of only that which is right and correct; is against everything which is a immoral, incorrect or unjust. Any just judge is like that and to our benefit S. L. Peeran is a poet too. This servant of God is sure to go a long way in his pursuit of truth. His interests are worldwide, his concerns, human. His heart is golden and his mind is pure. He has a simplicity of nature which is endearing. It is goodness, he is interested in; and virtue is his hallmark. He is capable of lifting us to divine heights and bringing sorrow at the condition of man. He is aware of his duty to God and this makes us admire him. Because of his poetry we have a better world.

Another poem using the word "hope" is "A Ray of Hope". The speaker is an old man on the threshold of death. He says:

*"My Lord, my succour,
My candle is now to burn out"*

He prays for the future generation:

"I look up now for fresh dreams"

Woman is worshipped in many countries as "mother". The goddess triumphs:

*"Ultimate triumph to womanhood
Who bears hardship with a cheerful smile."*

"Recorded moments" is a psychological poem.

"But mind records all and all, to yearn and recall".

The poet remembers many details from his life and presents them with detailed images that astound. The poem shows the working of the human mind – how we remember precious incidents, anecdotes, objects. The ups and downs of love is also shown.

“Hysterical laments on passing away of dear ones.

Haunting dreams of forlorn love, lost promises.

Glimmering unions, passionless splendours,

Erotic songs, secret messages to weave hearts with love”.

The poet is aware, probably unconsciously, of mystic realms. He has respect for evolved beings and their obedience to God. He is aware of the advantages of the non-speech state or condition and therefore the title of the poem is “Silences”.

“Rishies, yogis, mahatmas meditate in silence.

To go higher up in secret galleries to meet the Divine.”

Detailed studies have been done about “landscape” in poetry. S. L. Peeran’s heart has place for the entire cosmos!

“To tranquilize my heart, subside the storms within.” – from the poem, “Mighty Fear”.

In “Transformation”, the poet’s “heart” is enveloped with “blanket of pathos”. The terrible happenings of the world make the poet cry out, but with hope, for a complete, positive, corrective, transformation.

“Let’s weave hearts with virtues of love

Transform rivers of blood to milk of human kindness”

The poem “Quatrains” shows clearly the development of erotic love in a positive manner.

“A stranger with a roving eye

Enticing the young beauty in her youth

Seducing her with smooth butter words

To tickle her flame and the urge”

The second stanza shows the extent of romantic sorrow in their lives.

“The tears that swell like floods

When blues, afflict are to cleanse the being.”

“Cleans the being” indicates the cathartic effect that is brought about by the “tears that swell like floods”. The intensities of romantic love are well understood. An epitome comprising the essence of “Fountains of Hopes” is:

“While walking on marshy lands barefoot

While living in sultry seasons

While floating in surreal dreams

We yearn for golden times to dawn on us”

Another positive title and content is in the poem “Happy Times” which brings out the need to improve the human condition, after listing some of the correctable realities.

Hopes are clearly shown by the lines:

“Let’s wipe the tears of sorrows from every eye,

Let none go to bed hungry, live bare sans clothes.”

The above two lines clearly prove that the poet S. L. Peeran need not become the richest man of the world to give charity. He is much richer than the richest man of the world by his capacity for world prayer. He is so magnanimous, generous and giving a person that by virtue of his capacity for correct prayers, he is giving us the possibility of a better world; through his poetry. It is this kind of thinking and praying that brings about a tremendous respect and reverence for the appreciable mind of “S. L. Peeran”.

A different kind of poem “New Found Life” is a justifiable criticism of the limitations of the computer and the computer age. God is the creator of beauty and makes man to marvel at it. He is also the creator of the computer, which has “ensnared” man in a closed room taking him away from the splendours, joys and soothing effect of nature:

“Nature’s beauty, its colour, its charm

Receding in one’s background

Away from mind and heart

Body stiffened like hard-board glued to chair.

S. L. Peeran is a complete pacifist at heart, pointing out the horrors of war, and the need for peace. Respect for God, obedience to God and need to pray for and achieve peace permanently in this world, are important preoccupations and themes in his admirable poetry. “War and Peace” is such a poem. He has a futuristic positivity, which makes his poetic out-pourings worthy of serious consideration.

The purpose of poetry is to evolve our nature from the animalistic to the Divine. The mind should be entertained and the heart should become content. The senses should achieve an aesthetic satisfaction and peace. The sensibility for poetic appreciation should be correctly satisfied. Diction and vocabulary should be precise, novel and exact – The correct word in the correct place. Images must be appropriate and as striking as possible. Poetic effects must be created with correct emphasis on meaning and content. The subject matter must be treated poetically, unlike in prose. The stances; roles; voices; masks and so on must be primarily for achieving the basic poetic purpose only. Exaggeration and hyperbole is allowed, as are all figures of speech; not for itself or its novelty, but for a pre-thought and much considered underlying poetic effect and poetic message.

All these above positive features are true in many ways in the prolific poetry of S. L. Peeran.

The poet observes that there is much to learn from:

*“the bygone pages of history
Of blood shed, animosity, hatred.”*

In the poem “Shut the Trap”.

He questions the need for uttering the truth when so many mistake the purpose. He dares to say that “I shall stand my ground” in spite of the danger of being mistaken for “A Charlie, a buffoon, a mad cap?”.

This poem shows that verbosity is not one of the poetic ills of the poet, but outspokenness is one of his virtues.

“Dreams for Merger” is a poem which shows the “sweet dreams” – “the unpolluted ones”. It is a poem about merger, union, coitus:

*“The lovely maiden in her imagination,
Swirls with her lover, dreams of merger
The widow piously preserves her memories
Lamenting daily on the loss of joys and glees”.*

The purpose of the poem and its main content is “To bring hearts, minds and bodies closer and closer.”

The next poem is about jingle and music, necessary to create a lovely day and fill its spaces and vacuums. An ordinary day may become an important one. The poet exhorts us to change a simple day into a memorable one:

*“Let the magic of this day forever,
Change the course of our life.
And thousand melodies thrill us forever.”*

This capacity to change the ordinary into the extraordinary is a strength of the poet.

The poem “pleasure and pain” shows the limitations of impermanent pomp and pelf. This is compared to “Alexander, Caesar, Hitler and Stalin”. A psychological explanation for this is given by the line. “But this very self, the inverted one, creates all this.” The poem questions “pomp” itself and dismisses it logically.

“Cold Waves” is a poem about someone dear, departing. The human drama is unfolded with great detail :

“Out bursts of deep affectional traumas.”

The passing of the dear one makes the mourning crowd to come closer:

“Oh! Look, how all assemble, cuddle,

Shake, furtively, forgetting

Bitterness, coming closer, hugging.

Seeking each other to console.

To lift the sagging spirits.”

