Renew Membership for 2026

The DEFENDANT

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'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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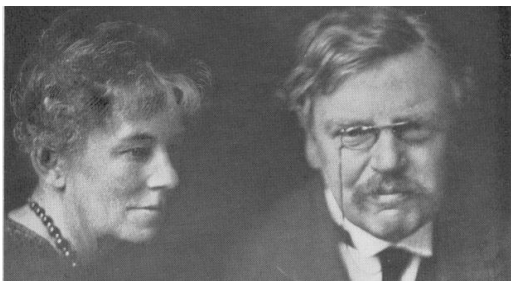
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The Wounds of Chesterton

by Karl Schmude



Gilbert and Frances Chesterton

The public image of Chesterton as a man of geniality and generosity of heart may not prepare us for the discovery that he knew the world as also a place of pain and pounding.

The Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges saw in Chesterton dark depths and hints of diabolical awareness, and the English journalist Malcolm Muggeridge sensed that, beneath his manifest happiness and joyous wonder, Chesterton was also "an anguished, frightened spirit."

Such counter-balancing features gain more credibility when we reflect on the wounds that Chesterton suffered in his life - and the scars that he carried. While by his own admission he had an idyllically happy childhood, his adult experiences were more mixed, and they had the effect of deepening his understanding, which led to so many memorable insights.

He did not enter the Catholic Church until 1922, at the age of 48, but he was long aware of what he called "the morbid but vivid problems of the soul" to which he found the Catholic faith a spiritual solution. As he wrote in his autobiography in 1936:

"That the Catholic Church knew more about good than I did was easy to believe. That she knew more about evil than I did seemed incredible."

Australian Chesterton Conferences

Over the past 25 years, the Australian Chesterton Society has held conferences in different cities before adopting Sydney as its favoured centre after Campion College opened in 2006.

Together with my wife Virginia, I have been responsible for organising the conference at Campion and arranging the various speakers. Unfortunately, I have now developed spinal problems affecting my mobility and, in particular, making difficult any long-distance travel to Sydney from our home in rural Armidale. As a result we regret that we have not been able to contemplate running a conference this year.

Any member of the Society who could take on this role is invited to contact me at: kgschmude@gmail.com.au

Karl Schmude
President of the Australian Chesterton Society



In an early essay, "The Diabolist" (published in *Tremendous Trifles*, 1909), Chesterton recalls a conversation he had with a stranger, which he describes as "by far the most terrible thing that has ever happened to me in my life." The diabolist showed "a horrible fairness of the intellect that made me despair of his soul." He embraced good and evil indiscriminately and, believing that evil had a life of its own, he pursued it as energetically as good.

This essay brings out powerfully Chesterton's penetrating grasp of modern culture – marked by its abandonment of objective truth and reality, and its incapacity to see intellectual distinctions.

Symbolically, the conversation in "the Diabolist" took place near a bonfire which sent its red sparks into the air. After Chesterton heard these last words of the diabolist, he rushed away, and as he passed the fire he confessed that he "did not know whether it was hell or the furious love of God."

The cross of childlessness

A major wound that Chesterton suffered was in his married life – what his first biographer Maisie Ward called "the heavy cross of childlessness".

Despite a deeply happy marriage with Frances, constantly attested throughout their life together, they were not able to have children. This was a cross borne especially by Frances, and the themes of longing for a family can be found throughout her poetry – as in one poem where she ("though my arms be empty") finds solace in the Blessed Virgin Mary cradling the "Eternal Child" and being touched "with a divine caress".

The longing was also felt by Gilbert, who captured it poignantly in his poem, "By the Babe Unborn", where he reflects on the darkness of the child in the womb and, in the final two lines, the yearning for birth: "If only I could find the door/If only I were born."

Yet the Chestertons bore the pain of childlessness courageously. Stories abound of how warmly they connected with children – by holding, for example, a regular Christmas party in their Beaconsfield home to which only children were invited. Gilbert would dress as Santa Claus and engage with the children in their games, while Frances produced original plays for the children to perform.

