The advancement of a science concerned with the study of a heterogeneous system, like the soil, requires a detailed knowledge of the chemical and physical nature of every component constituting the system. Since the properties of any one of these components are likely to influence those of another, exact scientific predictions cannot be made about the entire system unless each component is so well characterised that theoretical treatment of their interactions with one another is possible. For this reason, a complete picture of the physical and chemical nature of soil humus assumes great importance in the study of soil science. Our present day knowledge of humus chemistry is still insufficient to make it amenable to theoretical treatments. Clearer concepts are needed. This work is an attempt in that direction.

In the course of my more-than-a-decade-long association with the science of humic components of soil, the basic ideas behind the work embodied in this thesis, took shape. However, the experimental work was completed within two to three years of time. In this connection, I am deeply indebted to the following persons who have in many ways contributed to its completion.

Dr. S.K. Mukherjee by whom I was first introduced to this subject and from whom I have always received invaluable academic guidelines throughout my career.

Dr. M. Schnitzer who has unhesitatingly offered me interesting ideas and learned criticisms and has extended all possible help in the course of this investigation.
Dr. J.G. Saha whose sincere help made this work possible.

Dr. M. Adhikari who has encouraged me with this work.

Dr. W. Baier, Dr. I. de la Roche, Dr. S.U. Khan, Dr. H. Kodama,
Mr. B. Stone, Mr. G.C. Scott, Mr. A. D. Gordon, Mr. S. Itz, Mr. E. Bond,
Mr. W. Adam, Mrs. L. Trainor and specially Mr. D. A. Hindle who have
helped me directly or indirectly with the experimental work.

Dr. S. Ghosh Dastidar, Dr. A. Chattopadhyay, Dr. (Mrs.) M. Chatterjee
and Mr. A. K. Barman who have volunteered every possible help at all stages.

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