The working of the poet’s mind is shown in “My Poems”. The first kind of poem brings about a negative response. The second kind of poem pleases the Rashtrapathi (President) A. P. J. Abdul Kalam himself.

The poet confesses:

“Poets don’t bear rancor nor spite.

Poems are to mesmerize readers

In chosen words with similes.”

The next poem “To a departed friend” wins over admiration for the departed soul. He is an extraordinary person with many virtues. Line after line, every line speaks about his virtues and helpful nature. He achieves this by

making his only aim, to please His Lord, by working for His fellowmen. It is poems like this, which shows the poet's capacity to appreciate the appreciable in society. A good Samaritan, the departed friend sets a good example of a well-lived life.

"To ourselves" is a poem which shows that "We create our own islands" "with out own demarcated boundaries";

"Our own satellites and stars,

To go round in its orbits".

We dance to our own tunes:

"We have our own melodies.

To sing our own songs.

To please and soothen our own ears.

We dance to our own tunes."

In the next poem "Help Please", "A Mahatma" is spoken about. The poet says that he is "foxy and cunning" and "undependable".

The world is a snare, tempting man to become rich through "dubious means". But the poet is a "white collared man with values". He holds on to the "plank" of correctness and obedience to God from "drowning" in the "temptations galore" of the wrong path - which he does not want to tread.

A powerful poem - "Spread of Pollution" speaks about the failure of international relations. Countries fail in achieving harmony. The bridges are symbolic of the cultural bonds between nations. The meaninglessness of terror is highlighted. The world becomes complex, complicated. Small pox and AIDS pose their danger along with hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases. The situation of international turmoil perturbs even the sacred, secret marriage bed of the protagonist by its own illogical logic; showing the dangers of such unresolved tensions:

“Where to sow the seeds of love?

When the bed is polluted and marshy!

The poems on the uncontrollable terror of terrorism which is unleashed in different parts of the world causing an unwanted, seeming revival of the terrible conditions as were found at the times of the “crusades”, the “Balkan war”, “the first world war”, “Hitler” and “the second world war”. The protagonist wants to point out that those who advocate a cleansing correction of the terrorized world are themselves either corrupt or polluted in many ways and need correction in the first place.

The “Unseen hand of Mercy” is a positive poem which speaks about the hope of positive protection for all of creation. The unseen hand of mercy and love is that of God, the creator and human beings themselves. The poem uses exaggeration with good effect bringing about the magnitude of existence, human and otherwise:

“Each one is a universe by themselves.

Revolving around them their own Sun, Moon

And surrounded by million stars.

They raise their own multi-coloured flags.”

The last two lines of the second stanza:

“Some good taking place all the time,

And nature unfailingly bestowing its bounties”

and the last two lines of the third stanza.

“The combined strength of the good

Can subdue any wrong that may arise.”

speak about a positive future. This is another poem whose content and theme is in keeping with the title of the collection of poems – “Fountains of Hopes”.

A significant poem “Withering Moments” speaks imaginatively and realistically about the healing power of two loving hearts:

*“When two loving hearts meet,
Age old prejudices and hates
Of colour, race and religion would
Melt away like cold frozen ice.”*

“The Warmth” of the loving hearts – “the glowing fire within” –

*“Bring joy, pleasure, loving memories”.
To cherish and make life worth living”.*

How time is transformed when there is love in the heart is shown in the line:

“Every moment is an ounce of gold.”

Next the sorrow of separation is also brought out:

*“Unabated tears from ocean of feelings,
Washing away forever the sweet memories”.*

It is a noteworthy poem worth pondering over.

An orthodox mind and what it goes through in the changing modern times is brought out in the poem, “Modern Times”. The first three lines of the poem show the true nature of the poet and also the protagonist. His sincerity is noteworthy and wins our respect for his personality:

*“Let’s keep our hand on our heart.
And utter the truth, by being
True to our salt and to our Mother India”.*

The travails of a changing scenario is effectively brought out-

*“Old dogmas disappearing and melting
Like snow and ozone layer.
Faith and love reaching its nadir”.*

The rest of the poem highlights the sordid realities of daily life. The bohemian conditions of a “poppy culture” is reason for despair and concern of the poet.

In “Truth and Beauty”;
“The petty men with their power
Control the minds of slavish persons;
Spreading their tentacles
And net work, throwing a web
Around all encompassing nature;
For their whim, their pleasures”.

The most important question of the book of poems is asked here:

“Can the vision of everlasting goodness
Descend in our actions, in our lives”.

The poet prays that our thoughts should be freed from “cults, fetishes, passions”.

The high statement is in the last three lines:

“Let the shining Truth and Beauty
Capture and enthrall us for ever.
To take us beyond the realms of ecstasy”.

Another hopeful poem “Hope for the lost ones” speaks about the outer and inner worlds. Like the Buddhist teachings, the poet points out the meaninglessness of over-emphasis on outward phenomena and the need for caring for the inner self and its griefs and sorrows. Based on an essay, “A free Man’s worship”, by the world famous thinker and philosopher, Bertrand Russel, the poem begins impressively thus :-

“The struggle for private happiness.
To achieve temporary desires.
To burn with passion for external things,
To catch the slippery power,

Is the bane of the Modern Man”

The need to free the mind from the wanton tyranny that rule the outward life is highlighted. The important question is asked:

“Can we lighten sorrows, grief?

By the balm of sympathy.

To give to sufferers, the oppressed.

The pure joy of a never tiring affection;

To strengthen failing courage.

To instill faith in hours of despair?”

The very possibility and positive purpose of the use of words, whether spoken or written, read or listened is questioned in the last two lines:

“Can the spark of divine fire, be kindled

In the hearts, with brave words?”

Much more than the other “hopeful” poems quoted and analyzed; this poem “Hope for the lost ones” epitomizes the title of the book, “Fountains of Hopes”, and brings out the hopeful positive nature of the poet S. L. Peeran and his significant poetry.

The last two poems of the collection are “Happy New Year” poems of the years 2005 and 2006. In the first “2005”, the joys of the disciple’s surrender to the All-Knowing Master is brought out throughout the poem. Such a surrender, made in a humble way, makes everyday like a new year’s day – celebratory and joyous; - ridding all sorrows and making the “heart glow like a crystal”. The mind becomes purified and the world itself is aglow. The celestial gift of much sought after peace becomes easily available.

Every living second is prevailed by joy and ecstasy. Life moves smoothly with “fragrance of love”. Day in and day out; at sun rise and full moon; at all times, unlimited happiness is achieved.

Thus this poem shows the many-fold advantages of a humble and total surrender by the disciple to the Divine Master.

In the last poem of the collection the year 2006 is welcomed. Another very hopeful poem, it is like an incantation for peace, beauty, love and plenty. Note the line, “The withering age holds in its bosom, hope” it summarises the positive poet’s hopeful attitudes for the future. The very “civilized modern times” and “Great Nations” are presented hopefully:

Civilized modern times would overcome man’s grief.

