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The Sense-Data Delusion.

by Lars Aagaard-Mogensen.

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The only way out of these epistemological difficulties
is (I say) giving up the analytical ideal.

(Stephen E.Toulmin).

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L.Aa-M.

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The Topic.

To the question "What do you see?" one answer would be "I see the lighthouse". To the question "What do you hear?" an answer could be "I hear a car". To the question "What do you smell?" an answer could be "I smell the ripeness of the fruit". To the question of "What do you taste?" an answer might be "An excellent Beaujolais". To the question of "What do you feel?" an answer could be "That the bathwater is hot".

"Seeing", "hearing", and "smelling", "tasting", and "feeling" are activities that often are referred to under the common heading of "perceiving". The only technicality of my use of "perceiving" is the one of linguistic economy.

Accordingly all of the answers in the first paragraph might be called perceptual statements. It seems to me that all these perceptual statements could be appropriate answers to the questions, respectively, and further that when made in certain circumstances they are true, while, of course, in others they would be false. When they are made in circumstances where they are true they form part of what could be called perceptual knowledge, that is, we know something about the lighthouse that is located there and there; we know something about what happened there and there at a certain time; &c., &c..

In a way corresponding to these distinctions I shall speak of our perception as 'veridical' in the cases where our perceptual statements are true; and in cases where our perceptual statements are false, of non-veridical perception. Thus it will be natural and correct to say that the facts I perceive veridically comprise our perceptual knowledge, while on the other hand what we take to be facts but of which we have specific knowledge whether perceptual or not, contradicting such perceptual statements fall outside that class.

However, it is, if not often, at least sometimes the case that our perceptual statements are false. Throughout the history of philosophy this fact has induced philosophers to present reasonings of the following kind. Since our ordinary perceptual statements sometimes are wrong, they must go beyond what we actually perceive, beyond what really constitutes the testimony of our senses. It is also a fact that there are cases where different persons' concurrent perceptions of what we commonly suppose to be the same thing seems to contradict each other. This fact has been thought to present a ground for arguments challenging the validity of our perceptual knowledge.

Admittedly, such facts seems to form a problem. Apart from physiological questions about the way our senses function and psychological questions, for instance, about how learning, feelings, interests and expectations influence what we perceive,

there is also, founded on the above facts a philosophical question. The question that could be called the question of the philosophy of perception. Put quite generally it is: What is it we perceive?

Philosophers have dealt with this question in many different ways. It seems, however, that they all can be traced back to the traditional epistemological endeavour of justifying our empirical knowledge. By 'empirical knowledge' I mean, tautologically speaking, the knowledge we possess *via* perception in contrast to the knowledge, if any, in the obtainment of which perception is not involved. It is thus obvious that this question is of vital interest for all philosophers whether they hold or are in opposition to empiricism.

a. Once there was a tough-minded philosopher who answered this question short and clearly: we perceive nothing but our own ideas; let me call him an idealist. His answer obviously eliminates the puzzles that gave rise to the question. Thus there is no contradiction in saying that two persons perceive two different ideas concurrently, in fact he has to maintain that this has to be so. Nor is there anything inconsistent in maintaining that one person at different times perceives different ideas. In fact the idealist has good reason to assume that this is the case all the time. And with all the empirical evidence in his favor, he can even maintain that since everything happens as it does, whether we assume the existence of anything else than

our own ideas, and it is a good methodological principle not to multiply the number of entities beyond what is necessary, this is the answer we were looking for.

Now apart from the difficulties the idealist has to face in the philosophy of mind, in ontology, &c., he clearly has some quite severe difficulties in meeting the most elementary parts of our common sense views on perception. For instance, it is, I take it, ordinarily perfectly true in certain circumstances that persons perceive their own bodies. The typical idealist will of course answer that this is so because statements about our bodies are statements about nothing but bundles of ideas. But, first, this seems to imply that whatever idea I might perceive of my own body, it is true, which certainly is a peculiar implication. Next and worse, the idealist destroys quite a few of our common sense distinctions: for instance, he is unable to distinguish between my body and whatever I at a certain time perceive. That is severe indeed because here are two facts about the world which he cannot talk about separately. It might seem a little too easy, but I consider this argument decisive against idealism ¹.

b. Once there was another philosopher who answered the question pretty much the way I sketched in the first paragraph; let me call him a realist. His answer obviously eliminates the

1. Cf. my section on *Revisionism*, pp. 90-94; and pp.14-18.

puzzles, too. He maintains that of course our perceptual statements sometimes are false, in fact it would be awkward to say as does the idealist above, that the changes we are subject to in this world had no influence on our perception at all. And, of course, it is impossible for two persons to have precisely the same perception at the same time, because it would be just as awkward if circumstances, such as a person's spatial location, had no influence on his perception. In fact we know of some persons that are color-blind, for instance, who could not possibly have the same perceptions as persons with full color-vision¹.

