I have dealt with some salient problems of ontology and ethics from the point of view of Saṅkara's Vedānta in the present work. It is the result of several years of study and research. The plan of the work was sketched out in accordance with the instructions of my Professor Dr. Satkari Mookerjee under whom I have carried out my researches. I had to read extensively the relevant literature and I have been obliged to compress the wide range of speculations within the limits of the present work, which I am submitting as my thesis for the D.Phil. Degree.

Although much has been written on Saṅkara's Vedānta both in English and other languages of India and Europe I do not think that the subject has been completely exhausted. In spite of all that has been done by scholars, there still prevails a large volume of misconception and confusion of thought in the academic world regarding the position of Saṅkara, who has been more maligned than understood. There have been attempts to put a Hegelian garb upon Saṅkara's metaphysics. Saṅkara has been represented as an acosmist and illusionist by some, while others have tried to make out that Saṅkara was a realist like Rāmānuja and others. I have tried to avoid the temptation of these extremist standpoints and tried to make my representation as faithful and objective as lies within my power. I have endeavoured to show that in spite of his realistic leanings in the field of epistemology Saṅkara was not
afraid of running the risk of being denounced as an advocate of illusion in Metaphysics. Sāṅkara is not an acosmist like Nāgārjuna and his theory of illusion is only a necessary corollary of his realism. Sāṅkara would not make any compromise regarding the status of Reality. He would not allow any pragmatic consideration to whittle down his conception of perfect, complete, infinite and unqualified existence, knowledge and bliss which though one, are necessarily represented by three concepts due to the exigencies of the human understanding.

I have done my best to bring out the philosophical implications of these concepts. I have not hesitated to show that the world appearance cannot be realised in the metaphysical sense since that would make the Absolute imperfect and incomplete. More vituperation would not succeed in dislodging Sāṅkara and his followers from the position of unqualified Monism. The philosophy of Monism does not care to flatter or pander to our realistic bias and it may or may not be popular with the masses. However much one may decry Sāṅkara cārya, it cannot be gainsaid that Sāṅkara's Vedānta has permeated the philosophical and ethical outlook of the people of India from a very remote antiquity down to the present time. It may be affirmed without fear of contradiction that the interest of our worldly life are not jeopardised by this philosophy. The ethical values are preserved intact in
this system. I have elucidated this much misunderstood side of Bhāskara's philosophy in the concluding chapters of my work. That transcendence does not annul the code of ethics or social laws has been proved by me in my dissertation on the concept of jīvamukta - a problem which has unnerved some modern exponents of Vedānta. I have studied the philosophy of Vedānta with a critical mind, not incompatible with the spirit of reverence. I have tried my utmost to keep my mind immune from extra-academical influence in the appraisal of problems I have dwelt upon.

I shall be failing in my duty and guilty of ingratitude if I do not make an unreserved acknowledgment of the help that I received from my Professor and also from the late lamented philosopher Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar to whom I was recommended by Dr. Mookerjee, my guide and supervisor. I must put on record my deep debt of obligation to MM. Pandit Jayogendra Nath Tarkatirtha with whom I read some of the original texts with the permission of my Professor Dr. Mookerjee. It will be an act of unpardonable audacity on my part if I attempt to assess the depth of his scholarship or the quality of inspiration and encouragement I received from the savant, who is a living encyclopedia of learning.

In fine I appeal to the learned scholars to bear with my shortcomings and accept the grain of truth I may have succeeded in bringing to light. I shall try to improve.
improve my work in the light of helpful suggestions that may come from experts.