

The DEFENDANT

Quarterly of the Australian Chesterton Society

Vol. 29 No.2

Autumn 2022

Issue No. 113



'I have found that humanity is not incidentally engaged, but eternally and systematically engaged, in throwing gold into the gutter and diamonds into the sea. . . . ; therefore I have imagined that the main business of man, however humble, is defence. I have conceived that a defendant is chiefly required when worldlings despise the world - that a counsel for the defence would not have been out of place in the terrible day when the sun was darkened over Calvary and Man was rejected of men.'

G.K. Chesterton, 'Introduction', *The Defendant* (1901)

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The Magic of Magic

by Peter Malone

Father Peter Malone MSC has had a long and distinguished career as a film critic, and served in leadership roles in various cinema organisations, both in Australia and internationally. This review of Chesterton's first play, Magic, was published on his website - <https://misacor.org.au/item/28270-magic-chesterton> - and is reprinted with his kind permission.

'magic' (lowercase) is not a word or idea that springs immediately to mind when thinking of GK Chesterton. 'Magic' (upper case), however, is the title of the play produced in 1913 (when he was 39). But Chesterton did like a mystery – witness Father Brown solving his cases but probing the clashes between good and evil.

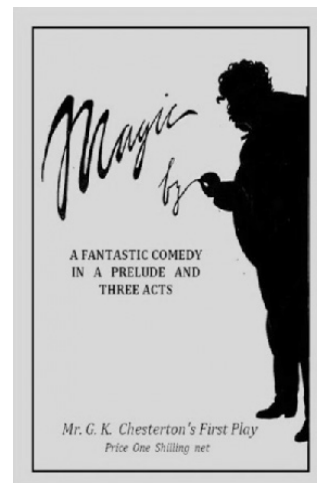
Magic has now been turned into a 70-minute film by Elvis Joseph (assisted by Heather Joseph as producer and, judging from the credits, members of the Joseph family).

There is always a challenge of how to stage dramas set in the past: preserve their original atmosphere or modernise the situation while retaining the dialogue. The *Magic*-makers have opted for the former. We experience something of what Chesterton presented in his time (although

there is a reference to 1913 as being modern times as well as a reminder that good manners are always in order).

Which means that like so many of the plays of the period (and the first three decades of the 20th century), the main setting is the drawing room of a country estate, complete with the Duke, his agent and glimpses of servants, his doctor and the local vicar (Chesterton was Anglican High Church before his conversion to Catholicism). There are two characters, brother and sister, lately coming from the USA, representing the younger generation. And there is a visitor, invited by the Duke, a Conjuror.

As anticipated by any Chesterton devotee, the emphasis will be on dialogue, the words,



2022 Chesterton Conference G.K. Chesterton – The Great Detective

Save the Date

After the hiatus caused by COVID, an in-person Chesterton conference is being organised for this year – to take place on **Saturday, October 22** at Campion College in Sydney.

Addressing the theme of “**G.K. Chesterton – The Great Detective**”, papers will explore various topics, including a comparison of Father Brown with other characters in detective fiction and movies, such as Sherlock Holmes and Inspector Clouseau (of *Pink Panther* fame), and a study of Chesterton and Dorothy Sayers as mystery writers.

Speakers will include John Young, Symeon Thompson, Richard Egan, and Karl Schmude. A special feature will be a screening of excerpts from the Australian-made movie of Chesterton's play, *Magic*, reviewed by Peter Malone MSC in this issue of *The Defendant*, together with a paper presented by the movie makers, Elvis and Heather Joseph.

intonations, pauses... Which means that this Chesterton devotee needs to be a listener, an attentive listener.

Chesterton was a philosopher and theologian so this is not going to be just smart and witty dialogue, and because the makers have opted to stay with so much indoor action. Though sometimes out in the street obsessed with a lamp that changes colour, magically, the film does resemble a stage play, stage performances; but editing enabling the audience to shift focus of attention from one character to another, often quickly, compelling us to notice and to be watchers as well as listeners, attentive to body language and facial expressions.