Now it is pointed out to the realist that these answers are not without difficulties. We might ask, for example, does that mean that all perceptual statements are true, and, if not, which are? And even if the realist can account satisfactorily for such differences, the idealist would ask further what are these bodies that you from time to time speak of? Sometimes we even perceive things of that kind where there are none, what is it then

1. Many writers on this topic deal almost exclusively with vision. Although this is objectionable (cf. e.g. pp.37-38) I shall do so myself in many cases; my justification is that I shall make no claim that the conclusions reached are generalisable to perception as such. Further I shall make an effort not to use 'perceiving' as synonymous with the activity of only one sense, but in such case always specifically use 'seeing', 'hearing', &c.. I shall not deal with the difficulties in distinguishing between the senses, which is a seldom recognized question although presented already by Aristotle, (cf. Richard Sorabji: Aristotle on Demarcating the Five Senses, *Philosophical Review*, 1971; H.P. Grice: Some remarks about the senses, in *Analytical Philosophy*, First series, ed. Butler, Oxford, 1962; J.W. Roxbee Cox: Distinguishing the Senses, *Mind*, 1970).

other than an idea we are perceiving? So it is said that realism is an unsatisfactory position in some respects.

c. There is, however, a third philosopher who as the two above, represents a great tradition in philosophy and who offers an answer to the question intended to overcome the difficulties that seem to meet the others; let me call him a phenomenalist. The typical phenomenalist answers the question somewhat like this: what we perceive are special sense-objects. The phenomenalist is particularly tough-minded in that with his compromise, he tries to gain advantage over both the realist and idealist position, and at the same time to avoid their difficulties. Thus he disposes of the above puzzles by saying, like the idealist, that two persons perceive two sense-objects concurrently and, like the realist, that they obviously could not perceive the same sense-object. Likewise it is plausible that a person perceives different sense-objects at different times, namely concurrently with changes in circumstances.

Dissolutions to the puzzles along such lines clearly commit the phenomenalist to certain views about the nature of sense-objects - views that are unacceptable to both idealists and realists, such as that we do not perceive things, that what we do perceive has no spatial and temporal location, that perceptual knowledge is derivative, &c.. Phenomenalism thus carries difficulties of its own.

For a long time, at least since Descartes¹, many philosophers have believed that this third answer is the right answer to the problem of perception; what was needed, according to them, was to work out a satisfactory account of the nature of sense-objects, and many different such attempts have been made. I do not share this belief, in fact I am writing here not to praise these attempts, but to bury them. I shall do so by examining the features that sense-objects and theories including such objects necessarily must have in order to constitute an alternative answer to the realist's. My conclusion will be that no attempt of this type could be successful. Now in order to carry out this project within a reasonable space and with decisive force I do not intend to examine all the various answers that have been given, but, as I said, only the necessary parts of this type of attempt. Before proceeding with a sketch of how I find it possible to delineate the way certain forms of this type can be dismissed, two things should be noted at this stage.

One significant difference between the three types of answers² I have referred to is that on the one hand the idealist and the phe-

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1. Descartes held a causal theory, where the "affections of our mind" from both "internal and external" senses, are called "perceptions of the senses" or just "sensations", which are Haldane and Ross' translation of *sensum perceptiones* and *sensus, sive sensationes*. E.g. Principles of Philosophy, Part IV, no. CLXXXIX-CXCVII, in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, Cambridge, 1911.
 2. I have chosen to neglect a type of answer that could be called materialistic; that is, what we perceive is material objects, implying that whenever we perceive something that is not a material object we are subject to illusions. I choose to do so because I do not know of anything that could be said in its favor, nor do I know of anyone who has maintained such a view.

nomenalist considers the above puzzles some of the main reasons for their respective answers. That is, they think that these puzzles are puzzles, and their answers are intended to solve them. On the other hand, the realist does not consider them puzzles, but, more or less, pressed by the obscurity of the others' solutions, he has felt himself compelled to give an explicit answer that dissolves the puzzles.

This difference has another side, too. It is mainly these puzzles we have to refer to in order to explain why philosophers have felt compelled to correct the fundamental presuppositions concerning perception, which we all ordinarily make understood through our ways of speaking and thinking about perception. Presuppositions such as that in some cases what we perceive are things in space and time, the events they form part of, sounds they make, &c.; and that through our senses we acquire knowledge of the nature of these things. Accordingly, this difference is often contrasted by saying that while the idealist and phenomenalist views are philosophical, the realist is associated with the common-sense view which requires analysis, justification, and correction.

d. Phenomenalisms. The problem of perception has often been put in a slightly different form which reflects more closely the reasonings that give rise to it. For example Quinton offers this

formulation:

The problem of perception is to give an account of the relationship of sense-experience to material objects.

