

**G. K. CHESTERTON,
A CRITICAL STUDY**

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G. K. Chesterton, a critical study by Julius West

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JULIUS WEST

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BY

JULIUS WEST

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I HAVE to express my gratitude to Messrs. Burns and Oates, Messrs. Methuen and Co., and Mr. Martin Secker for their kind permission to quote from works by Mr. G. K. Chesterton published by them. I have also to express my qualified thanks to Mr. John Lane for his conditional permission to quote from books by the same author published by him. My thanks are further due, for a similar reason, to Mr. Chesterton himself.

to
J. C. SQUIRE

1892

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I

INTRODUCTORY

THE habit, to which we are so much addicted, of writing books about other people who have written books, will probably be a source of intense discomfort to its practitioners in the twenty-first century. Like the rest of their kind, they will pin their ambition to the possibility of indulging in epigram at the expense of their contemporaries. In order to lead up to the achievement of this desire they will have to work in the nineteenth century and the twentieth. Between the two they will find an obstacle of some terror. The eighteen nineties will lie in their path, blocking the way like an unhealthy moat, which some myopes might almost mistake for an aquarium. All manner of queer fish may be discerned in these unclear waters.

To drop the metaphor, our historians will find themselves confronted by a startling change. The great Victorians write no longer, but are succeeded by eccentrics. There is