But, of course, with Chesterton, he challenges not only by what the characters are saying but by what they mean.

QED is not what we expect at the end of a Chesterton article or book (except Father Brown's crime solutions). Chesterton does not solve. He probes.

The screenplay uses the device of a narrator – but here it is the writer of the story, busy at his typewriter (1930s look) but then out and about in the evening, walking, thinking, pondering.

And then we have the Conjuror, meeting Patricia in the garden, talking about fairies and magic but also introducing the theme of how much we should believe in ourselves. This makes us check where we stand. And this is immediately confirmed, schematically, by the appearance of the rationalist, the doctor, on the one hand, and on the other, the man of faith, Mr Smith the vicar (though

Chesterton does not give him much faith-filled dialogue).

Since the Duke has invited the conjurer (and the Duke is self-satisfyingly comfortable on both sides of a cause and argument) to demonstrate magic, this leads to some emotional drama with the young man, Morris, modern and sceptical and a scorners, who becomes obsessed with one of the tricks, concerning the changing colours of the streetlamp. He rants, hyperventilates, and it drives him mad, literally. Conjuror, give him a solution, the truth or a lie?

So, we are in the world of Chesterton Paradox.

Is life reasonable? Is making sense of it reasonable? But is life able to be reasonable about? Probing life and its meaning without drawing up a set of rationalist principles? And the Conjuror reminds us that we have our demons. We have our spirits. Who are they? What are they? Do they control us?

Perhaps the best response to *Magic* (unless you watch it with the Pause button and take time off to think scenes through) is to let the dialogue wash over us, letting it seep into our consciousness, influencing our understanding – a 70-minute contribution by the Chesterton intelligence to what human existence is. ■

Cast: Vincent Parfitt, Barnaby Goodwin, James Domeyko, David Lucas, Kirsty McKenzie, Aaron J. March, Nick Barker-Pendree, Joe Loria. Directed by Elvis Joseph. Colour. 70 minutes.

Available for purchase via vimeo - <https://vimeo.com/r/3q1b/b/NXdqcWYzR2>

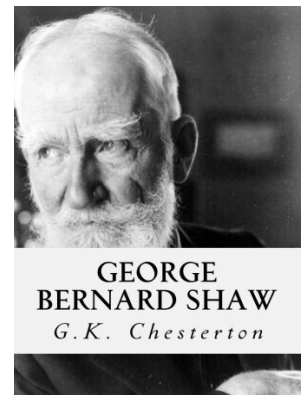
Shaw's taunt to Chesterton

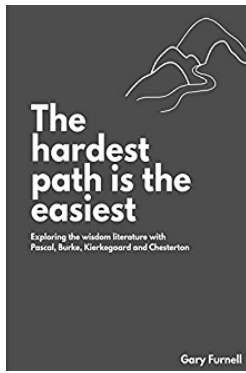
George Bernard Shaw's huge admiration for Chesterton could take the form of playful criticism, especially when he was badgering Chesterton to write a play. His most mischievous attempt was a letter he wrote on March 1, 1908, of which this is the opening paragraph. (The full letter can be found in Maisie Ward's 1944 biography, *Gilbert Keith Chesterton*, p.196.) Chesterton finally relented – and wrote *Magic* in 1913.

My Dear G.K.C.

What about that play? It is no use trying to answer me in the New Age: the real answer to my article is the play. I have tried fair means: The New Age article was the inauguration of an assault below the belt. I shall deliberately destroy your credit as an essayist, as a journalist, as a critic, as a Liberal, as everything that offers your laziness a refuge, until starvation and shame drive you to serious dramatic parturition. I shall repeat my public challenge to you; vaunt my superiority; insult your corpulence; torture Belloc; if necessary, call on you and steal your wife's affections by intellectual and athletic displays, until you contribute something to the British drama. You are played out as an essayist: your ardour is soddened, your intellectual substance crumbled, by the attempt to keep the work of your twenties in your thirties. Another five years of this and you will be the apologist of every infamy that wears a Liberal or Catholic mask. . . . Nothing can save you now except a rebirth as a dramatist. I have done my turn; and I now call on you to take yours and do a man's work.

