We have undertaken to make a study of the poetry of Kālidāsa and Shakespeare, in one, with special reference to their recognised masterpieces, the 'Sākuntala' and 'Hamlet', respectively. Our point of view is a comparative critical appreciation with reference to the principles of criticism of both the East and the West. After having made a critical general study of the works of both Kālidāsa and Shakespeare as well as a critical special study of the 'Sākuntala' and 'Hamlet', in particular, we propose to make a modest attempt, in our conclusion, to indicate the way in which the secret of their extraordinary beauty and significance may lie.

In this task, we propose to make an original and independent approach although based on the results of studies of some of the best critics of both Kālidāsa and Shakespeare, that is to say, we shall set forth our own views and ideas which will correlate those of earlier critics, and also sometimes we shall carefully venture new ones, which, we trust, will hold good.

It may be noted that we shall not make this study from any notions or ideas outside of the works of the poets concerned; we shall commence with a critical appreciation of their works, and then allow the notions or ideas develop themselves. In other words, this will be, we hope, as
faithful a study of the originals as possible.

We have made a reasonably thorough study of the works of both poets. We shall, however, try to confine quotations from both—also from the various critics—to the reducible minimum, and mostly to absorb them in our observations; as otherwise those 'quotable quotes,' which are peerless in beauty and countless in number, if once unleashed, will know no end. The source-materials, we have utilised to our benefit, are indicated in the Bibliography at the end.

As this study relates to Kālidāsa and Shakespeare with particular reference to the 'Sākuntala' and 'Hamlet,' we hope it will be most appropriate to append to this study our book 'Dīnārka - Rājakumāra - Hemalekha,' a Sanskrit transcreation of Shakespeare's 'Hamlet,' already published with financial assistance from the Government of India.

We have taken care to correct typing errors as far as possible, and to show notation marks in Sanskrit quotations.

Last, but not least, we are deeply grateful to our revered teacher, Professor Dr. K.G. Goswami, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D., F.R.A.S., etc., Asutosh Professor and Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Calcutta University, but for whose affectionate encouragement and able guidance this modest study of ours will never have been commenced or completed.