The doctoral thesis entitled “Sahodharan Ayyappan and the Socio-Political Movement in Kerala” unfolds the contributions of Sahodharan Ayyappan (1889-1968) to the spread of socio-political movements which helped to create a new generation with progressive ideas. He has succeeded to carve out an immortal niche for himself in the annals of socio-political movement in Kerala by the revolutionary changes he effected and the sufferings he underwent for the uplift of the people in general and of the lower sections in particular. The study comprises of seven chapters besides the introduction and conclusion. The first chapter “Sahodharan Ayyappan and the socio-political background of Kerala” makes a brief analysis of the polity and society of the later part of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century Kerala. The second chapter deals with the Sahodhara Movement. It gives an insight into the interdining and the attitudes of the different sections of Hindu Society which justified Swami Vivekananda’s remark of Kerala as ‘a lunatic asylum’. Sahodharan Ayyappan aspired to implement the philosophy of Sree Narayana Guru, which was not understood properly even by his close followers. Other than interdining, he advocated inter caste marriage for the destruction of caste system. The third chapter Sahodharan Ayyappan and the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam unravels his relations with the Yogam. While he was the leader of the Yogam, Sahodharan Ayyappan also organized the abstention movement and called it as non-co-operation movement. He spread the activities of Yogam among the farmers and labourers and organized unions like ‘Adi Vaipin Thozhilali Sangham’, Ochanthuruth Thozhilali Union, Thiruvithamkoor Labour Association and Cochin Labour Union. The fourth chapter deals with the role of Sahodharan Ayyappan in the rationalist movement in Kerala. Sahodharan Ayyappan did not think that Sree Narayana Guru had said the last word on any subject and never hesitated to speak out his own ideas. In this connection, Sahodharan Ayyappan modified the saying of Guru, “One Caste, One Religion and One God for Man” into “No Caste, No Religion and No God for Man”. Sahodharan Ayyappan and Mass Media
constitutes the fifth chapter. It analyses the role of Sahodharan Ayyappan as a poet and journalist. He was the editor of *Sahodaran, Yuktivadi and Velakkaran*. Through the columns of these newspapers, he tried his level best to destroy caste system and its associated evils like untouchability and superstitions. He also used his newspapers to uphold the cause of toiling classes and marginalized sections. Sahodharan Ayyappan used poems as an instrument for social change. His unique style and simple language in poetry appealed to the common people. The sixth chapter, Sahodharan Ayyappan and the struggle for responsible government, deals with his perspectives of freedom. He played a vital role in the course of the struggle for responsible government in the princely state of Cochin. Many constitutional reforms of Cochin were the results of his hard work. He became instrumental in the enactment of a series of legislations including the Adult Franchise in the Panchayats and the Civil Marriage Act. His role as Deputy President and Minister for Public Works Department forms the seventh chapter. It is a study largely based on the primary data collected from the different archival and research centres in Kerala and outside the State. The original sources are further supplemented by the secondary data including published books, journals and pamphlets. The documentary sources are further supplemented by a variety of corroborative sources like interviews and field study.