Yours ever,
G. Bernard Shaw





Shining the Divine Light of Wisdom

by David Daintree

David Daintree, Director of the Christopher Dawson Centre for Cultural Studies in Hobart and formerly President of Campion College Australia, finds much to praise in Gary Furnell's recent book, *The Hardest Path is the Easiest: exploring the Wisdom Literature with Pascal, Burke, Kierkegaard and Chesterton* (Connor Court, Australia 2021, \$29.95). Available from: www.connorcourtpublishing.com.au

Writing a book review is sometimes a chore that one performs for a friend's sake. At other times when the quality is high and the content attractive it's a pleasure.

Gary Furnell's little book is in a class apart: it's a charming and skilful anthology of excellent writing from four quite diverse sources, all ably tied together by the author's lucid and wise commentary.

His choice of sources is inventive and exciting: I had never seen such a selection before and found the whole thing a delight to read. No chore at all, just a pleasure.

A fitting alternative title of the book could have been drawn from the opening words of Psalm 14: *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.* Furnell would have been far too courteous to call it that, though one suspects that his sources (with the possible exception of the holy and kindly Kierkegaard) would have no such qualms. And the word *Folly* occurs frequently in the text. For the whole book is firmly founded on the *fact* (let's not mince words) that almighty God created the universe, and that all its evils are consequent upon the wilful wickedness of mankind.

To say that this book would not appeal to most people living in our modern post-Christian secular world is an understatement of the most extreme kind. The very idea of man's dependence upon and subservience to God is outrageous, even obscene, but God is not mocked and the day will come when all will discover the greatness of the truth.

But in the meantime if any modern default-position atheists should pick up this book (and God grant that some such people will) they will find amazing things to extend their vision, expose the folly that we're all prone to, and even draw them to the threshold of conversion.

A short review allows little space for quotations, but a few things deserve mention.

There's Burke on politicians who *'choose to make themselves bidders at an auction of popularity'*. Sound familiar? And on society as a contract: *'a partnership*

not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born.'

Original Sin is the most unpopular Christian doctrine, despite being (as Chesterton observed) the only one that is absolutely self-evident. Here is Furnell himself on its fatal effects: *'All people, rich and poor, are equally capable of grasping, manipulative actions ... the shirker, the labouring man and the well-paid executive are all vulnerable to the temptations of self-seeking.'*

There is no Christian smugness here: all people are weak, all are fallen. There is no hope for a world that blames everything on 'systems', or gender, or race, and denies the democracy of evil.

Chesterton understood. *'Man is an exception, whatever else he is. If he is not the image of God, then he is a disease of the dust. If it is not true that a divine being fell, then we can only say that one of the animals went entirely off its head.'*

And Pascal has something to say to those who see no real difference between mankind and its pets: *'It is dangerous to make man see too clearly his equality with the beasts without showing him his greatness. It is also dangerous to make him see his greatness too clearly, apart from his vileness. It is still more dangerous to leave him in ignorance of both.'*

Kierkegaard wittily comments on the paradox of human folly: *'The biggest danger, that of losing oneself, can pass off in the world as if it were nothing; every other loss, an arm, a leg, five dollars, a wife, etc. is bound to be noticed.'*

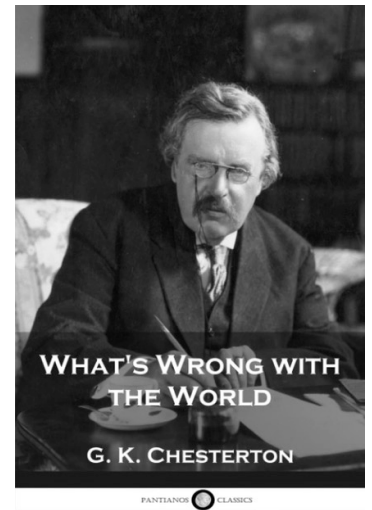
These quotations have been chosen because they appealed to this reviewer's fancy, but the book is otherwise profusely rich in such good things. I haven't chosen anything from the Wisdom Literature because there is so much of it, and it's so aptly named.

