ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my deep gratitude to Dr. Thomas James, Professor and Head of the Department of Botany (Rtd), St. Berchman's College, Changanacherry, for his valuable guidance and encouragements.

I am extremely thankful to Dr. M. R. Sethuraj, Director, Rubber Research Institute of India, Kottayam, for the permission to utilise the laboratory and library facilities of the Institute.

I express my gratitude to Dr. N. M. Mathew, Deputy Director, Rubber Chemistry, Physics and Technology Division, Rubber Research Institute of India for the technical help and advice for various analyses. I am also thankful to Shri Benny George, Junior Scientist, Rubber Chemistry, Physics and Technology Division for his sincere assistance in the laboratory investigations.

I am thankful to Dr. C. P. Reghu, Botanist, Germplasm Division, Rubber Research Institute of India for the sincere assistance rendered for taking the photomicrographs and also for my exploratory investigation to the Mettur Forest. I am also thankful to Smt. K. P. Leelamma, Asst. Technical Officer, Kum. K. K. Saji, Stenographer and the staff of Germplasm Division for their whole-hearted co-operation.
My sincere thanks are also due to Shri Badrinarayanan, Managing Trustee and the staff of Chandappa Estate, Mettur Hills for the facilities provided for collecting data from wild trees of *M. glaziovii*. My sincere thanks are due to Dr. D. Bhuvanendran Nair, Junior Scientist, Plant Physiology, Mrs. V. K. Rajalekshmi, Pathologist, Dr. C. R. Nehru, Entomologist; of the Rubber Research Institute of India and Dr. A. Thulaseedharan, Pool Scientist, CSIR for their help during the course of this work.

Thanks are also due to Dr. T. K. Damodaran, Wood Science Division, KFRI, Peechi and Messrs. Aspee Wood Ltd., Kalamasseri for their co-operation.

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Ashokraj, Director, Bio-informatics Centre, New Delhi, Shri Sharma, Publications and Informations Directorate, CSIR, New Delhi, Dr. G. K. Nair, CTCRI, Smt. Mercy Jose, Documentation Officer and the Library staff of Rubber Research Institute of India for their whole-hearted help for the survey of literature.

The technical helps of Shri Kurian Thomas, Junior Publication Officer and Shri C. Krishnan Nair,
Department of Training are gratefully acknowledged.

I am also thankful to Shri K.P. Sreeranganathan, Senior Art-Photographer, Rubber Research Institute of India.

I am grateful to the Chairman, Rubber Board for granting me study leave and to the Principal, St. Berchman's College, Changanacherry, for admitting me as a research scholar under the faculty of science.

I record my sincere thanks and appreciation to my wife and daughter for their constant helps and inspirations.

[P.J. GEORGE]