The British diplomat Sir Alec Randall recalled that, during the Chestertons' visit to Rome in 1929, they arranged a party for the diplomat's children. Upon arriving to pick them up, he found Chesterton "sitting tilted back in a chair, with a large white towel tucked into his collar, being lathered and shaved with a pretended razor by my small son."

Undoubtedly a special consolation was the support of Dorothy Collins as Gilbert's secretary for the last ten years of his life. She was, as Aidan Mackey noted, the daughter the Chestertons could not have.

The loss of a brother

Chesterton suffered a double wound with the final years of his only brother, Cecil. A fellow journalist – though more pugnacious and polemical than Gilbert – Cecil was convicted of libel for exposing political corruption (in an insider trading scandal involving the Marconi brothers and various British politicians at the time). Subsequently Cecil died at the close of the First World War, after being wounded on active service in France.



Cecil Chesterton

Gilbert recalled the turbulent warmth of their brotherly relationship – how they "perpetually argued, but never quarrelled." He saw a fundamental difference now obscured – that an argument is about objective truth and evidence, while a quarrel is about personal character and behaviour. As Gilbert put it: "the principal objection to a quarrel is that it interrupts an argument." (*Autobiography,* 1936)

Cecil's early death led to Gilbert taking on the editorship of his weekly journal *The New Witness*, which under the changed name of *G.K.'s Weekly* honoured Cecil's legacy by continuing to promote Distributism as a philosophy of widely distributed rather than centralised ownership and power.

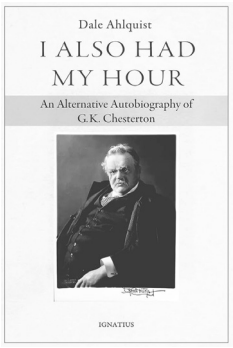
When Gilbert came to reflect on the deep wound that Cecil's early loss represented for him, he simply noted:

"A portrait is impossible; as a friend he is too near me, and as a hero too far away."

Chesterton suffered other wounds in his life, especially the physical breakdown he experienced in 1914 as a result of overwork, but the enduring impression is of his bravery in surmounting the trials he faced, and allowing them to deepen his understanding - and enrich the works he has left us. ■

Chesterton's Other Autobiography

by Gary Furnell



The President of the Society of Gilbert Keith Chesterton in America, Dale Ahlquist, has produced a most unusual book, creating a second autobiography of Chesterton based on his own writings, which in some ways is more revealing than his own Autobiography *(1936).*

Gary Furnell *reviews this work, entitled* I Also Had My Hour: An Alternative Autobiography by G.K. Chesterton (Ignatius Press, 2025). *His review first appeared in the current affairs magazine,* News Weekly (January 15, 2026)*, and is republished with the kind permission of its Editor, Peter Kelleher.*



Dale Ahlquist

This is an intriguing book with, perhaps, no precedent in its concept. Dale Ahlquist has sought to construct a type of new autobiography by compiling what Chesterton wrote or said about his life and views.

Ahlquist wanted Chesterton to tell us more about himself because the autobiography that Chesterton wrote, published after his death in 1936, left out a great deal. Somehow, he neglected to reveal much about his life in his autobiography.

The contrast between Chesterton's 1936 autobiography and Ahlquist's alternative 2025 version underscores this intention:

"He managed to insert a few details about Gilbert Chesterton, but not enough to paint a self-portrait. However, in his boundless writings about everything else, especially in his vast and largely uncollected journalism, he leaves fragments of an autobiography. I have tried to cobble together from this mountain of words a new version of Chesterton's life."

Ahlquist uses lines from Chesterton's Easter poem, *The Donkey*, as chapter headings.

When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born.

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
Of all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

Ahlquist's method involved great and prolonged labour, but he says that it was a labour of love. For decades, in the musty years before the internet, he journeyed across continents, visiting libraries, dusty archives and overlooked offices to collect Chesterton's neglected written work, principally his journalism. The result is a treasure trove that contributes sparkling insights into Chesterton and his epoch; it's like the Sutton Hoo of early 20th-century philosophy.

