

Dr Cooke's book is offered as an 'invitation' to the works of Coleridge. It deals with Coleridge's writings under eight headings after the initial apology that this separation is necessary in order to elicit order from the writings of this genius of 'unity in multiteity'. The notes, bibliography and index enable the text to be used as a guide to the works of Coleridge. Dr Cooke quotes extensively from the works and ends her introduction with the instruction that "there can be no better way of studying Coleridge than to read the works themselves", editions of which are listed prior to the text and conveniently on the dust cover.

Dr Cooke begins with a short life of Coleridge, which is somewhat elaborated upon in each of the succeeding chapters. She is concerned to demonstrate that criticism of Coleridge which treats of his work as disorganized or mere plagiarism or which sees Coleridge as unable to complete anything is misguided because it lacks sympathy with Coleridge's point of view. She herself has so much of this sympathy that her chapters do not come to grips with the works she claims to be discussing.

Her second chapter, on the plays, has an interesting array of dates and accounts of how Coleridge's plays came to be produced, but her delight in proving that Coleridge could finish a work seems to leave her incapable of judging the plays even as she presents them. The improvement in Coleridge's grasp of structural dramatic skills is suggested by quotation from 'Osorio' and its revision, 'Remorse', but is merely stated without any serious attempt at demonstration. Indeed this tendency to state tantalisingly without the establishment of an argument runs disturbingly through Dr Cooke's text.

In the chapter on Poetry her sympathy leads her to accompany quotation with rapid commentary: she quotes from "To an Infant", for example, and then tells us that Coleridge's simple language "convincing the reader that [what the poem deals with] was actually experienced". In the chapter on Literary Criticism she side-steps critical analysis by lauding the achievement of Coleridge with the adjective, Coleridgean, a term reappearing through-

out the book in "truly Coleridgean", "genuinely Coleridgean" and in the section on his Philosophical Writings, appropriately enough, as "quintessential Coleridge".

This sympathy, seducing Dr Cooke into characterising Coleridge's work as more or less Coleridgean, leaves her without any stance from which to tackle the problems Coleridge's writings give rise to. She does not place Coleridge's work in an historical context, but merely informs us that "the affairs of the world at large had an effect on him which cannot be overlooked"; she overlooks it, occasionally stating, further, that Coleridge has had an effect upon subsequent literary criticism, philosophy etc. I found no suggestion of the nature of this effect.

The chapters on Political Journalism and Political Theory are extremely interesting because it is here that Dr Cooke most gives Coleridge the floor, and her lack of intrusion upon her long and efficiently organized quotations made me, at least, want to turn to 'The Friend' and 'Essays on his Times', both also available from RKP.

Dr Cooke's desire to demonstrate the unity of Coleridge's thought is betrayed into mere statement that Coleridge's thought is unified and her conclusion begins with the quotation from Kathleen Coburn that "all the various Coleridges . . . are one Coleridge". Clearly, such a claim requires a much longer study than she had space for, as she herself is careful to tell us, but it is precisely here that the aims of the book become confused. She wishes to invite the reader to read more Coleridge by exhibiting the extent of his writings, but is thereby rendered incapable of analysing the strands of Coleridge's thought which rope together the multiteity of his activities. As a work of Criticism and Interpretation, its description for library cataloguing, the work never gets off the ground; as an invitation its generosity is seriously diminished by the fact that its 264 pages, including punctuational and typographical errors, which at times hinder the reader, notes etc. retail at £6.95.

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