Great nations with ever ennobling thoughts, nurture

Protect poor men in distress and pain.

The poet prays that (ageless beauty and) love shower on mankind various gifts – gold, silver and full granneries – thus praying for a good harvest. This poem shows that Peeran has a positive mind.

The seven “Haiku” deserve reading and re-reading for their successful effect. Within the limitation of seventeen syllables and various Haiku rules, correct imagery has to be used with brevity and sharpness. Some are based on the Zen tradition which does not insist on a seventeen syllabic order.

To sum it all up – an interesting collection of poems with a variety of themes and subjects, brought about with all the possible enthusiasm and genuine sincerity of a growing poet, showing promise for the future. We have to concentrate on the concerns of the poet to understand and appreciate him fully – by a slow and sympathetic reading of his poetic efforts.

A purely intellectual effort to “hoo-ha” and “pooh-pooh” varying levels and kinds of written creativity – whether poetastry; verse or poetry, will help us to achieve nothing of consequence. Though, it might be argued, that genuine

respect for a poet's mind may slowly grow into sustained appreciation, worthy praise and deserving recognition; it need not become sheer adulation for whatever reason. Appreciation in an unbiased and an unprejudiced fashion is always better than negative criticism.

It is with such a perspective that we should assess the first eight volumes of Peeran's verse and look forward to his future poetry.

Bangalore
17th June 2006

S. V. Ramachandra Rao, M.A
Lecturer in English

Preface

I am presenting to my readers my eighth collection of poems. I am dedicating this work to few of my bosom friends who have known me in and out, and have stood by me throughout my life during summer and winter. Their love and affection has been overwhelming. Their encouragement unseizing like a torrential rain. I cannot ask for more.

My poet friend Dr. D. C. Chambial, Editor Poetcrit has been pleased to pen a foreword to my collection, for which I am extremely grateful.

My friend Sri S. V. Ramachandra Rao has been my friend from primary school days. We have sailed together in some ways but parted company in other ways. Yet our spiritual bonds have been thick. He is a poet and Lecturer in English for over three decades. A mystic and a profound reader of books, of men and society. My request to him was for a simple introduction but his generosity has been enormous. His lavish introduction has embarrassed me. I am thankful to him for his analysis of this collection of poems.

I am thankful to several poetry journals for publishing my poems in their regular issues.

I beg my readers to forgive me for my lapses in syntax, semantics and short comings in my poetry.

I hope my poems will appeal to the sensibility of the poets, critics and lay readers.

I am thankful to Sri M. S. Venkataramaiah, Editor, Bizz Buzz, for readily taking up the task of publishing this work.

Bangalore

S. L. Peeran

*Fountains of Hopes***LET'S BUILD CASTLES IN DREAMS**

I am concerned, worried
With furrows on forehead.
I scratch my head.
Shuffle my thoughts.
I try to stir my imaginations.
But it is horrid, stifled,
Like a dried well in a desert,
Storms, Cyclones, nor miseries.
Enthuse me, nothing inspires me.
Is my poetry dead? I mourn, wail,
Weep, cry, pull my hair.
I sit with a dead pan face.
Twinkle in the eye has waned
With sunken eyes, hollowed cheeks.
O muse, cast your dazzling eye.
Let my beloved's charming face,
Delicate hands around me.
Stir waves and waves within me.
To pour forth my love in verse.
To ever live in castles, in dreams.

S.L. PEERAN**PAST SHADOWS**

The dead past with haunting memories.
Like a steam engine, shunting up and down
Whistling, jetting out smoke and sparks
Screaming its sirens and horns.
Slowly and steadily overwhelming
The consciousness, the jittery mind.
The silence in the air like an old lady
Cringing, cowering setting ennui.
The listless journey's pace at snail speed
In a rickety bullock cart, with jingling bells.
The shallow paths with muddy pot holes, thorns
Living in quagmire with dull surroundings.
Day and night pause, to look back
And watch the dark shadows melting away.

*Fountains of Hopes***GLITTERING LOVE**

The threshold of love,
Glimmers like a twilight.
Separating the light and darkness.
A horizon where sky meets an ocean.
A shore between land and a sea.
Like a stream passing through a parching land.
Let me bow and place my brow,
On the altar, where love oozes.
My thousand supplications on pulpit melt
And passes into oblivion sans acceptance.
But a single glance and glimpse
Of love, surpasses the dreary moments.

S.L. PEERAN**PASS ON**

I wish I melt away like an ice.

Evaporate like steam in the thin air,

On the orange sun shining bright.

Then be a stone in a running stream.

Let me be a pilgrim in a caravan.

To pass on to the antiquity.

In a white shroud to eternal obscurity.

Then limp like a blind beggar in typhoon.

Night's canopy has spread like a vampire's wings.

Lightning hardly brightens the pathways.

Breathless silence standing still in snaking streets.

My whooping cough disturbs the darkness around.

Chimneys are all choked, hearths cold.

Granaries empty, ponds, rivers parched.

Sickle, axe, plough lying in a corner.

Hungry children's cry rends the chill air.

*Fountains of Hopes***COOL STREAMS**

There was a time when I found him

Calm, and serene sans tension.

I took it to be his weakness,

His inability to be zestful

Today, when I look back.

I do feel that I was wrong.

He was always cool

To the turbulent surroundings.

He knew one thing, perhaps, that

To strive for something unusual.

For hopes, to touch the zenith,

Are mere mirages and clouds to melt

My son tells me what I spoke

To my loving dad, in my teens.

My ranting, hooting, shouting

Hardly stirred the silent flowing streams.

“MASTANI MA” – The green one

On a fine summer day, a high profile friend.
 A devotee of an centurion lady saint,
 Took me in his car, to the town of Chittoor,
 Passing through a forest and hilly track.

It was past noon, when we reached the place.
 A mausoleum of white stone, with chambers.
 Masons, Stone cutters were dressing and chipping stones.
 Giving finishing touches and laying the floor.

In a corner sat, the holy one in green kurta pyjamas.
 We fell on her lotus feet to seek her blessings.
 She opened her Tiffin carriers and served us
 With sumptuous rice, sambar, vegetables, pickles.

To all low and high present, she greeted,
 Offered them food with a sweet smile.
 Child like innocence radiated from her being.
 Though, she has been fasting over half a century.

She spoke softly to say about herself.
 Of her penance on three hundred sixty hills.
 Showed us a room with pebbles of various colours,
 Collected from each hill, where she sat in prayers

She examined my pulse and said, I suffer
 From illnesses, which were unknown to me.
 Of evil effects of foes and black magic.
 Of my inner sorrows, pangs and bitterness.

In low tone, she blessed me with sagely advice.
 To be true to Lord and recite His Names.
 To love all His creatures with compassion.
 To shun being enemy of my own soul.