It seems obvious to me, however, that too much is already assumed in that case. First of all, of course, that such an account is needed, which means that the reasonings I sketched above as giving rise to the question implicitly are accepted as problematic. But, in the next place, also the terms of 'sense-experience' and 'material object' are accepted as the items defining the problem; as I shall argue later these assumptions are of no small importance and that there is no good reason to make them at all. At the same time I find that put in this way the phenomenalist answer seems more easily accessible.

Philosophers of this type, that is, those who maintain that we perceive sense-objects (only), obviously must take upon themselves the task of giving satisfactory account of what *we* call perception of things. And just as obvious, this account can only be of one kind: since all we perceive is of one kind - sense-objects or sense-data - regardless of whether our perception is veridical or non-veridical, then the difference between perceiving a thing, and, say, an illusion must be that in the former case there exists a thing which has one or other relation to the sense-datum we perceive directly.

When we say that a person perceives a thing, we ordinarily

presuppose that he knows that he perceives it ¹. Therefore we must claim that the relation which is said to hold between sense-datum and thing is a relation of which we have good reason to assume that the person can know or believe holds between them when he perceives a thing. Here, precisely, one of two possible phenomenalistic accounts or theories about the nature of that relation, viz. the representative theory of perception, contains a logical howler. According to this theory the relation is most often interpreted as a causal relation - less often as a relation which is stated as "appearing" between thing and datum.

But, as it has been known since Berkeley and Hume, it hardly makes sense to say that the person can know, still less have reason to believe, that any such relation holds, for any testimony of his senses are, *ex hypothesi*, limited to data. This objection appears decisive, and I need only to point out one paradoxical implication before moving on. It is implied that if perceiving a thing is direct perception of a datum which is an effect or appearance of the thing, then the possibility is allowed for that the thing may change it's nature radically, without any consequences for our perception of it, granted it continuously produces the same effects or appearances as before.

1. I should like to emphasize 'ordinarily' here, since certain cases, such as unconscious perception, failure to realize what is perceived, and the like, seem to indicate on the contrary that such knowledge is not required. It seems to me, however, that this is a group of borderlinecases, that means merely that perception does not necessarily involve full attention.

In an attempt to evade the difficulties of the representative theory some phenomenologists state a different nature of the relation, which I shall speak of as the sense-datum theory of perception. The sense datist holds the view that things or, closer to his own terminology, material objects are a collection of data actual as well as possible. To perceive a material object is to perceive a datum which is a sign of the possible attainment of other data that have a certain relation to the former. That a data is a sign thereof - that I, under certain conditions will perceive such and such other data, is something my previous experience provides the reason to believe. The sense-datum theory clearly gains its plausibility from its ability to dispose of the difficulties of the representative theory. Unfortunately its own difficulties cannot be disposed of, which is my task to show in the present paper. So to avoid unnecessary repetition I shall not list them here, but continue to prepare the stage for the battle.

"Defense of Common Sense".

In order to foreclose some of the current philosophical objections, it remains for me to answer the question of what criteria can be the base of a successful rebuttal of phenomenalist theories. As indicated in several places already, departure from our common sense views is sufficient to dismiss further theorizing. Indeed, the philosophical views I am examining arise only in contrast with our common sense views. This position has often been referred to, a bit condescendingly, as naive realism; also as just common-sense or the plain men's view¹. For philosophical purposes it is unfortunate that realism has not been dealt with systematically. The absence of such a work is, however, a fact that rests on good grounds; in spite of the fragmentary foundation I, for present purpose dare offer, it will be seen, though of indispensable external, to be of questionable internal significance. The main justification and incitement to give the following "defense of common sense" in the indicated sense is thus that a good many philosophers have failed to realize certain of their own presuppositions and so failed to realize the nature of the realist's arguments against them.

1. This was even reflected in one of the first references to realism, cf. D.Hume's First Inquiry, Sec.XII, Part I.

Having taken these precautions I shall offer a "defense of naive realism" in four steps. The question often makes itself felt *via* reasonings of the following kind: When confronted with philosophic accounts such as the sense data theory of perception, the naive realist's objections take the form of drawing attention to (or sometimes stating) our ordinary ways of speaking; for instance, *in casu*, by saying that ordinary usage does not legitimize an inference from the fact that a thing appears such and such, to the fact that there is something, which *is* such and such. His opponent may agree that we actually speak in this way, but claim that this certainly is not decisive and that, on the contrary, these parts of common sense knowledge themselves are something that need justification since his arguments prove them to be in error. Put more generally his point is that if one wants to defend common sense against philosophical theses, which are incompatible with it, it will simply not do to repeat common sense's views.

