CONCLUSION

Latin Catholics a Section of Christians, are living in all districts of Kerala. Origin of Christianity in Kerala goes back to first half of the first century about 52 AD, when St. Thomas, an apostle of Jesus Christ came to India and evangelized the land. According to the numismatics and inscriptional sources, Gondophernes reigned the Western part of India, where St. Thomas landed in 52 AD. After St. Thomas many missionaries came at different periods, the object being the dissemination of the Gospel. Pantaneus, a celebrated philosopher was one of the earliest missionaries came to India by 190 AD. It is believed that he has been sent by Demetrinus, the Bishop of Alexandria, in response of the request of the Indian Christians. Later in 345 AD Thomas of Cana came to Malabar with a group of Chaldean Christians accepted the rights and ceremonies of Syrian Church. They were known as Knanaya Christians. Their descendants were seen in central Kerala at Kottayam, Idukki and Ernakulam.

Latin Catholicism had its origin in Kerala in 1291 AD, when John of Monte Carvino, baptized a number of people into Catholic faith in Malabar. Latin Christianity in the same as Roman Christianity or Papal Christianity. The latin catholics otherwise known as latin Mappilas. Latin catholics were a heterogeneous group of St. Thomas Christians, Anglo Indians and those converted by St. Francis Xavier. Those from Paravas of Bharathas, Nadars, Vellalas, Mukkuvas or Arayas, Parayas or Sambavas, Pulayas or Cheramans, Sanars, Kerala Muthali etc.
The origin and development of the Latin Catholics in Kerala (13th Century) was vigorous because of the support and encouragement from Rome so as to bring Nestorian Christians to the Catholic fold. Latin Christianity is as old as the church of the Christ itself. Though in the beginning, naturally, it was Juda Christian in character. The theological synthesis of the Catholic Church emerged in the Latin environment and crystallized by 2nd Century. John of Monte Carvino, a Franciscan Friar, who visited Quilon in 1291 and stayed for 13 months in South India, in his way to China and the Far East. Fr. Monte Carvino and his associates converted a good number of people at Quilon and Catholicised. This was the beginning of Latin Christianity in India. Latin Catholics is simply the vast portion of the Catholic body which obeys and submits to Roman Pontiff. The activities of the “pilgrim society for Christ” increased and became at Quilon.

Quilon (Kollam) became the first Catholic diocese in India, as the Dominican Friar Jordan Cathalani of Severe, the first Bishop of Quilon. St. Francis Xavier and other missionaries who came to Quilon reinforced Christianity. At present there are 12 Latin Catholic Dioceses in Kerala under two Arch Dioceses of Thiruvananthapuram and Varapuzha.

Educational and Cultural developments are two closely related process. Culturally developed people are the great wealth of the nation. Only educationally enlightened society can fight against inequalities and injustice. The envious educational developments in Kerala owes to Christian Church in Kerala.
The Christian missionaries took a pionerring interest on the promotion of education guided by humanitarian as well as religious motives, with a liberal system not considering any distinction of Caste or religion. The educational efforts of Christian missionaries had been more successful among the local people than in any other part of India. Christian institutions imparted education to all, unlike other educational institutions at Kalady, in which only Hindus got admission. At first Schools where established among with churches, thus came to know as Pallikkudangal. Later Pallikkudangal became the universal centre of public education.

Christian missionaries brought a revolutionary change in Women education. It was the time, when, even the Government has not conceived the idea that a change in society can be brought out only through women education. This gave way to social change by bringing them out of their comfort zones, Kitchen, to social mending. In schools along with other subjects training were given to drawing, stitching and embroidery, which enforced economic stability. Even now each and every catholic dioceses pioneers educational institutions. The administrators and rulers of land gave much importance to education and supported its development.

Social development of a community is wholly depends on its economic development. The socio economic activities are now called developmental projects. Standard of living marks the socio-economic improvement. The basic principle of Christianity lies with the service of the sick and suffering. Hospitals, Orphanages, home for the destitute are the imprint of Christian mission. The inmates of these institutions are trained in
arts and crafts to earn their living. Enterprises like small scale and cottage industries, sewing, beedi making, coir making, khadi spinning, fishnet making etc helped self help.

Though the Latin Catholics are economically backward, like the good Samaritan, directed by Jesus Christ himself, rendered admirable service to the sick and suffering. Even in the inferior and remote corners of the country, which meagre transport and communication facilities, established hospitals, leprosy clinics, maternity and child welfare centres to aid the poor and needy. The social service societies provided aid for the landless and constructed for homes for the homeless.