*Fountains of Hopes***RAINING FIRE AND BRIMSTONE**

The big mighty brothers, with fiery eyes;
Along with their hefty bully younger ones.
March with their forces and fighters.
To rob the riches and treasure of their brother.
To loot, ravish, plunder his home, family.
To let rivers of blood, scorch and burn
All the perfumed gardens of love.
The jewel of peace is shattered
To smithereens. The mirror
Reflecting splendor and glory
Lay in pieces. Mourning is deep.
The blue canopy is turned red.
Father in heaven, mother by his side.
Weep for lost sanity and equanimity.
Terror turns to vanquish a dictator.
But snatches the twinkle from tiny tots.
The suckling ones are roasted alive.
Tender ones are rolled down.
Lovely roses are left to dry in parched lands.
O Heaven! Where is Thy promised Mercy?
Thou art Stupendous and Tremendous!
Does Thou destroy what Thou create?
To raise new gardens, with new hopes.
To give fresh lease to a decaying land?

DIVE DOWN

My deep sub-conscious mind,
Drenched with millennium
Thoughts of my fore-bearers,
Of their desolatory living in parched lands.
Unmindful of the blistering fiery sun.
Of pangs of hunger, bare-bodied.
The deep hidden hood strikes,
Whenever heavenly pleasures surrounds –
To make me oblivious of the pussy wounds;
Of the marshy thorny paths.
The soaring skylark dives down,
To be hunted and encaged.
The short lived freedom, mirth and joys,
Gets drowned in mire.

ABSENCE RINGS

Roses in December hasn't bloomed.

Stillness in the air is chilling.

Dense fog has choked the visibility.

Ah! Where now the warmth of my beloved?

My throbs and fire in my bosom.

My longings in my heart.

My searching, tearful eyes,

Pierces the dark veil for a glimpse.

Spring has dawned sans fragrance.

The gardens are all desolate.

The nightingale's sweet songs are missing.

My beloved's absence adds to my woes.

SLIPPERY LOVE

Yes, we sing tearful songs.
Songs to cheer the desolate heart.
But the passing shadows,
Eclipse the bright round one.
The dark clouds have all melted.
Where now the silvery lining?
The burning candles are to pop out.
To leave me in darkness and in silence.
Whither the fragrance of rose?
That once caused ripples in me.
The torturous path of slippery love,
With deceptive face is to give blues or fragrance.

Fountains of Hopes**TIMELESS AGE**

Millions of years of life,
On planet Earth evolving,
From Amoeba to Man.
A process repeated in the womb.
A replica of a story of evolution.
Enacted in nine months.
Life lived for any length,
Is momentary on Earth, a speck.
The expanding cosmos.
Timeless immeasurable.
A lived moment in realization,
Enlightenment surpasses Time.

BLAME WHOM?

Yes, I may not bring sweet memories.

But, bitter ones to boil your blood.

Reddened eyes, hot ears, tremors passing over.

Foamy mouth, stammering tongue, uttering profanity.

Why then this show of brotherhood.

This talk of cordiality and smooth sails.

Of perfumed gardens and glimmering lights.

Oh! This slippery pathways of mire.

Mercuriality of tempers, meandering mind!

Then, why blame Satan for our wrongs?

YELLOW RAIN

Now I look for yellow rain,
To shower on my deserted hut.
To turn it into a castle.
When I was a lonely child,
I begged from my mother,
For a paisa to buy toffee.
She would console me,
And say that my father
Has planted a tree.
That would yield money instead of leaves.
I believed her, waited and waited.
Of late, I begin to wish
For white rain, milky rain, honey rain.
To quench my thorny thirst.
To uplift me from mire.
For blues to wane and flowers to blossom.
O, Heaven! Shower manna for ever.

EACH FOR ALL

They say what we talk
Gets recorded on rocks
And walls too have ears.

They say our actions
Too gets recorded,
By the angels on shoulders.

They say that trees
Have hidden eyes
And are our watch dogs.

There doesn't seem
To be any more secrecy left.
For today, "each is for all, all for each".

DISMAL FUTURE

The volcanic eruptions
Have melted the warm
Relationships bridging gaps.
Now thrown on the blistering
Sandy deserts to face storms.
The shady trees giving shelter,
Fragrant flowers, fruits and breeze.
Are all dried up for ever.
Ozone layer and water table
Have evaporated, to expose
Me and my surroundings
To torturous situations.
To ever weep and curse,
Our dismal destiny.

AMIDST VULTURES

She had just crossed her youth.

Happily licking the honey of charm,

With budding blooming flowers around.

Enjoying the fragrance and the calm.

As sudden as smiles came to her,

It vanished like a morning dew.

Left her exposed to the blistering sun.

Sans shelter or a kerchief to dry her tears.

The roots that gave her sap suddenly dried up.

The brimming well with fresh water,

The flowing rivers and the springs,

All chose to stop flowing for ever for her.

Destiny's iron hands has snatched her purdah.

Now, she is exposed to vultures.

BELLS OF OBLIVION

When in a desolate state,
I lie down and watch the ceiling.
The swirling fan brings to my mind,
The feeling of making a long train journey.
Life begins to take a tumble.
I feel being glued to a seat.
Watching scenes after scenes,
Of hills, rivers, deserts, forests, plains,
Streams, bridges, fields, stations and stations.
The jettery train nervously moving ahead.
Slowly covering the journey mile by mile.
Umpteen co-passengers, hawkers, befriending.
Hour after Hour pass into night and day
The journey continuously ringing bells of oblivion.

LET'S GIVE A BREAK

The blistering shining sun
Throws shadows long, then
You come for a while
To peck me in my moments of silence.
Your soothing words and songs,
Cool my burning wounds and sense.
But such moments are far and few.
Like passing clouds on a summer day.
Let's give a break,
To this unending chain of blues.
Which crop up like a wild grass,
With thorns and weeds around.

CONSCIOUSNESS

They say we, committed grave sins,
In our previous births,
And need to pay for it in this life.
But not an iota of memory survives.
Instead of redemption, we commit more wrongs.
Does not sufferings spring from our actions?
Though not of past but of present?
Does our fore bearers' actions rebound on us?
A lotus springs in a polluted marsh,
So also a fragrant rose among thorns.
Our thoughts and actions arise from within.
Is consciousness guided by the destiny?

ETERNAL BLISS

Millions are pinned down by chill penury.

Bogged down day in and day out,

By rigmarole of daily living,

And concern for the next meal.

The thoughts governing our actions,

Draw succour from inner springs.

The grilling burden is lifted,

And the heavy weight on shoulders is eased,

On the blow of cool breeze from virtues

Of daily actions, which prevent catastrophe.

Life gets measured by the bright

Sunshine of love for Eternal Bliss.