I enjoyed this book immensely, from cover to cover, and recommend it highly. It will give reassurance and confidence to the believer amidst these difficult times and will at least partially open the mind of the sceptic, if you can persuade him to exercise his eyes! ■

Revisiting *What's Wrong With the World*

by Garry Nieuwkamp

Chesterton's great work of Christian sociology, *What's Wrong with the World* (1910), has been often overlooked or under-rated in the corpus of his writings. Yet it contains many of his most penetrating insights into the foundations of society, beginning with the family. It reveals, in particular, the perverse alliance that we continue to live with in the 21st century, between over-large companies in collusion with over-large governments and bureaucracies. **Garry Nieuwkamp**, a doctor on the NSW Central Coast, looks again at a Chesterton classic.



What's wrong with the world, asked G. K. Chesterton? Lots apparently.

Published in 1910, the book's title is a reminder of Chesterton's quip – that, on being asked by The Times newspaper this very question, "What's wrong with the world?", allegedly was: "I am".

This is Chesterton as many of us remember him – insightful but brimming with mirth. It is also a reminder that he was ever the spiritual clinician taking the pulse and prescribing a tonic to the world he saw in decline.

In a much later book that gathers together essays that give an account of his conversion to Catholicism, Chesterton sums up in one paradox what is wrong with the world.

"In the matter of reforming things, as distinct from deforming them, there is one plain and simple principle; a principle which will probably be called a paradox. There exists in such case a certain institution or law; let us say for the sake of simplicity, a fence or gate erected across a road. The more modern type of reformer goes gaily up to it and says, "I don't see the use of this; let us clear it away." To which the more intelligent type of reformer will do well to answer: "If you don't see the use of it, I certainly won't let you clear it away. Go away and think. Then when you can come back and tell me that you do see the use of it, I may allow you to destroy it." ("The Drift from Domesticity", *The Thing*, 1929)

Not being able to understand what a thing is for is a criticism that is at the heart of *What's Wrong With the World*: "What is wrong is that we do not ask what is right." As Aristotle writes in the opening of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: "If like archers, we have a target, are we not more likely to hit the target?" If one doesn't know what the ideal is, then hitting the mark is a shot in the dark with fingers crossed.

This is the problem epigrammatically expressed: "The business of Progressives is to go on making mistakes. The business of Conservatives is to prevent mistakes

from being corrected." *Illustrated London News*, April 4, 1924) "Hudge and Gudge are secretly in partnership" is Chesterton's suspicion.

If this is the diagnosis, what is the restorative? For Chesterton "Men invent new ideals because they dare not attempt old ideals. They look forward with enthusiasm because they are afraid to look back."

Chesterton does not want to disenfranchise those who have gone before. It is not that they necessarily had the wrong ideals but that they failed to live up to those ideals. "The problem with Christianity," as one of those ideals he writes, "is not that it has been tried and found wanting but that it has been found difficult and left untried."

So too with the democratic dream; "It has in a strict and practical sense been a dream unfulfilled".

So Chesterton's solution is to weave into the fabric of society those ideals based on family, private property and a nurturing of a deep spiritual life: "The idea of private property universal but private, the idea of families free but still families, of domesticity democratic but still domestic, of one man one house- this remains the real vision and magnet of mankind."

The family provides a counterbalance to the State: "It may be said that this institution of the home is the one anarchist institution. That is to say, it is older than law, and stands outside the State".

