in a spirit of uncontrolable mirth. His humour and wit, entrenched behind a strong pugnacity, have put to rout many of his controversalists, because Chesterton is, above everything else, a fighter, one whom even his controversial enemies have learned to respect. It is told that during a period of political excitement in England a few years ago, he carried on as many as twenty controversies in various English journals, with much success. At the present day his influence over many young and developing minds in that country is assuredly great, largely because of the originality of his style and his constant habit of using ludicrous examples with which to enforce an argument or from which to prove a truth. He gives us a reason for this proclivity on his part in a chapter on Spiritualism, taken from "All Things Considered" (1908).

"I think seriously on the whole that the more serious is the discussion, the more grotesque should be the terms. For this, as I say, there is an evident reason. For a subject is really solemn and important in so far as it applies to the whole cosmos or to some great spheres and cycles of experience at least. So far as a thing is universal, it is serious. And so far as a thing is universal it is full of comic things. If you take a small thing, it may be entirely serious; Napoleon, for instance, was a small thing, and he was serious; the same applies to microbes. If you isolate a thing you may get the pure essence of gravity. But if you take a large thing (such as the Solar System), it *must* be comic, at least in parts. The germs are serious because they kill you. But the stars are funny because they give birth to life and life gives birth to fun. If you have, let us say, a theory about man, and if you can only prove it by talking about Plato and George Washington, your theory r ay be a quite frivolous thing, but if you can prove it by talking about the butler or the postman, then it is serious because it is universal. So far from it being irreverent to use silly examples on serious questions, it is the test of one's seriousness. It is the test of a responsible religion or theory whether it can take examples from pots and pans and boots and butter-tubs. It is the test of a good philosophy whether you can defend it grotesquely; it is the test of a good religion whether you can joke about it."

However, it is primarily his philosophy with which we are concerned and the evolution of ideas leading up to his acceptance of a philosophy which satisfied a Descartes, a Bossuet and a New-

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