MERA BHARAT MAHAN

I am not going to speak
About the disasters
Cyclones, Havoc,
Terrorism and Corruption
Nor
Of our past glory
Of famous rule of Akbar
Of architecture of Taj Mahal

Of Temples of Konark
Nor
Of the modern India
Of improvements in city life
Of reigning bureaucracy

Of roads, dams and bridges
Nor
Of per capital income
Of agricultural output
Of factories, defence production

Of population explosion, birth control
But
Let me speak
Of our unity in diversity
Of our spiritual values, diverse literature.

Of our religious tolerance

Of our spicy foods, films, music & dance.

Of our colourful dresses, head gears.

O! Bharat Mahan

Thou have lived from antiquity
Thou shall live for eternity.

WELCOMING 2003

We picked fragrant roses of love
Adorned the vases with lotuses.
Spread the sweetness of Jasmines
Decorated thresholds with mango leaves,
With rangoli patterned designs on floors.

Days and Nights were filled with dreams.
Satiated all our senses with pleasures.
Faced boldly every grave moment.
Braved storms, betrayals of friends, foes.
Shed pearls of tears on loss of loved one.

Now, we turn our calender, to welcome,
Yet another year, to fill our hearts,
With joys and days with peace.
With hopes of prosperity and bliss.
Let happiness shower on the dawn of the New Year.

*Fountains of Hopes***FOUNTAINS OF HOPES**

Oh! Only could I sow stars,
Moons on the galaxies, where,
now is littered with blood.
Bring in silence to the turbulent floods.
To the love starved generations,
Only could I sow rainbows, roses.
Create founts in the flaming deserts.
Bring fragrance to the decaying souls.
Where now the scintillating music?
The cheers, charms, the lullabies.
For sweet dreams, hopes to linger,
The dazzling sun has burnt the gardens.
Let's find shores bereft of saline waters.
A place where brimstones don't rain.

A CRY IN MISERY

The silence of the valleys

Have come to greet me.

The icy mute tombs beckon me

The chilly winds of snow bound mountains

Enrap me, to shudder for warmth, comfort.

I cry, wail, weep for a flame, pepper, salt

For a pint of milk, sugar and sauce

But the sun has gone into the hiding

The thick fog has chocked the visibility

I am a friendless destitute.

O Heaven! Let Thy Mercy dawn

To snuff out the breath to a state of stillness

Oh! What a mystery? Misery forsakes the miser,

While blues and black surround me.

WELCOMING 2004

Ring O bells, ring O bells, ring all the way,
On the eve of the New Year, 2004.
The heavy dark clouds have melted.
The storms have subsided, weather is fine.

The chirping birds, the budding flowers,
The rising New Year's Sun beckons
A year of mirth, joy and peace.
Ring O bells, ring O bells, ring all the way,

Let hopes and dreams realise in light.
Let life sail smoothly and bright.
Let four seasons pass in tranquility.
Let Love and peace ring till eternity.

TOGETHER WE BLOOMED*

We boarded for a long arduous journey.
Waltzing through starry space, crossing
Fiery seas, deep oceans, flowing rivers,
Barren hills snowy peak mountains.
Passing over flaming trackless deserts.
Landed to stay in an ancient city.
Where sturdy warriors met with shining swords.
Where bloody battles were fought and kingdoms lost.
Where monuments were built and gardens laid.
Where lengthy debates held and poetry flowed.
Where saints, sages met for inner growth.
Sooner and later the throbbing metropolis,
Engulfed us, took us in its mighty arms.
Put us on a high pedestal, where men
With learned length and thundering sound.
Enarmed us with lightening speed, the flowing wisdom.
Showered their shiny pearls gathered from fathomless seas.
Spread the fragrance, scent from chosen perfumes.
To draw from our bosoms just rulings.
Helped us to hold even, the pans of justice
To cast dazzling light on dark souls.
You reached the garden city, at last.
To rest, rejuvenate, to dream afresh.
Let memories remain green forever and ever.

** To a beloved colleague on his retirement.*

A VOICE OF A MARTYR

What if I have to face,
Storms, tempests, tumults,
Brimstones, brick bats, fire.
I may lose my limb.
My skin may get scourged,
Burnt, maimed, exposed to vultures.
I may be hooted, shunted,
Trampled down and silenced.
I shall dare to save the wings
Of the dove being trapped in thorny net.
Destiny will judge me right one day,
When soft winds blow the sail of the ship of peace.

FOR A LITTLE HAPPINESS

For a pint of happiness and joy,
To discover it in parching soil.
In silent valleys, flaming galaxies.
In the stony hearts, sick minds.
I need to blow up to the winds.
All the cherished aged values.
Burn the twinkle of gleaming eyes.
Break the wailing walls surrounding me.
Pierce the veil protecting me like a canopy.
Walk on the dry trackless desert.
Yet, fragrance is hard to find in marshy lands.
Gathering storms cannot meet the eye of joy.
Fiery passions are infernos to burn the gardens,
To shrink the illusive bliss, ecstasy.

A RAY OF HOPE

Oh! The times have passed.
Age has withered.
The dreams are shattered.
I look up now to Thee,
My Lord, my Succour.
My candle is now to burn out.
Yet I hope, I look up
To the horizons beyond.
To gaze at the twilight,
Where darkness fades,
And light flashes its rays.
Beckons me to reach out.
Oh! I have witnessed times,
When the twinkle of love,
Has faded in the bloody wars.
When the blooming gardens,
Have turned into flaming deserts.
When youth lost its shame.
I look up now for fresh dreams.
To pass on the legacy for a new era.

O 'TALIBAN'

Compassion that should ooze from the heart.
But hatred like hemlock does the body apart.
You call them 'Kafir' bound for hell.
While you grow opium to sell.
Brotherhood, a parochial term, you practice.
For your own selfish needs as a tactic.
Woman you marry, to divorce to remarry.
To chain, enslave and make her carry
Woes, keep in seclusion, pardah for ever.
Darkness surrounds you, when you desert her.
You cut hands, stone a sinner to death.
Whither love for humanity on this earth?
Soul rending music does not stirr you.
O 'taliban' Shun violence, acquire world view.

*Fountains of Hopes***BEARS HARDSHIPS WITH A SMILE**

For an atom of mercy
For a smile, a tender
Hand around the shoulders.
Is like searching for a rose
In the blistering fiery desert.
A distraught housewife,
A mother with umpteen children
Living in quagmire situations.
Struggles like a 'hamali'.
To lift the load on a barehead.
To balance it, to walk
On the slippery marshy grounds.
Ultimate triumph to womanhood
Who bears hardships with a cheerful smile.

ON A SWELTERING DAY

As I was cycling down the road

On a sweltering mid-summer day.

The eternal Sun bellowing fire and heat,

Melting tar burning the bare foot coolies.

My mind whirling round and round, body sweating.

Yearns for cool wind, icy water to quench my thirst.

