

**LAY SERMONS. I. THE  
STATESMAN'S MANUAL;  
II. BLESSED ARE YE THAT  
SOW BESIDE ALL WATERS**

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Lay Sermons. I. The Statesman's Manual; II. Blessed Are Ye That Sow Beside All Waters by  
Derwent Coleridge

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*Coleridge, Samuel Taylor*

LAY SERMONS.

I. THE STATESMAN'S MANUAL.

II. BLESSED ARE YE THAT SOW BESIDE ALL  
WATERS.

EDITED, WITH THE AUTHOR'S LAST CORRECTIONS AND NOTES,

By DERWENT COLERIDGE, M.A.

THIRD EDITION

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1852.

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## PREFACE.

BY THE EDITOR.

11-19-47 MFF  
THE Lay Sermons of S. T. Coleridge, brought out originally as pamphlets, in the years 1816 and 1817,\* then appended to the third edition of the Church and State, are now for the first time presented to the public in a separate volume. Hitherto they have perhaps excited less attention, in proportion to their worth and importance, than any other of the author's productions. It was not to be expected that they should become immediately popular. They do not bear an attractive title. Neither the union of religion with politics, nor of philosophy with religion, meets with general favour in this country. Each of these subjects is studied apart, by a different class of

\* "The Statesman's Manual," a Lay Sermon, 8vo. Gale and Fenner, 1816. "Blessed are ye that sow beside all Waters," a Lay Sermon. Gale and Fenner, 8vo., 1817.

persons, very commonly in a spirit of mutual jealousy. It is the object of the Lay Sermons to exhibit them as necessarily interdependent. With somewhat of an occasional character, with an express reference to a particular conjuncture of affairs, not without an appearance, though an appearance only, of political bias, and with considerable warmth of language, they conciliated no prepossessions, and were calculated to serve no party purpose. Above all, they were found to require a fixity of attention in the perusal, and an amount of patient afterthought, which it would be unreasonable to expect from the many, and which is not easy to obtain, for any deeper process of self-knowledge, even from a few.

Yet it cannot be doubted that these Sermons have found readers, more or less thoughtful, and have contributed with the rest of the author's writings, to leaven the public mind. Opinions, here combated, it might almost seem with the energy of despair,—ways of thinking then all but universal, are now no longer prevalent;—at least they no longer rise to the surface. Indeed there have been witnessed more than indications of an opposite extreme,—a result which has been expressly attributed, both by friendly and unfriendly observers,



to the writings and conversation of Coleridge. There may be *some* truth in the allegation. Principles, the guides and supports of thought, when removed from the ground out of which they spring, can hardly fail to lead to excess. They become of limited application, and can no longer be regarded as organs of absolute truth. The founders, are not the leaders of opinion. For one of the former, there are many of the latter, who may be mutually opposed, yet refer to a common authority. Or, if it be more convenient, they may deny their origin, and impute it as a reproach to their opponents. It has so fared with Coleridge. He has been made responsible for contending errors, and for rival mischiefs, by those who owe to him, directly or remotely, whatever is true or striking in the school of thought which they profess. Or they would have it to be understood that he worked for his own age :—that his work is done, and his mission at an end. Of the Lay Sermons, more particularly, it may be imagined that they refer to the past, and that the lapse of five and thirty years has deprived them of whatever importance they once possessed.

To these and the like objections currently alleged against the writings of Coleridge (the influence of which, felt, it may confidently be asserted, in every

sect of opinion, has been, and is, from different quarters, and in a contrary sense, continually impugned), it is best to reply by an appeal to the works themselves.

The Lay Sermons, to which the attention of the reader is now invited, taken together, may be regarded as a contribution to religious philosophy, considered under three aspects, as politics or the doctrine of civil rights, and duties; as mental philosophy; and as theology, commonly so called. As above remarked, these are exhibited in mutual connexion; but of the two treatises the latter is more political, the former more expressly theological; while the Appendix to the first Sermon, not the least valuable portion of the whole, contains what is most peculiar to the author, in the region of pure thought.

The author's political views may possibly have created a prejudice against him with some of those who would be disposed to respect his judgment on other points. They are opposed, in appearance, to those formerly maintained by himself. Perhaps they may be thought to partake in certain economical fallacies which have subsequently been exposed. A closer inspection will, it is believed, leave a different impression. The form may belong in some

measure to the past ; the principles enunciated, and this with singular force and clearness, are permanent.

*Primâ facie*, the line taken may appear to be that of the old Tory. It is more imaginative, more religious—more a matter of principle, and less of expediency—than that of the modern Conservative. Addressing his countrymen shortly after the conclusion of the Peninsular War, at a period of great national depression, and general discontent, he is directly and vehemently opposed to the self-styled reformers, who were then ranged on the popular side and arrogated to themselves the exclusive attributes of liberality and patriotism. The arts of the demagogue were never more keenly analysed or more eloquently denounced. As specimens of splendid writing, these paragraphs cannot but be perused with interest, whatever may be thought of their political bearing ; but in truth they read a lesson of continual application in every free state. They point out and describe the ever-recurring canker of liberty. It is not much that could be added to what may be found on this head in Thucydides, Plato and Aristophanes ; but where shall we find the experienced warning of the profound, the subtle, and the witty Greek, so reproduced,—so translated for English ears.