

## ABSTRACT

The history of Catholic Mission in Darjeeling and Sikkim began with the arrival of the first group of Loreto nuns in 1846 AD, almost ten years after the opening of the hill station at Darjeeling. Ever since, the Roman Catholic missionaries established schools, orphanages, churches, social service centres etc for the physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the inhabitants of Darjeeling and Sikkim. The Catholic missionaries hailed from Belgium, France, Ireland, Switzerland, Canada, Germany, U.S.A and various states of India. The activities of the missionaries during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century included interactions with the inhabitants in the three major areas, viz. Education, Economic Development and Community Development programmes. This thesis documents the events concerning the arrival of the Catholic missionaries, establishment and activities of Catholic missions at different locations in Darjeeling hills and the state of Sikkim. There is also a statistical evaluation of the activities of Catholic missionaries on the basis of data and information collected from the local inhabitants through Sample Survey. The analysis and inferences show that there is significant influence of the Catholic missionaries on the land and life of the local inhabitants. The Catholic missionaries continue their venture in the spiritual and socio-economic developmental programmes in Darjeeling and Sikkim.