Fishermen form a large portion of the Latin Catholic community of Kerala. Most of them even now use primitive methods of fishing. They were provided with mechanized boats and improved varieties of fishing nets. Catholics church is also very active in solving the problems of fishermen during monsoon.

Catholic Church is very keen in introducing benefit schemes for the needy. Credit societies, debit relief fund, death benefit fund and small saving schemes are being operated in most of the parishes of all Latin dioceses. Vocational trainings and alternative income generating programmes, trained women and youth to provide livelihood. Through this training the beneficiaries upgrade their skills and acquire better competence.

On the whole the Latin Catholics have a vital role in social change. Indian society has been unique because of its continuity in the one hand and
its vast diversity on the other. The social awakening that lead to social reform in India differed from region to region. The fusion of western culture effected the Indian society. The class distinction was based on the economy in the west but in India birth was the criteria in deciding the Caste of a person. The Catholics followed a liberal system of education. Through education people were equipped to fight against social evils like Sati, Child marriage, Widow remarriage, untouchability etc and also fight against social disabilities.

The missionary enterprises considerably influenced the native architectural designs. Native architectural got changed with the western architectural models. ‘Banglows’ were built for single family. This resulted the change from joint family to nuclear family. Education also shattered the age old. ‘Jathi’ on occupation by the introduction of industrial schools.

Road network system was yet another impact hinterland cultivation necessitated road net work transport system other than water transport system. In the case of health and care Christian society got upper hand. Ayurvedic system gave away to Allopathic medicine.

Social service societies under Christian missionary undertook lot of projects schemes to the uplift of the weaker sections of the society irrespective of Caste and Creed conducted seminars, discussions on contemporary issues, leadership courses and conducted protestation against Government policies which affected the community.
Education had a drastic impact on the socio–economic life of the people of Kerala. Education strengthened the potentials to undertake any social work for the welfare of the society. Humble and assiduous service to the fellow–men characterised the Christian service activities. The missionary activities gave right orientation of making people aware of their rights. A work of participation with people who are striving for a genuine human existence. Eventhough latin catholics were economically backward, took a keen interest to establish institutions for the orphans and the destitute. In all latin dioceses, measures for the betterment of small scale and cottage industries, fishermen and farmers were implemented to earn their living better.

The Latin Catholic community comprises of heterogeneous group of people converted from both high and lower classes. One time masters, the latin catholics who enforced socio–economic reformation, remain backward in a paradoxy. The earnest and social service societies did not fully equip all section of the community. The fishermen community of coastal area are example. At present both Central and State Governments give due help to bring them up. Since Catholics being minority in minorities, educational scholarships are given to Latin catholic students. UPSC and other Government agencies included Latin Catholics under OBC (other backward classes) and provide reservation to Government jobs. The efforts of the Central and State Governments are noteworthy. At present numbers of this community adorns key positions in both State and Central Governments. It shows ‘if winter comes, spring cannot be far behind’.
Socialist system envisages to bring all communities to the limelight of the society. Since Latin catholics form a heterogeneous group, converted from backward sections of the society their backwardness, in spite of the hard work of the Latin missionaries may be psycho – socio – economic problem.

Both the central and state Government have brought Latin catholic under OBC and provided all benefits and reservations as envisaged by the Constitution of India. But sorry to say that it has not reached lowest tier of this community. Hence, the Government should give extra care to uplift this section. The BPL (below poverty line) section of the community deserves the benefits and reservation enjoyed by the scheduled caste or tribe. The reservation criteria should be strictly followed. And along with the job reservation, reservation in promotion also considered.

Beyond doubt, Latin Catholic are backward people have tendency to take loans from money lenders to meet their immediate needs. This ultimately lead to debt live and die debts. Initiative by the co-operative societies and micro financing can do a helping hand subsidies should be provided for buying materials which enable them to find a living. Thus Latin catholics community can be brought to the main stream of society through motivating them to leadership qualities, then only they can stand in their own leges without fear.

Above all indeed, the Latin Catholic Missionary activities, Governmental and non – Governmental organisations services to this society
will not creat a mass transformation among the Latin Christians. A special
care may taken by the above mentioned Governmental and non-
Governmental institutions upon this community for a good future to them