PREFACE

The present thesis on Marie Corelli: A critical Estimate can be said to make a fresh contribution to the subject for three reasons. This is the first full length account of Marie Corelli which is biographical as well as critical. In the books on Marie Corelli, published so far, I do not know of any work that examines critically the art of Marie Corelli as a novelist. Carr, Coates and Warren Bell give a chronological survey of her works in their biographies of Corelli. These biographies were published in the early part of the twentieth century, Corelli wrote some novels even after these biographies were published. Other biographers like Eileen Bigland have concentrated more on the womanly and the 'Popular' aspects of her life. Secondly, Marie Corelli's philosophic beliefs have so far, been just passingly referred to by critics. It can even be said that they have been deliberately ignored because of her interweaving of theosophy and Christian dogma. A statement is made frequently to the effect that Marie Corelli's thought was considerably influenced by theosophy. But there is not even a single book available in which this question has been examined seriously and an adequate exposition given of her exact indebtedness to theosophy. An attempt has been made in this thesis for the first time to make up for this critical deficiency and to give a full exposition of Marie Corelli's creed and of her indebtedness to theosophy. Thirdly,
Finally, it can be claimed that a total view of Marie Corelli's life, work, beliefs and achievement has been given in this thesis for the first time. There follows a critical estimate of her personality and achievement based on this comprehensive view. There is also a chapter on the position that Marie Corelli held among contemporary writers of fiction.

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