The age old rustic unmindful of season's vagaries,

Cultivates cucumbers, watermelons, mangoes.

I watched swirling maidens, scantily dressed.

Teasing my amorous thoughts, pleasing my eyes.

Tinkling love oozes out profusely, to jump with joy.

Caring mothers running after naughty children at play.

The twittering birds of various hues and colours,

Fluttering from branch to branch pecking worms.

RECORDED MOMENTS

I turned the pages of my life, my diaries

The recorded events, old albums, collections.

There were moments of exhilarations in darkness and light.

Enchantment with fragrances, melting mirages, hopes.

Hysteric laments on passing away of dear ones.

Haunting dreams of forlorn love, lost promises.

Glimmering unions, passionless splendours,

Erotic songs, secret messages to weave hearts with love.

Childhood fantasies withering away like a rose.

Life passing through a checkered board, on snake & ladder.

A game played with dice, hide and seek, ice pice,

Colourful marbles, kites flown in gusty winds.

Heart beats rhythmically, unmindful of changing times.

But mind records all and all, to yearn and recall.

SILENCES

There was silence, an uncanny weird one.

A chilly moment, blood curdling, freezing.

Darkness, shadows falling on life's melodies.

Songs of happiness melting away in agony.

I was passing through deserted cities

Where people defecate in open fields.

Discordant notes emerging from dark souls.

Mute monuments being witness to calamities.

Love foresaken to deserted islands.

Sea shells on shores hiding pain.

The crushed dreams wailing in loneliness.

Distant desperate eyes watch silence in melancholy.

Rishies, yogis, mahatmas meditate in silence.

To go higher up in secret galleries to meet the Divine.

MIGHTY FEAR

Fear like a mighty venomous snake,
Encoils my past memory.
To block my pristine sight.
To create illusions, deliriums.
To drown the sharp intelligence,
In the fathomless ocean of darkness.
Creating obstructions to perceive
The unknown, the unfathomable.
I am caught in the web of prayers.
To get released from darkness of fear;
Which clings to my body like leeches,
To freeze my soul and numb my feelings.
I yearn to fly like a free skylark.
Flirt from flower to flower like a butterfly.
To suck the nectar, to spread fragrance.
To tranquilise my heart, subside the storms within.

TRANSFORMATION

My heart is enveloped with blanket of pathos
Blood curdling life experiences mingled with pain
Has choked my voice, clouded my thinking
Hidden in my bosom are bleeding dreams.

Universal lamentation on freezing of Jews
In gas chambers; nations splintered
Everyday somewhere Godra enacted
Fires burning children; chained insane persons.

Temples of peace shattered in earth rattling quakes
Gandhies, Luther King, Kennedy assassinated
Can fires be doused, to raise gardens of love?
Bring twinkle in tiny eyes; a smiling Theresa.

Let's weave hearts with virtues of love
Transform rivers of blood to milk of human kindness.

*Fountains of Hopes***QUATRAINS**

A stranger with a roving eye
Enticing the young beauty in her youth
Seducing her with smooth butter words
To tickle her flame and the urge.

~~

The dust that falls in the eyes
Is washed off by the streaming tears
The tears that swell like floods
When blues, afflict are to cleanse the being.

FLEETING MOMENTS

While walking on marshy lands barefoot.

While living in sultry seasons.

While floating in surreal dreams.

We yearn for golden times to dawn on us.

Now surrounded by gardens, perfumes.

But the haunting memories flood the canvas.

To add salt, pepper to sweets.

Day and night add varied colours to fleeting moments.

ETERNITY

Timelessness, a void in the cosmic space.

While life moves on in time and seconds.

Mind, heart, soul ticks to Time.

Glorious Sun, the center of Universe,

Pushing planets round and round.

A system to sustain till eternity.

HAPPY TIMES

Those days of corporeal punishments are no more.

No more you need to cut the hands for theft.

Stone to death for adultery, hang a petty thief.

Nor hit a child on head or on buttocks.

Mercy from heaven has descended to harbour love.

To ring the bosoms and drive away the fears.

To illumine hearts and minds for greater freedom.

Liberty is now on march to unite man and man.

Tyranny has taken a flight, cruelty has vanished.

The pans of justice are held even for everyone.

Peace prevails to soothen the eyes and hearts.

The gardens of love and affection are sweet.

Lets wipe the tears of sorrows from every eye,

Let none go to bed hungry, live bare sans clothes.

NEW FOUND LIFE

Enclosed around by walls of knowledge.

Like a book worm smelling the dust,

Accumulated within the pages of life.

Stifling and scaring the existence

Nature's beauty, its colour, its charm

Receding in one's background.

Away from mind and heart.

Body stiffened like hard-board glued to chair

Eyes fixed on computer, fingers cramped

A new found way, life precipitated.

Silence enveloping, voice lost.

Future fears blanketing hopes, dreams.

Ah, the one who gives beauty to marvel,

Has now opened new wonders to ensnare.

WAR & PEACE

How many widows, orphans, old people
Must have wept, cried in pain and in distress.
When enemies overran, to wreck vengeance,
To destroy, ravage, rape and plunder.

Those were the days with no doctors around.
Sans orthopaedic aids to put wounded
On crutches. Crippled soldiers maimed.
Cruelty at its worst, sans humanity.

Has the times changed now for the better?
When tyranny leaves its own trail of sorrow,
Humane face of mankind torn by horror.
Beshaming Prophets, Sages and Saints.

Ushering in blindness, lameness, hunger, death.
Terror, war, strife tears peace to shreds.

SHUT THE TRAP

If I utter the Truth,
Like Mansoor Hallaj, my fate
Would end up, like millions.
Who loose the game
Before it begins.

Do I need to accept
The much said fact
That "We are all puppets
In the Hands of the Master
Who designs His own game".

Or do I dare the storms.
The waves and the currents.
And get lost like a Salmond.

Or do I give myself in.
Like a dried leaf.
To be taken to oblivion.
No, I shall stand my ground.

What If I am taken as a novice,
A loud mouth, a baseless vessel.
A hollowed trunk, a trumpeter,
A Charlie, a buffoon, a mad cap?

Do I need to take a lesson or two?
From the bygone pages of history
Of blood shed, animosity, hatred
And shut my trap as a goon!

DREAMS FOR MERGER

The sweet dreams, the unpolluted ones,
One clings, to draw daily succour from
That cherishes one another, binds like a glue
And attachments to strengthen the frail hearts.
The lovely maiden in her imagination,
Swirls with her lover, dreams of merger.
The widow piously preserves her memories,
Lamenting daily on the loss of joys and glees.
A dear bosom friend fosters loyalty,
as flowers spread fragrances around.
A child clings to the mother like a creeper,
And sweet love that enjoins one another.
For, intimacy of souls is deep indeed!
To bring hearts, minds and bodies closer & closer.