"If we want to preserve the family," he writes, "we must revolutionize the nation". The problem, though, is that it is to "the State, the School, the modern machinery of taxation and police", to which people actually look to save themselves from the superstition of their fathers". That is the contradiction at the heart of what's wrong with the world, and it will inevitably lead to a crashing collision. Not only have we lost our way, he writes, we have lost the address!

We have taken a wrong turn, says Chesterton, and we are told we must go forwards not backwards. To what

end he would ask? We have lost our way; must we lose the map as well? Because we have missed our ideal, must we forget it? It is a modern heresy of "altering the human soul to fit its conditions, instead of altering human conditions to fit the human soul".

Chesterton wants neither big government nor big business but a society that puts the family and the freedom centre stage: "As every normal man desires a

woman, and children born of a woman, every normal man desires a house of his own to put them in. He does not merely want a roof above him and a chair below him; he wants an objective and visible kingdom; a fire at which he can cook what he likes, a door he can open to what friends he chooses".

This sound suspiciously like Chesterton's home at Beaconsfield - and an ideal definitely worth preserving. ■

Chesterton Epigrams

Chesterton, Garry Nieuwkamp notes, "writes prose like a poet unleashed." *What's Wrong with the World* is "a book loaded with typical Chestertonian epigrams - forty-nine chapters, forty-nine epigrams." This is a selection of the most impressive quotations he found.

"The great ideals of the past failed not by being outlived... but by not being lived enough". (Chapter 5)

"For the first time in history he begins really to doubt the object of his wanderings on the earth. He has always lost his way; but now he has lost his address". (Chapter 9)

"Men are most themselves when they are free". (Chapter 14)

"But when men wish to be safely impressive, as judges, priests or kings, they do wear skirts, the long, trailing robes of female dignity". (Chapter 20)

"It is the view that because we have taken a wrong turn some time ago we must go forward and not backwards; that because we have lost our way we must lose our map also; and because we have missed our ideal, we must forget it". (Chapter 27)

"Dogma is actually the only thing that cannot be separated from education. It is education. A teacher who is not dogmatic is simply a teacher who is not teaching". (Chapter 31)

"...we cannot create anything good until we have conceived it". (Chapter 32)

"Now most modern freedom is at root fear. It is not so much that we are too bold to endure rules; it is rather that we are too timid to endure responsibilities". (Chapter 33)

"The modern Conservative no longer conserves. He is avowedly an innovator". (Chapter 3)

"The only persons who seem to have nothing to do with the education of children are the parents". (Chapter 40)

"Socialists are specially engaged in mending...the state; and they are not specially engaged in strengthening and renewing the family". (Chapter 43)

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Layout of 'The Defendant' designed by Jenna Fulop

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The annual membership fee of the Australian Chesterton Society is **\$30.00**, which entitles subscribers to receive the Society's quarterly newsletter, *The Defendant*.

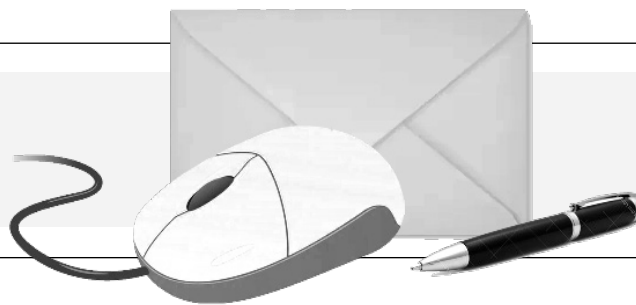
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Letter to the Editor



A Comment on *The Sins of G.K. Chesterton*

I have just finished reading *The Sins of G.K. Chesterton* by Richard Ingrams and the review by Gary Furnell (*The Defendant*, Summer 2022), and I was driven to write something in defence of Chesterton.

