PREFACE

The first edition of this work was published in two separate volumes in 1923, 1925. Almost simultaneously in 1923 appeared the second edition of the Sāhitya-darpana by Mahāmahopādyāya Dr P. V. Kane, to which was prefixed an introduction of 177 pages dealing with the history of Alamkāra literature, subsequently elaborated in the third edition (1951) into 423 pages. Referring to these facts Dr Kane writes: "Both of us were thus practically pioneers in this field. Our books led many scholars to study the numerous works on Alamkāra, to point out defects and mistakes, to produce papers dealing with several aspects of the Alaṅkāraśāstra and to publish several important texts." This will make clear the necessity of revising the present work, which was written and published independently, but which, not yet superseded, had been out of print for more than thirty years.

The scope of the present work was sufficiently explained in the preface to the first edition. An attempt has been made to approach the subject from the historical point of view, instead of presenting a bare account of the works and authors or a mere epitome of the different topics of Alamkāra. Presuming a general knowledge and taking the representative writers (and, as far as necessary, the neglected commentators and so-called minor writers), the development of Sanskrit Poetics has been traced through its fairly long and varied course of history, which covers an extensive literature of more than a thousand years. The first volume of the work, therefore, deals with the preliminary but important question of a working Chronology and original Sources, on the basis of which the second volume proceeds to set forth the history through divergent Systems and Theories. It will be seen that, barring some rearrangement
and division into chapters, the general form of the first edition has not been changed; but for convenience the two volumes are now published in one, divided into parts.

In investigating the growth of Sanskrit Poetics it was, of course, not possible to ignore its content; but it has been thought more useful to lay stress on the essentials of doctrines and omit minor details, the object of this work being more historical than expository. It was not possible, for instance, to give a detailed technical analysis of individual rhetorical "figures", with which the Alamkāra-śāstra is traditionally and popularly associated; but the general doctrine of poetic figures has been dealt with, in so far as they are not mere tickets of nomenclature but positive agents in the production of artistic beauty. The study of analytical Rhetoric, apart from its value as a formal discipline, may be regarded as pedantic and futile; but Sanskrit Alamkāra-śāstra, in spite of its name, possesses a speculative interest by involving, besides mere Rhetoric, a great deal of what is known to-day as Criticism or Aesthetic. It was almost impossible for the Ālamkārikas, concerned that they were with form and technique, not to be interested in the general phenomenon of literature or theorise on general principles.

For a similar reason of historical and general treatment greater emphasis has been laid on the earlier writers who cover the creative periods of the discipline; of later writers who show in the main an excessive dependence on their predecessors, only typical names have been selected with a due regard to their historical as well as intrinsic importance. The author has confined himself to Sanskrit Poetics, and has not taken into account the numerous vernacular works on the subject, as well as the allied but distinct theme of Dramaturgy; for they deserve more room for a detailed and separate treatment. The Bibliographies and references are perhaps not exhaustive; but they are meant to supply such notable information as might lead to a further study.
A word of explanation may be deemed necessary for the use of the term Poetics to designate a half-theoretical and half-practical discipline which goes by the name of Alamkāra-śāstra. Its scope has been sufficiently explained by H. Jacobi, who seems to have been the first to make this term current, in ZDMG lvi, 1902, p. 393, fn 1. It may be pointed out that the commonly used term Rhetoric is inadequate in explaining the standpoint of a study which includes a great deal more than a mere normative treatment of rhetorical categories; while the expression Aesthetic in this connexion is misleading, inasmuch as the theoretical scope of Alamkāra literature is not co-extensive with what is understood by that term in modern philosophical studies. Comparative estimates, therefore, with reference to Western Aesthetic or European Critical literature have been generally avoided; for that would not only exceed the limited scope of the present work but might lead to sweeping or misleading generalisations. Those who are interested will find a short critical outline of Sanskrit Poetics in the light of modern Aesthetic in two essays by the present writer published in the Dacca University Studies, vol. i (1936), pp. 1-46, and in the New Indian Antiquary ix, nos. 1-3 (reprinted in the author's Some Problems of Sanskrit Poetics).

It is needless to say that, as the references will indicate, a careful use has been made of the accumulated but scattered labours of previous workers, but it has been supplemented by the author's own studies. Useless discussion or controversy, however, has been avoided as much as possible, the author confining himself to stating his own view and leaving it to speak for itself. He is fully conscious that no one can claim he has said the last word on the subject.

In the preface to the first edition the author recorded with sincere thanks the manifold help and encouragement he received in writing this work. But it is sad to recollect in this connexion the departed kalyāṇa-miras, H. Jacobi, L.D. Barnett and F.W.
Thomas, He has only to add that in the present edition he has profited by the suggestions of Professor Dr. V. Raghavan who took the trouble, in the midst of his manifold preoccupation, of sending useful bibliographical notes on some works and authors.