

**THOMAS
CARLYLE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649010783

Thomas Carlyle by G. K. Chesterton & J. E. Hodder Williams

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G. K. CHESTERTON & J. E. HODDER WILLIAMS

**THOMAS
CARLYLE**



THOMAS CARLYLE

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY WILLIAM BARR

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THOMAS CARLYLE

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

BY

G. K. CHESTERTON

"

AND

J. E. HODDER WILLIAMS

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

THIRD EDITION

LONDON
HODDER AND STOUGHTON
27 PATERNOSTER ROW

1903

TO VINU
UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

PRINTED BY
HAZELL, WATSON AND VINEY, LD.,
LONDON AND AYLESBURY.

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1872
1873

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UNIV. OF
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THOMAS CARLYLE



THOMAS CARLYLE'S MOTHER

(Reproduced by kind permission of Mr. Alexander Carlyle)

THERE are few cultivated people who do not pretend to have read Mr. Lecky's "History of Rationalism in Europe." That very able work covers the whole of one very important side of modern development. But the picture of the real progress, the real mental and moral improvement of our species during the last few centuries, will not be complete until Mr. Lecky publishes a companion volume entitled "The History of Irrationalism in Europe." The two tendencies, acting together, have been responsible for the whole advancement of the Western world. Rationalism is,

of course, that power which makes people invent sewing machines, understand Euclid, reform vestries, pull out teeth, and number the fixed stars. Irrationalism is that other force, if possible more essential, which makes men look at sunsets, laugh at jokes, go on crusades, write poems, enter monasteries, and jump over hay-cocks. Rationalism is the beneficent attempt to make our institutions and theories fit the world we live in, as clothes fit the wearer. Irrationalism is the beneficent reminder that, at the best,

THOMAS CARLYLE



From a photo by J. Patrick, Edinburgh
 ARCH HOUSE, ECCLEFECHAN
 The Birthplace of Thomas Carlyle

legs and arms, the existence of which the tailor had not suspected. And as surely as there arises a consistent theory of life which seems to give a whole plan of it, there will appear within a score or two of years a great Irrationalist to tell the world of strange seas and forests which are nowhere down on the map. The great movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which rose to its height in the French Revolution and the Positivist philosophy, was the last great Rationalistic synthesis. The inevitable Irrationalist who

they do not fit. Irrationalism exists to point out that that eccentric old gentleman, "The World," is such a curiously shaped old gentleman that the most perfect coats and waistcoats have an extraordinary way of leaving parts of him out, sometimes whole

followed it was Thomas Carlyle. This is the first and most essential view of his position.



From a photo by G. G. Napier, M.A.
 THE ROOM AT ARCH HOUSE IN WHICH CARLYLE WAS BORN

In order to explain the matter more clearly, it is necessary to recur to our image of the old gentleman whom no tailor could fit. Not only do the tailors tend to think