Firstly, Ingrams is to be congratulated on the depth of his research. No stone was left unturned in his search for a sin committed by Chesterton.

However, the title to the book demands that some sort of sins be revealed. Yet it is only at end of the book (on page 242) that the supposed sins of Chesterton are disclosed. They are listed as follows:

- the unspecified experience of Gilbert at London's Slade School of Fine Art
- the treatment by Gilbert of his friends Gardiner, Masterman and Cadbury
- the stories told by Gilbert about how his brother died
- the written attack by Gilbert on Rufus Isaacs

I will respond to the first claimed sin, the unspecified experience of Gilbert at the Slade School of Fine Art, and leave it to others to respond to the rest.

Ingrams only mentions Slade in a few lines in the whole book of over 6000 lines. The first is a passing reference (at page 39) to Gilbert attending the Slade School of Fine Art for a year, and then at pages 233/334:

"The process of his slow conversion began when he was an art student at the Slade and went through a period of acute depression during which he had 'an overpowering impulse to record or draw horrible ideas and images.' Evelyn Waugh has mentioned rumours of homosexuality at this period in his life, and Wilfrid Blunt refers in his diary to an attempt by Lord Alfred Douglas to blackmail him which he and Belloc managed to prevent. Whatever his experiences were, they left Chesterton with an abiding sense of evil- 'I had dug

quite low enough to recognise the devil'- an experience previously promoted by playing with an Ouija board with Cecil. This frightened him so much that he vowed never to touch it again 'with a bargepole.'"

This explosive allegation is not elaborated on. It is left there hanging in the air. It is in contrast to every other thing in the book, which is researched and revealed no matter how small. No evidence in any conversation or any other thing, nothing in all of Ingrams' digging! Notwithstanding the tremendous detail throughout the book there is no reference to any correspondence or conversation which gives any detail of this alleged behaviour.

And at page 246, his conclusion:

"When it comes to confession, more than once Chesterton wrote that he became a Catholic to get rid of his sins, his followers deducing, probably correctly, that he harboured some deep seated feelings of guilt dating from his experiences at the Slade, which left him, as he said, with a strong sense of the physical nature of evil. Whatever may have been those sins, they must seem trivial compared to his treatment of his friends Gardiner, Masterman and Cadbury, his lies about Cecil's death and his vicious and unprovoked attack on Rufus Isaacs."

Even Ingram is extremely guarded in making this statement himself about Chesterton. Instead, he hides behind unnamed Chesterton's followers in "deducing, probably correctly" regarding the allegation. He offers no evidence, and this reflects poorly on the credibility of Ingrams.

I have no doubt that Chesterton committed sins; he was human, but this does not license an allegation of a sin without evidence.

Robin Speed

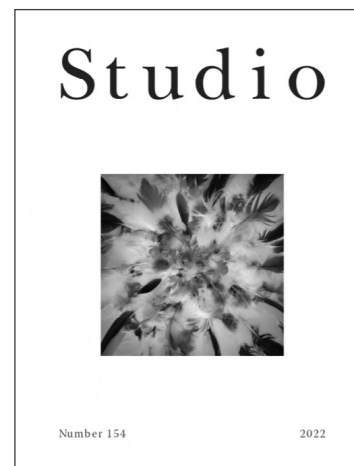
Robin Speed has his own law practice in Sydney, Speed and Stracey, and co-founded the Rule of Law Institute whose purpose is to foster the rule of law in Australia by means of conferences, programs and public comment.

Nothing is too sacred or too secular for God

The journal *Studio* turns 40

by Paul Grover

An Australian literary journal, *Studio*, is an impressive example of independent publishing of creative works that offer spiritual perspectives. Its founding editor, **Paul Grover**, reflects on its first 40 years of publication.



Studio, a journal of Christians writing, features poetry, short stories, articles and reviews from subscribers, as well as commissioned and unsolicited contributions.