Fountains of HopesTHOUSAND MELODIES

Come, Come, let's create a lovely day.

Fill the spaces and vacuums.

So that this day becomes memorable,

To be etched in memory for long.

Let this day jingle with music.

To be talked about again and again.

To recall to mind the pleasures of this day.

Let the magic of this day for ever,

Change the course of our life

And thousand melodies thrill us for ever.

S.L. Peeran**OH, TSUNAMI!**

Tsunami, you bear within your bosom
Oceanic tears, you destroy the body,
heart and rend the mind to pieces.
Sorrows to envelop the beings to chillness.
To leave deadly silences on the shores.
Sea shells hiding pain within their cores.
Conches benumbed, fishing boats topsy turvy.
Blue waters sending across blues to all.
God forgave Adam and blessed him.
While humanity shows compassion to the victims,
Love binds us to elevate the suffering,
Cleanses our beings to heavenly sweetness.
God sends messengers to warn mankind.
What are you, Oh! Cruel Tsunami?

*Fountains of Hopes*TEARS, **TEARS**, TEARS

Tsunami, Tsunami, Tsunami.

O! You are a bolt from the blue.

A tidal wave to sweep the coastal line.

To drown the young and the old.

Cataclysmic traumas to one and all.

Tearful mournings, heart rending scenes.

Those who came to you, O Shore! for joy,

You have taken them away in your bosom,

Forever; for us to shed tears.

You have beaten man black and blue

To make us realize the transience

Of time, and all that is created

To wither, crumble and melt away,

Away to oblivion, never to reappear.

PLEASURE AND PAIN

The techni-coloured multistarred-flag
Hoisted on the illgotten-wealth.
With fun and frolic in bohemian mood.
As if they are conquerors of the whole world.
Like Alexander, Caeser, Hitler and Stalin.
Unmindful of the fate their nations met.

My inner questioning self keeps asking -
Why all this pomp and show and fun?
When everything is to wane and fade away.
But this very self, the inverted one, creates all this.

Who wants to submit to a life of submission?
Away from rancour and strife and pride.
For a little comfort, much pain is wrought!
A streak of pleasure surpasses thousand pangs.

CHILLY MOMENT

The black-hooded clown with sceptre and crown.
On a dark weird night of silence.
Knocks the heavily guarded
Mosaic tiled home.
Decorated with chandeliers and marble.
On the cozy cushioned bed lay
His victim gasping for breath.
A damsel of rare beauty,
Clinging him like a creeper.
The guards hypnotised fall apart.
The doors flung open in a flash
Of a moment to make way
For the king of chillness, to collect
His booty, the spirit of his crippled victim.
The pleading damsel's agony nor the
Wealth in exchange would please the vampire.
With lightning speed, he collects the dark soul
And disappears into nothingness.

COLD WAVES

When someone dear departs.
The mood of mourners flashes not
Eclectic joys but splashes chill
Cold icy waves of tears and cries.
Hiccups, faintings, uncontrolled, unabated.
Outbursts of deep affectional traumas.
The blue sky, the white clouds,
The multicoloured roses turn themselves
Grisly and somber reminding
Of the ONE, who has set
This wheel of life to churn
Grease not cream, to oil itself.
Oh! Look, how all assemble, cuddle,
Shake, furtively, forgetting
Bitterness, Coming closer, hugging.
Seeking each other to console.
To lift the sagging spirits.
And offer to the departed soul
Handful of soil, as blanket of love,
To cover the womb of silence.

MY POEMS

My poem "To a lost boy"
Has caused chagrin, distress
To the parents, who out of anger
Threw my book in the fire.
Cursed me with an angry fax,
Accused me of causing
"Cruellest, unkindest cut of all"
And pleaded that "I shall be
doing a most merfiful act,
If I spare them from
Commercialising their agony".

While my poem "Peace Within"
Has pleased APJ Abdul Kalam
Our Rashtrapathiji.
From the poets pen —
Flashes the deep felt emotions.
To move one, who reads it.
Poets don't bear rancor nor spite.
Poems are to mesmerize readers
In chosen words with similes.

TO A DEPARTED FRIEND

He had made a niche
In the hearts of his fellowmen.
With his light hearted humour.
Sincerely sympathizing with their cause.
Lending his ears and hands to them.
Devotedly working for elevating them.
Like a sweet wind blowing
In hot seasons carrying the fragrance,
Of multi coloured roses and jasmines.
He was always around to console.
To join in grief, sorrows and pains.
His only aim was to please
His Lord, win Him through His fellowmen.

TO OURSELVES

We create our own islands,
With our own demarcated boundaries.
Our own satellites and stars,
To go round in its orbits.

We have our own melodies.
To sing our own songs.
To please and soothen our own ears.
We dance to our own tunes.

We create our own Tsunamies, traumas.
Quakes to shake our own foundations,
To uproot ourselves, our culture.
Open up wounds, which don't heal.

Life gives to each one of us
In its own measure, cheers and sorrows.

S.L. Peeran**HELP PLEASE!**

He may be a friend to many,
May be a Mahatma, or some
Such thing, for his external
Appearance. But for me, he is
A devil in gentleman's garb.
Always prowling, with deep fangs
Of a snake, slippery, sly
Foxy and cunning, undependable.

Who does not want to be rich today?
But my culture restrains me
To lie at a drop of a hat.
Adopt dubious means to earn.

Yes, I may sound a white
Collared man with values.
But I must confess that
I am equally slave to my desires.
They keep propping up to tease me.
Temptations galore gripping my mind.
I am holding on to the plank from drowning.

SPREAD OF POLLUTION

The bridges have all been smashed
What has been built over ages,
Now lay shattered allowing the
Underground rivers of blood to
Flood the cities high Towers.
The black turbuned terror has gone berserk.

Hitlers are now on hunt, to trace
Needles from the hay stack.
To eliminate the germs of small pox
Which has reoccurred again like ghosts.

Hate is wide spread like AIDS,
Hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases
Where to sow the seeds of love?
When the bed is polluted and marshy!

UNSEEN HAND OF MERCY

Each one is a universe by themselves.

Revolving around them their own Sun, Moon

And surrounded by million Stars.

They raise their own multi-coloured flags.

Each one is unique with their own individuality.

Yet a unique harmony exists among millions.

Some good taking place all the time,

And nature unfailingly bestowing its bounties.

What if someone doesn't do good to other?

Create panicky, harm and terrorise.

The combined strength of the good

Can subdue any wrong that may arise.

The unseen hand of Mercy and love

Protects its creation from destruction

WITHERING MOMENTS

When two loving hearts meet,
Age old prejudices and hates
Of colour, race and religion would
Melt away like cold frozen ice.
The warmth, the glowing fire within
Bring joy, pleasure, loving memories.
To cherish and make life worth living.
Every moment is an ounce of gold.
Separation breaks the fragile heart.
Into pieces like a mirror and glass.
Unabated tears from ocean of feelings,
Washing away forever the sweet memories.
Leaving passing time as a healer, a refreshner.
But ageing withering away zest of life.