Ahlquist used this recovered material for his alternative autobiography, combining hundreds of excerpts to provide a fresh perspective on Chesterton. At the bottom of each page, reference numbers identify the source and the year of each passage. There are also numerous footnotes that provide further context or offer additional editorial commentary. The subtlety is deliberate, adding valuable information without intruding on Chesterton's account.

Previous biographies have tended to overlook Chesterton's journalism and his speeches. This is ironic because Chesterton was a joyful journalist and, for more than 30 years, he was a dedicated speaker. No wonder he was famous. From 1903 to 1936, he spoke at clubs, openings of something or other, town hall meetings, church congresses, or college and university gatherings up to three times a week.

His efforts were prodigious, matching people's eagerness to hear his insights. He wanted to encourage discussion of his ideas and expose the inept ideas tormenting society. He wrote in 1926:

"I believe more and more that the modern world has far too little argument of the real sort; and that the aim of any public-spirited person today must be to find a stable statement of truth, upon which alone anything socially solid can be built. When I look back on my life, even in the lightest fashion, I can see it only as an attempt to reach such an end."

Detailed timeline of Chesterton's life

Augmenting the unusual but effective narrative, Ahlquist provides a 112-page timeline, noting the main events of each month in every year of Chesterton's life. This is a revelation of fascinating detail.

By 1902, when Chesterton was 28 years old, the pattern of his life – daily journalism and frequent speaking engagements – was decided. After the 1914-18 war, his engagements increased, culminating in his two visits to America with months of travel and dozens of lectures. While Chesterton's intellectual abilities are often acknowledged, this timeline highlights his enormous energy, from his 20s to his 50s, given unstintingly to public good.

The "new version" autobiography – and the timeline – fill about one half of the book's 477 pages. There is a vast reservoir of *aperçus* worthy of quotation – for example:

On state censorship: "It is wicked to nationalise mines or railroads, but we lose no time nationalising tongues and talk."

On technology invading our lives: "We have given ourselves over to an insatiable monster who serves us at the price of our liberty."

On Capitalism: "Capitalism does always begin with what is normal; with private property and political liberty. Owing to greed of property in some and neglect of liberty for all, it becomes mere plutocracy." There are a multitude of shrewd observations to ponder.

Chapters are dedicated to more controversial aspects of Chesterton's life and thought, including his friendship with Hilaire Belloc; Chesterton's response to charges that he was hostile to Jews; the presence of evil; and duels with his critics.

There is a selection of Chesterton's poems, revealing his concerns and hopes. It is appropriate to use his poetry to complement his prose because Chesterton set high value on poetry – it uses words to convey what is beyond words, proceeding from the heart.

Fifty-nine testimonies – arranged chronologically - from Chesterton's colleagues, associates and friends provide further insights into Chesterton's qualities, idiosyncrasies and achievements.

It is remarkable how quickly Chesterton matured, and how consistent he was once he matured. He was, early in his adulthood, friendly, humorous, intelligent, generous and keen to engage with people. He remained this way until his final sickness, although, as Ahlquist notes in his introduction, the bright, outward-bound energy of Chesterton's youth gave way to quiet, sometimes solemn, reflection in his 50s and 60s.

He acknowledged this change, writing in his 50s: "I know that since my own views have grown much more settled and secure, I am less inclined than I was to go about incessantly contradicting everybody who contradicts them … And this is not because I am drawn towards thinking they are right, but because I am far more securely and serenely certain they are wrong."

Chesterton wrote about his interior pilgrimage, leading to his conversion to Catholicism, "the chief event of my life". Here, Chesterton's facility with profound concepts and spiritual matters is displayed. Many of his fans delight especially in his religious writing, valuing his honesty, fairness, historical sense, Bible knowledge, his turn of phrase and his wit. Those fans now have a new wealth of Chesterton writing to pore over, cherish and memorise.

