# CHARLES DICKENS: A CRITICAL STUDY. [NEW YORK]

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Charles Dickens: A Critical Study. [New York] by G. K. Chesterton

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# G. K. CHESTERTON

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# CHARLES DICKENS

# A CRITICAL STUDY

BY

## G. K. CHESTERTON

Author of Varied Types, Heretics, Etc.

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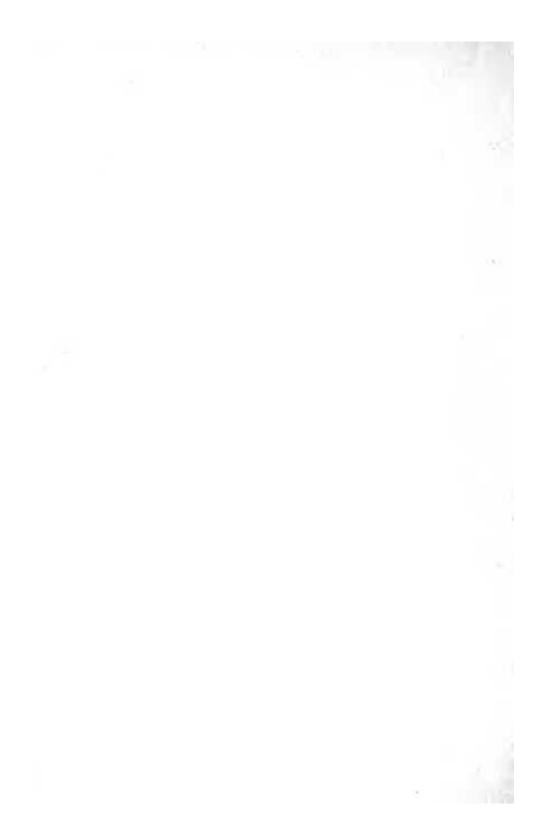
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## CONTENTS

#### CHAPTER 1

PACH

THE DICKENS PERIOD .	3	<b>31</b> 2	×			•	1
- CHA	PTE	R H					
THE BOYHOOD OF DICKEN	s.		•	×	1	•	24
СНА	TR	R 11	ł				
THE YOUTH OF DICKENS	18		*	×	9	e	43
CHAI	PTE	R 1V					
"THE PICKWICK PAPERS"	3	•	×		•	•	71
СНА	PTE	r v					
THE GREAT POPULARITY			•	*			100
CHA	PTE	R VI	l.				
DICKENS AND AMERICA		•		8	5 <b>.</b> 5	25	127
CHAP	TEF	a vi	1				
DICKENS AND CHRISTMAS	3		10	10	15	15	155

### CONTENTS

#### CHAPTER VIII

THE TIME OF TRANSITION	•	•	181
CHAPTER IX			
LATER LIFE AND WORKS	×	×	211
CHAPTER X			
THE GREAT DICKENS CHARACTERS	*	30	244
CHAPTER XI			
ON THE ALLEGED OPTIMISM OF DICKENS	( <b>*</b> )		266
CHAPTER XII			
A NOTE ON THE FUTURE OF DICKENS .	8		291

PAGE

+

#### CHAPTER I

#### THE DICKENS PERIOD

MUCH of our modern difficulty, in religion and other things, arises merely from this, that we confuse the word "indefinable" with the word "vague." If some one speaks of a spiritual fact as "indefinable" we promptly picture something misty, a cloud with indeterminate edges. But this is an error even in common-place logic. The thing that cannot be defined is the first thing; the primary fact. It is our arms and legs, our pots and pans, that are indefinable. The indefinable is the indisputable. The man next door is indefinable, because he is too actual to be defined. And there are some to whom spiritual things have the same fierce and practical proximity; some to whom God is too actual to be defined.

But there is a third class of primary terms. There are popular expressions which every one uses and no one can explain; which the wise man will accept and reverence, as he reverences desire or darkness or any elemental thing. The prigs of the debating club will demand that he should