MODERN TIMES

Let's keep our hand on our heart
And utter the truth, by being
True to our salt and to our Mother India.
The ancient gods are dethroned!
Heaven has faded into mere sky and
Hell a den of pleasure and mirth.
Old dogmas disappearing and melting
Like snow and ozone layer.
Faith and love reaching its nadir.
Lo! Day and night passing by –
Slipping into new zone of modernity.
Mall culture, cell phones, plastic money,
Condoms, junk food, single mothers,
Gays, night dancing girls serving
Wine teasing young minds for fun;
With bonhomie and poppy culture all around.

TRUTH AND BEAUTY

The petty men with their power
Control the minds of slavish persons;
Spreading their tentacles
And net-work, throwing a web
Around all encompassing Nature;
For their whim, their pleasures.
Can our thoughts, inspirations
Be freed; even from the tyranny of death?
Can the vision of everlasting goodness
Descend in our actions, in our lives?
The glitter, the glamour, the magnetic
Pull of the monstrous evil,
Makes our desires their victims.
Let the thoughts, be freed,
From the cults, fetishes, passions.
Let the shining Truth and Beauty
Capture and enthrall us forever.
To take us beyond the realms of ecstasy.

HOPE FOR THE LOST ONES

The struggle for private happiness.
To achieve temporary desires.
To burn with passion for external things,
To catch the slippery power,
Is the bane of the Modern Man.

Is it possible to conquer fate?
With the ever increasing
Attractions and distractions!
Is it possible to free the mind?
Free it from the wanton tyranny,
That rule the outward life,
Undismayed by the empire of chance?
Tortured by the weariness and pain.
Can we lighten sorrows, grief?
By the balm of sympathy.
To give to sufferers, the oppressed.
The pure joy of a never tiring affection;
To strengthen failing courage.
To instill faith in hours of despair.
Can the spark of divine fire, be kindled
In the hearts, with brave words?

(Thanks to Bertrand Russel "A Free Man's Worship)

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2005

Surrender at the feet of the MASTER
For every day would be a NEW YEAR.
You would be rid of all the sorrows.
Your heart would glow like a crystal.
With purified mind, the world is aglow.
Peace, a celestial gift afloats freely.
Every second, joy and ecstasy prevails.
Life moves smoothly with fragrance of love.
Let every sunrise, shine with golden rays.
Let every full moon bring unlimited happiness.

Wish you a prosperous New Year 2005

WELCOMING 2006

The ever carefree Sun is dipping delightfully.
Taking with its last shadow pain and horror.
The full Moon bright and Stars aplenty
Shining and twinkling to welcome the New Year.

The withering age holds in its bosom, hope.
Civilized modern times would overcome man's grief.
Great nations with ever ennobling thoughts, nurture
Protect poor men in distress and pain.

Let the New year 2006 delight us.
Let ageless beauty and love, endlessly
Shower on mankind its bower of gifts
In gold, silver and granneries fill.

*Fountains of Hopes**Haiku*

Piercing sunny light
 Illumining the dark souls
 Beware of darkness

~~

The fast train
 Bull on tracks
 Black crow flies

~~

The moth flirts around
 The flickering candle
 Withering petals

~~

Eagles fly swiftly
 Raises mushroom clouds from ground
 Pregnant woman aborts

~~

The tractless desert
 The silence of the valleys
 Lone moon in dark sky

~~

Fresh autumnal green
 Reflects the splendor of sun
 For the soul to gleam

~~

A dew on a leaf
 To melt away soon in air
 On first glimpse of rays.

S. L. Peeran's Publications

- 1. *Essence of Islam and Sufism and its impact on India* 1998.**
- 2. *In Golden Times* 2000 - *Collection of Poems***
- 3. *In Golden Moments* 2001 - *Collection of Poems***
- 4. *A Search from Within* 2002 - *Collection of Poems***
- 5. *A Ray of Light* 2002 - *Collection of Poems***
- 6. *In Silent Moments* 2002 - *Collection of Poems***
- 7. *A Call from the Unknown* 2003 - *Collection of Poems***
- 8. *New Frontiers* 2005 - *Collection of Poems***
- 9. *Glass House and Other Short Stories* 2004 – *Short Stories***

About the author

Dr. S. L. Peeran, a Judicial Member of Customs, Excise & Service Tax Appellate Tribunal, Bangalore, has emerged on the scene of Indian English Poetry in recent times, with his publication of poems in several poetry journals and anthologies.

His first work "In Golden Times" was published by "The Home of Letters", Bhudaneswar. The work has been well received by critics and poets. Reviewing for 'METVERSE MUSE' Dr. A. H. Tak says, "S. L. Peeran sounds to me more like Tennyson, reflecting the restless spirit of his progressive age and Alexander Pope, voicing the artificiality of his contemporary society, particularly in the expression of grief, love and hope. Like Pope, he most often expresses not so much a personal as a social spirit. His poetry is an excellent mirror which reflects the social, political, moral and religious trends and tendencies of his times.

Dr. R. K. Singh reviewing for 'POET' says that "The poet is critical, philosophical, reflective and interpretative of his milieu and influences. "In Golden Times" offers an overview of the contemporary society besides a view of Peeran's own idealist temper. These reveal the depth and complexity in the poet's vision and literary techniques over the last few years. He appeals to me as one of the few form-conscious Indian English poets with a strong sense of rhythm. And as a pursuer of Truth and Reality of Life, he is socially conscious as well".

In his foreword to *In Golden Times*, Dr. Krishna Srinivas writes, "Like Blake, Peeran sees the world in a grain of sand and Eternity in an hour".

Dr. Srinivasa Rangaswami reviewing his work has this to say, "It is a wholesome spread of noble thoughts and reflections of life and myriad – faced mankind. Poet Peeran is a fascinating combination of a pious, mature, compassionate soul and a sensitive aesthetic being, who sets great store by abiding values of life.

Mr. Gordon Hindley writes, "S.L. Peeran is a worthy Lakshana or sign post of the best in all of us and in the Indian English writing". While Mr. Bernard Jackson writes, "A delightful collection by a writer who combines sincerity with craftsmanship - a fine command of English".

Ms. Patricia Prime opines "New Frontiers" is S.L. Peeran's seventh collection of poems in English, and demonstrates in detail what was already evident – a master hand at the art. It's pretty fine volume of complex and skilful poetry, with a good ear attuned to some fine idea throughout."

Dr. S. L. Peeran has brought out eight collections, of poems and a Book of Short Stories.

The International University of Contemporary Studies, Washington, DC, USA conferred "Doctor of Philosophy in Literature" on Peeran.

Poet's International, Bangalore, has also nominated the author as "Best Poet for 2003".