Fortunately, the book is a high-quality, durable item. It will last a lifetime of reading and thumbing through looking for treasured quotes. Alas, there are no photographs, although it is likely that Ahlquist unearthed many photographs of Chesterton in various settings at different stages of life.

We can be thankful to Dale Ahlquist for his decades of diligent work and his generosity in sharing the rich results in the form of an autobiography. Chesterton admirers, and those not yet admirers, will read keenly *I Also Had My Hour*.

In the decades ahead, no doubt there will be more Chesterton biographies written, but the authors will draw deeply – and, one hopes, with gratitude – on the incredible recovered resources compiled here. As always when reviewing a book, I read it twice. The time spent was enjoyable and profitable.

Chesterton once identified sloth as his besetting sin. We must take him at his word – he's a better judge of his heart than we are – but it's hard to reconcile sloth with the hundreds of speeches, astonishing number of articles and dozens of books he completed.

Chesterton's sloth makes other writers look comatose. ■



GKC on clear and courageous thought

All tame and trivial thought is concerned with following a fashion onward to its logical extremity. All clear and courageous thought is concerned with following it back to its logical root. A man may make hats larger and larger and be only as mad as a hatter. But if he can quite perfectly explain what a hat is he must have the great sanity of Aristotle. (*Dublin Review*, July 1909)

Charging a Just Price - A Layman's Guide

by Garrick Small



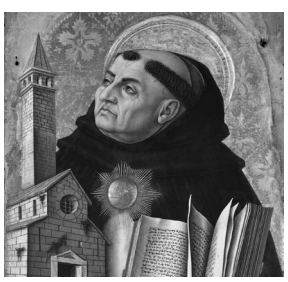
Dr Garrick Small speaking at an Australian Chesterton Conference

Following his earlier article on usury in The Defendant *(Summer 2025),* **Garrick Small,** *a property economist and author with wide academic experience, teases out the moral basis of a just price.*

He identifies the principles by which to judge, in today's economic circumstances, whether the price of a product is just and what is the meaning of a living wage. It can be seen that the application of these principles lies behind Chesterton's championship of widely distributed ownership as the means by which to counter the concentration of economic power.

In the time of St Thomas Aquinas, merchants could find themselves in the confessional for overcharging their customers. Today we have forgotten that charging more than a thing is worth can be mortally sinful.

Unlike other occupations, St Thomas noted that the merchant was constantly working within the occasions of sin where he could easily lose his soul. Today we believe there is no moral obligation involved in abusing market power because "*the market will fix it*" - and force the proper price to be charged.



St Thomas Aquinas

It does not take too much reflection to realise that our modern economy bristles with instances where the market enriches some at the expense of others, but our culture has lost the capacity to identify the boundary between healthy commerce and exploitation.

St Thomas's world was more transparent. As a result, despite his providing an insightful understanding of the morality involved, he did not see the need to outline its practice in too much detail. But he did leave us with a vital clue when he wrote that "*no man should sell what is not his*."

Despite the obvious common sense that a person steals when he takes money for what he does not own, the power of that fact is not always obvious in modern economic conditions. Understanding justice in the marketplace revolves about looking closely at what people do own when they engage in trade.

Need - and the pressure of demand

Need is the primary area where ownership is violated. If you have a need, it might cause you to buy something from me, but as the buyer your need remains yours. The price that I charge you should only cover what I own in the thing you want to buy from me.

In modern economics, your need is called "demand". However, the strength of the buyer's demand can be allowed to lever the price well beyond what the seller actually owns - and can justifiably charge.

For his part, the seller also owns his need to support his own life, along with the lives of his family who depend on him. Society sets parameters on the amount of work a person can reasonably expect to achieve in a week, a year, or even his whole life. The reward he earns from that work must be sufficient to keep him and his family alive for that period.

In Australia in the 1950s, it was considered reasonable for a man to work for 40 hours a week. This amount of toil was considered sufficient to produce enough income for the man to support himself and his family for that week. It included allowances for savings for holidays and old age, and to cover anticipated risks, such as illness. With production advances that number fell towards 36 hours, but has since started to rise.

