Samuel Taylor Coleridge is the premier poet-critic of modern English tradition, distinguished for the scope and influence of his thinking about literature as much as for his innovative verse. His poems of this period, speculative, meditative, and strangely oracular, put off early readers but survived the doubts of Wordsworth and Robert Southey to become recognized classics of the romantic idiom. Coleridge renounced poetic vocation in his thirtieth year and set out to define and defend the art as a practicing critic.