Our beginning in 1980 saw a handful of copies printed, folded and stapled using an old hand-operated printing machine. In 2022 *Studio* is professionally printed in the hundreds using high-quality stock and a professional presentation.

At the beginning the voices of doom were all around – small magazines don't last, you won't get quality creative contributions, it's already been done and failed, there's no market.

Les Murray encouraged us in our first year with the comment that *Studio* should strive for excellence because God is excellence itself. In 1987 Andrew Lansdown, the Australian poet and novelist, made this observation as guest editor for our 25th *Studio* number (we were called *Christians Writing* in those days):

"I have followed the development of 'Christians Writing' with interest over the last four years and commend the editors for their efforts to combine (so it seems to me) several objectives that do not always sit comfortably together - namely, to publish work of literary merit, to offer a venue for new and aspiring writers, and to create a sense of community of 'Christians writing.'"

We continue this tradition in 2022, and we are about to publish *Studio* number 154. *Christians Writing* became *Studio* when we realised that many people pre-judged the journal after only reading its title rather than the work inside. Tim Winton suggested early on that we needed to change the name to avoid ugly preconceptions becoming a barrier to people who would gain much from reading and contributing to the journal. So, why the name *Studio*? The inside cover of each edition carries our 'credo':

'A studio is a creative place where people explore their art and experiment with ideas. *Studio* journal explores creative and spiritual perspectives, publishes work of literary merit by established, new and aspiring writers, and develops a sense of community among *Studio* members and friends.'

The journal contributes in a small way to an ongoing conversation about our place in the world and spiritual perspectives in life and relationships. It adds motivation and momentum for a greater appreciation of the arts,

and contributes to our rich exploration of spiritual journeys within and beyond.

It is not a journal of poetry, stories, articles and reviews about religious belief. Some people assume we only publish writing about religion or Christianity itself. *Studio* is a journal for writers who are comfortable being published in 'a journal of Christians writing' (lower case 'c' & with the broadest definition of a much-maligned word that needs reclaiming). We publish from a spiritual world-view, across the whole spectrum of human experience - all the stuff of this life and this world.

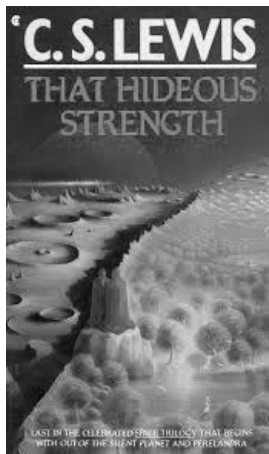
Studio has featured many hundreds of established, new and aspiring writers over its forty years, and we look forward to featuring many, many more into the future. It has always been a non-profit magazine with a volunteer editorial team, and members are drawn from all walks of life, from all ages, and from all around the world. *Studio* members have gone on to publish their work in a wide range of literary journals, edited collections and their own books.

Good writing reaches well beyond display and self-promotion. The presence of good writing in the marketplace and an openness to other voices are like the chorus of ancient Greek drama, or the clown in Shakespeare's plays, or the slave in Roman imperial processions. You are brought to face the essence of things, to consider the truth beneath outward show, the value of relationships, and the significance of people and events in life's journeys. Honesty and generosity of spirit are so valuable in a troubled and transient world.

Novels, plays, poems and stories open doors some people would rather keep closed, or do not even know exist. Poetry is one of the most intense forms of human communication, and the spiritual journey the most valuable one we can ever undertake.