If a man charged for his week's work sufficient to support his family for a month, then he would be charging beyond what his contribution warranted. Conversely, if he was not paid sufficient to support himself, then he would be exploited by the person he sold his labour to.

Possible violations of just commerce

In these examples, three possible violations of just commerce can be found:

(1) charging a person for their need and not merely what the seller owns in the thing sold,

(2) setting a price that exceeds what the seller needs in order to satisfy his needs to support the lives of himself and his family, and

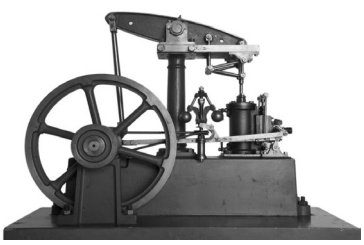
(3) setting wages so low a person cannot reasonably support himself.

A little thought reveals that (1) and (2) largely reduce to a single problem, usually caused by charging for the need of the buyer which the seller has no right to. This is the problem of the just price.

The third case involves the opposite problem. It is known as the problem of just wages. The Catholic Church has long upheld the principle of just wages, often evident in the call for a "*living wage*".

Modernity, especially as found within Protestant cultures, has been marked by a rejection of the living wage principle. Modern writers coming from those cultures have substituted "*subsistence wage levels*" for a living wage. They argue that this is what wages would naturally tend towards if left unhindered.

Subsistence is merely a survival level of income, not a reasonable standard of living. In England, wages fell from "Catholic" levels at the end of the 15th century to subsistence levels by the end of the 16th. The misery often associated with the 18th century industrial revolution had more to do with this transition than the invention of the steam engine or spinning jenny.



Steam engine



Spinning jenny

Abuse of the free market comes from a combination of imbalances of economic power and the inclination of those holding excessive power to use it to take what does not belong to them. Ultimately, they steal the standard of living of the weaker party.

The free market is necessary and healthy, but its abuse by those with economic power undoes its benefits.

Economic abuse hinges on the moral fabric of those holding the greater power. Christianity encourages the great commandment to love thy neighbour as thyself. It means encouraging people to freely turn themselves from abusing their power in any context. It was one of the casualties in the Protestant revolt against Catholic morality. It was hidden beneath the war cry of *sola fides* which Luther invoked to undermine the importance of our good works in attaining salvation.

Ordinary people are seldom faced with the occasions of sin that the merchant must work within, since it is the merchant who usually has the greater power in commercial relationships.

I do not have the economic power of BP or Mobil when I buy fuel. I only have my need to drive to work each day. My need is mine, but it means those companies can charge me for it. Conversely, I need a wage to feed my family, but I have little negotiating power if my employer has a staff of thousands with lines of unemployed who are eager to take my place, even at the expense of a lower living standard.

Karl Marx noted some of this, but his solution was not Godly. He did not advocate for moral self-restraint, but merely a war with those with the upper hand. His solution was essentially a more toxic version of the same problem, but one that carried the additional evils of making everyone lazy, antisocial and poor.

Hiding behind both approaches is a mean and suspicious opinion of the others in the marketplace, one that sees others as either enemies, or victims to be exploited. This attitude is now widespread, but it is toxic to all human relationships.

Chesterton understood this attitude and devoted his life to inspiring the alternative, ultimately derived from the example we were given from the Cross. He disliked both big business and big government because he saw both as enemies of the common man.

There are ample resources and productivity to provide comfortable circumstances for everyone in society, but only when workers apply themselves and those with economic power freely use it to avoid excessive polarisation of incomes and wealth.

Self-restraint remains the key. It is most reliably found in authentic Christianity. Christ came to show us that it is possible, which is why it does not work without Him. ■

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Layout of 'The Defendant' designed by Jenna Fulop

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Putting Climate Science to the Test

by Garry Nieuwkamp

The Friesland eleven-town long distance ice-skating race of 1963 was a shocker.

