Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I thank God Almighty who has been my strength and comfort all through, who enabled me to complete my task on time and "girded me with gladness".

I thank the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University for permitting me to register for my research in the University.

My sincere thanks go to Prof. S. Arulson Daniel, Principal, Scott Christian College, Nagercoil and the members of the Governing Board of the College for giving me the necessary permission to undertake this project and for their continued encouragement.

I owe my gratitude to all my well-wishers in the Department of English, at the University and to all my colleagues and friends at Scott Christian College, particularly to Prof. S. Chella Kumar Rose, Prof. Winston V. Somervell and Prof. (Mrs) Latha Jayakumar of the Department of English, whose scholarly comments and suggestions were of immense help to me towards the completion of this study.

I am profoundly indebted in a special sense to my guide and supervisor, Dr. V. Sam Sahayam, M.A., M.Ed., M.Litt. (U.K.); Ph.D., Reader in English, Manonnaniam
Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli for his "labours expert, various and unremitting". His extensive discussions, spontaneous reactions, candid evaluations, critical insight, inspiring explanations which settled many a nagging question, his translations of several passages from Jayakanthan into English, the enthusiasm he evinced in going through the entire dissertation and his concern and care throughout the period of my research—all constituted a never failing source of inspiration for the successful completion of my thesis.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to Mr. Jayakanthan, the novelist, who was kind enough to give me an interview when I called on him at his residence on the Christmas eve of 1995. He was quite emphatic in reiterating that it is humanism that runs through the entire corpus of his works. Besides, he defined humanism as 'proper human relationships based on brotherly love'. He further asserted that it is only by changing the orthodox and convention-ridden religious values that we can hope to find solutions for the dissensions over castes and religions in India. I express my gratitude to the publishers of his works, Messrs. Meenakshi Puthaka Nilayam, for giving me permission to render into English passages from the works of Jayakanthan wherever necessary.
I would like to place on record my gratitude to the Librarians and authorities of the National Library, Calcutta, the British Council Libraries at Madras and Trivandrum, American College Library, Madurai, University Library, Madurai, the Public Library, Trivandrum and the Connemara Library, Madras, for making readily available the books and journals I needed in connection with my work. My special and sincere thanks are also due to my good friend A. Yesu Selva Raj, Librarian, Scott Christian College and Dr. D. Yesudhas, Prof. and Head of the Department of Tamil, Scott Christian College for providing me with a number of books and journals, related to my research.

Finally, I owe a word of thanks to Mr. G. Janin Jaji, B.Sc., Scott Christian College and Mr. D. Simon, Concordia Theological Seminary, Nagercoil, for the neat execution of the work.

A. Rajadurai