The roads less taken will be important and revelatory. Together, fine writing and a searching spirit can change the way you live. And nothing is too sacred or too secular for God. ■

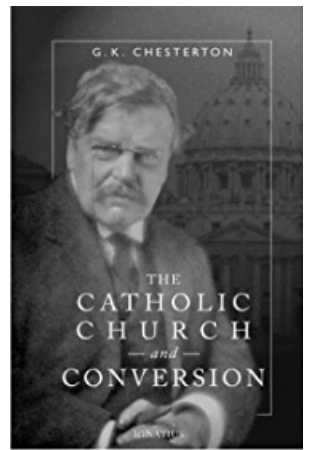
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Reason and Liberty are not N.I.C.E.

by *John-Paul Heil*

George Orwell criticized C.S. Lewis's 1945 novel That Hideous Strength for its supernatural elements. John-Paul Heil, a PhD candidate in history at the University of Chicago and adjunct professor at Mount St. Mary's University in Maryland, argues that this is precisely what connects Lewis' and Chesterton's notions of conversion.



C.S. Lewis's *That Hideous Strength* is a novel about conversion. Released in 1945, this third part of Lewis's Space Trilogy was reviewed by George Orwell, who despite thinking that "by the standard of the novels appearing nowadays this is a book worth reading," critiqued how "the supernatural keeps breaking in" to the story's proceedings in "rather confusing" ways.

He also observed that "Mr. Lewis probably owes something to Chesterton as a writer."

Orwell was right on all but one count: the "undisciplined ways" the supernatural enters Lewis's story provide the engine of its protagonists' conversions and further reveal Lewis's debt to Chesterton. In his 1926 essay "The Catholic Church and Conversion," Chesterton emphasizes that though no two conversion stories are the same, what connects them all is a shared recognition of Truth, the reality of things as they are.

Lewis's novel celebrates the "supreme sacredness and value of two things: Reason and Liberty" which Chesterton argues can "justify the whole Catholic theology."

Lewis's protagonists, Mark and Jane Studdock, are nonbelievers looking for reason and liberty. Recently married yet already tired of one another, the pair find themselves pulled apart.

Mark, attempting to climb the academic career ladder, becomes entangled with the National Institute of Co-ordinated Experiments (N.I.C.E.), an influential cabal he believes is rationally and scientifically working towards "the preservation and extension" of humanity. Jane desires liberty via marital equality and balks at the idea of obeying anyone, much less her husband.

Mark eventually learns of the Institute's alliance with demonic powers and their true plan, to transform the "intellectual nucleus" of humanity into "the race itself," jettisoning the rest, as the "human race is to become all Technocracy" by means of a technologized spirituality.

To prepare him to cooperate with the N.I.C.E.'s diabolical patron, Mark is held captive and eventually

brought to step on a crucifix. Though he believes Christianity "a fable," he finds himself "looking at the crucifix in a new way...as a bit of history" which represents "an image of the Straight" and truly novel "Normal" opposed to the Institute's crooked technocracy.

Mark rejects this desecration, in Chesterton's words, "out of contempt [for] the evil by which he has been surrounded." We are close to Chesterton's observation that "the Catholic Church is the only thing which saves a man from the degrading slavery of being a child of his age."

Though the ragtag resistance movement against the Institute tries to recruit Jane, she initially resists, as joining them would mean giving herself to them and subjugating her will to their unseen director. Jane holds firm to her faulty notion of freedom until she meets this director: Elwin Ransom, the protagonist of the trilogy's first two novels, whose time on the sinless Venus has left him in an Edenic but crippled body. His natural and moral rectitude, his Adamic kingliness, and the goodness of his reality inspire Jane to consider things which never, "till that moment, seemed to be connected with real life."

Ransom reveals the real reason for her marital difficulties: "you do not fail in obedience through lack of love, but have lost love because you never attempted obedience."

Jane pledges obedience to Ransom as the convert pledges obedience to the Church, "for beauty was made for others. Her beauty belonged to the Director. It belonged to him so completely that he could even decide not to keep it for himself but to order that it be given to another, by an act of obedience lower, and therefore higher, more unconditional and therefore more delighting, than if he had demanded it for himself."

The supernatural, ever "confusing" and "undisciplined" to human eyes, breaks into Mark and Jane's lives and provides the means for their conversions and reconciliation. Lewis was not Catholic, but his novel is certainly contained in the "great dome" of its Truth. ■