The Dutch winter that year was particularly harsh. Of the 10,000 who set out for the finishing line, 200 kilometres through the powder snow and extremely low temperatures, only 69 made it to the end. The winner was virtually snow-blind as he stumbled over the finishing line of an event since known as "De Hel van 1963" ("The Hell of '63," as highlighted in the title of a 2009 Dutch drama film).

The race takes place once a year in the province of Friesland in north Holland, weather permitting. The ice needs to be at least 15cm deep before the race can take place. Like the Melbourne Cup, it's a race that stops a nation.

After the hell of 1963, the race did not take place for another 20 years, and the last time the race occurred was in 1997. Why? The ice has not been thick enough. The climate has changed.

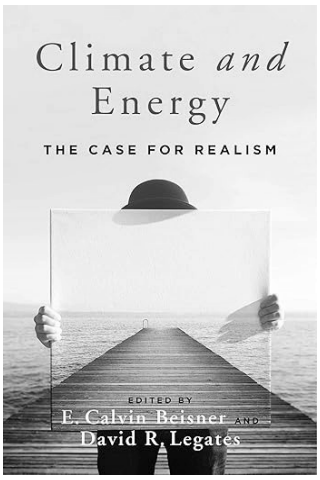


For those living in Friesland, they don't need the scientists to inform them about the change in the weather; the dream deferred of crossing that finishing line on skates that have long been in hibernation is evidence enough that something is afoot. And so, Greta Thunberg, wind farms, rare metals, art vandalism, solar panels, melting continents, coral deforestation, global greening, eco-colonialism, energy poverty - and the list goes on!

The tribunal of empirical evidence

In the 1990s, David Sackett and Gordon Guyatt, among others, founded a movement within medicine designed to harness and generate the best available evidence for the treatment of patients. The proponents of Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) published a series of articles, in the *Journal of the American Medical Association,* focussing essentially on the nature of evidence as it pertains to various aspects of the medical encounter: treatment, diagnosis, prognosis etc.

Underpinning this movement was the conviction that no matter how extensive physicians' understanding of a particular condition might be, they did not have a bird's eye view of creation – and so they needed to submit their understanding and beliefs, no matter how complete and certain they were of their stand, to the tribunal of empirical evidence. They should not simply rely on theory, anecdotal "evidence", or in the words of Sackett, "intuitions we could not explain".



In *Climate and Energy: The Case for Realism* (2024), editors E. Calvin Beisner and David R. Legates do for climate science what Sackett and others did within medicine; they question.

When Dr Anthony Fauci, who has had an otherwise stellar career prior to Covid, made the observation about his critics during an interview, that "they're really criticizing science because I represent science", he unwittingly provided the Internet with a sound bite that would help to define his career.

Medicine advances because it seeks disconfirming evidence as epistemic "holy water", which then allows hypotheses and predictions to be finessed. Criticism is at the very heart of medicine, and for that matter all science, including climate science. When Carl Sagan explained to Charlie Rose that "science is a way of thinking, a way of sceptically interrogating the universe with a fine understanding of human fallibility," he was pointing to a necessary character trait in all who would apply the scientific method to the interrogation of nature.

"If we are not able to ask sceptical questions, to interrogate those who tell us something is true, to be sceptical of those in authority," Sagan said, "then we're up for grabs for the next charlatan, political or religious, who comes ambling along."

The influence of values

And so, what to make of climate science, the goal of which is to make accurate predictions about the future? While it is true that EBM and science generally seek the truth of the matter in question, it cannot escape the influence of values. Whether to pursue one question or hypothesis, as opposed to another, requires not more facts but an evaluation. Values insinuate themselves into every decision made in science.

Within the philosophy of EBM, the values and preferences of both clinician and patient play a pivotal role. Weighing and judging requires practical wisdom, and without humility can torture facts to do the scientists' bidding. Values are inescapable in decision-making but they can also be hijacked by undue influence.

In a chapter in *Climate and Energy*, Patrick J Michaels expresses concern that climate modelling, as a way of predicting the future, is not entirely transparent. This in itself is reason enough to be sceptical of any prediction, leaving aside the whole question of the influence of global billions of dollars on what the outcome of these predictions might be.

When the models are fine-tuned to an "acceptable range", and this process of fine-tuning is not made explicit, more than just the value of scientific integrity is a stake. In another chapter in *Climate and Energy*, Vijay Jayaraj notes the connection between energy poverty and the lack of development in various parts of the world. The very success of the West is due in part to cheap energy, which has provided the ladder to success, which the West now denies to others through what some are calling carbon imperialism. And so facts about the climate and what are done with those facts can have a deleterious effect on people far removed from where those decisions are made, leaving the development of parts of the world hostage to energy poverty. Science servicing the poor?

Chesterton and eugenics – and the promotion of genetic purity

Chesterton was well acquainted with the perils of the "intellectually magnanimous" using the authority of science to alleviate the suffering of the poor. The eugenics movement aimed at the target of improving humanity by promoting the reproduction of "good stock", while at the same time prohibiting the breeding of those like Carrie Buck, one of the "three generations of imbeciles" that Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr, sitting on the American Supreme Court, allowed to be sterilised. (Another stellar career embodied through intemperate language to just the four words above.)

The facts of the relatively new science of genetics could provide the underpinning for a new utopianism; one of genetic purity. What could possibly go wrong? Chesterton like others at the time could see the dangers of "following the science" when he wrote *Eugenics and Other Evils* in 1922, well before the stench of incinerators was wafting over Europe.

When eugenics had finally run to seed by mid-century, the utopian animus nevertheless remained. Psychiatrists with 'ice-picks' and a little tap of the hammer were "following the science" in another part of the hospital; one of them even making the trek to Stockholm having received the imprimatur from the Nobel Committee.

The lobotomised poor in spirit were perfected at the very cutting edge of medicine; first "do no harm" held in abeyance because so much 'good' could be achieved. As C.S. Lewis observed:

"Of all tyrannies, a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive. It would be better to live under robber baron's cruelty than under omnipotent moral busybodies. The robber baron's cruelty may sometimes sleep, his cupidity may at some point be satiated; but those who torment us for our own good will torment us without end for they do so with the approval of their conscience."

He could almost have been talking about some of the scientific enthusiasts of today.

Science has done and will continue to do so much that is good. The fact that we carry around, on our person, a mobile phone with access to untold amounts of information seems almost miraculous and extraordinarily beneficial. Yet as we have seen, science can also underpin the technologies that can do extraordinary harm; just ask Carrie Buck.

For climate science to be a science, Beisner and Legates' book should be welcome. For the cupidity of those who want to save the world, this book might be a useful tonic.

As for the next 11-town long distance ice-skating race, I'm not unpacking those skates just yet. ■

Chesterton Centre in Sierra Leone

In the Summer 2026 issue of *The Defendant*, a special Appeal was launched to assist the agricultural and educational work of the Chesterton Centre in Sierra Leone.

Initially the Australian Chesterton Society made a $1,000 gift to the Sierra Leone Centre. The founding Director of the Centre, John Kanu, responded on the significant benefit this gift would provide for local communities:

"I shared your good news right away with members of one of our cooperatives right on the field where we are at work this morning, trying to convert degraded lands into fish ponds (see photo below). This group, in the mining-affected village of Bandafayi in the eastern province of Sierra Leone, will be the direct beneficiaries of the generosity of the Australian Chesterton Society.

On their behalf, kindly extend our deepest gratitude, as GKC would have said, to your colleagues in Australia for standing with us in promoting land justice for the poor."

Our Appeal will close at the end of July with the goal of sending the Sierra Leone Centre a further $2,000. Australian Chesterton members have since provided $500 towards this goal.

Further contributions of any amount would be most welcome, marked for the "Sierra Leone Chesterton Centre", - to the Australian Society's account:

BSB: 932-000 Account No.: 722360



The site being worked on by farming families in the village of Bandafayi to convert degraded lands into agricultural assets and fishponds that enable the community to better feed itself