We may first note here that the opponent has misconceived naive realism. It is, viz., not, as implied in his way of argument, a theory or a thesis. It is the patent frame for all of our thinking, acting, and speaking, (and note thus also the *sine qua non* for his objections). If we then say, for example, that because a coin looks elliptical from a certain angle it does not follow that there is something, a sense-datum, which is elliptical, this is true simply because there is no good reason or argument for doubt-

ing this fact. It obviously follows that the burden of proof is on the opponent of naive realism. Or, to take another example, the statement that a thing and its properties exist independently of whether it is perceived or not. This statement evidently is beyond any doubt if there is no arguments against it. Suppose I put my pipe into its case; before I did so, I perceived it, now nobody perceives it, and if I then open the case I perceive the pipe again. While the case was closed, and consequently nobody perceived the pipe, it was still a pipe and was, of course, also yellow. This is what we mean by saying that things and their properties exist independently of whether they are perceived or not. This is, of course, a trivial fact about the pipe. To deny that this is the case is thus absurd - ordinary language is all right as it is.

That realism forms the conceptual frame inside of which we make statements and inferences concerning the world has the implication, which is fatal for arguments against it, that such counterarguments followingly becomes arguments against their own presuppositions. And as I said above that realism is true unless there are good reasons or arguments for doubting it, it therefore also follows that they are impossible. That is, if the opponent continues to believe that his arguments actually disprove the realistic view, he slips into what we may call a revisionist position; this, of course, I will have to take into account. What the rev-

isionist, as I understand him, is suggesting is that we know what ordinary language says, but as his analysis shows it is vitiated because of ambiguities and inconsistencies. The philosophical problems that gave rise to his theory is sufficient proof that ordinary language is not all right as it is.

Put otherwise, the revisionist's claim amounts to the proposition that even though realism is the conceptual frame presupposed in our thinking, it might be wrong or inappropriate; therefore we could choose another and better frame. This is true if realism was only one of several possible frameworks, one that we more or less incidentally had acquired. But is this the case? If not, then we are not free to replace it, that is, realism is not only our factual but our necessary conceptual frame.

Moore confronted, in the now classical answer to this question, general metaphysical and sceptical theses with concrete cases of common sense knowledge. His point was that there must be something fundamentally wrong in a philosophical view, which implies that our knowledge about trivial things such as that this is one hand and that that is a table, is derivative knowledge, knowledge that is based upon something we know or perceive in a more fundamental sense than this.

Another answer, also associated with Moore, is the view of language that among other things is associated with the famous

paradigm-case argument. It is true of both phenomenalist theories of perception, as touched upon, that they imply a definite consequence as to ordinary perceptual statements, for example, "I see the lighthouse" - a consequence, which the most rash of their devotees expressed by saying, that statements of that type simply are incorrect ways of speaking, since what I really see is a sense-datum, while the existence of the lighthouse and its properties is something to which I infer. Some more cautious, have confined themselves to say that this type of statement actually expresses truth, but not if they are used to state the kind of judgment, as they are used for and as, it is maintained, reflects the unwarranted judgments of common sense. The most cautious, e.g. Moore himself, have preferred to say that the grammatical form of these statements tends to mislead us when we wish to know what precisely is true, when perceptual statements of this kind are true; since what is the case is far more complicated than grammatical form reveals - a relationship, which involves a reference to a sense-datum of which the linguistic expression has no mark at all.

This view of language could be put in the following way: our ordinary ways of speaking cannot misrepresent the situations in which they commonly are used, simply because their meaning is determined and learned by ostensive definition in such situations. And since an expression cannot refer to anything else than what

we use it to mean there is no question of misrepresenting or misinterpreting the situations to which it refers - granted only that it really equates the one of which we learned to use the expression and for the purpose it was introduced.

However this view, which seems to be in Malcolm's essay "Moore and Ordinary Language" ¹ and is found also in Martin Lean's critical analysis of Broad's theory of perception ², operates on the assumption that different types of situations exist all ready, so to speak, needing only to be correlated with an expression each *via* an ostensive definition. It does not provide a real answer - an answer which is more than a mere rejection of philosophers who hold that the choice of the situations by means of which we ostensibly define expressions, may depend on theoretical presuppositions, and that by introducing an expression in a certain way we may (sometimes) bind ourselves to more than the use we intentionally give to it. But one thing it can do is to show how an attack on the paradigm-case argument goes wrong. Passmore attacks Malcolm's use of a distinction between the classes of expressions learned through descriptions and through ostensive definitions, by saying, quite convincingly it seems to me, that there is no sharp distinction there ³. But from this fact, if it

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1. *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore*, ed. P.A. Schilpp, New York, 1952.
 2. *Sense-perception and Matter*, London, 1953.
 3. *Philosophical Reasoning*, New York, 1961.

is a fact, it simply does not follow that either of these classes is erased; moreover the absence of a strict distinction does not exclude that some expressions are learned ostensively, nor that we can agree on such cases. Which case is more obvious than Moore's own "Here is one hand"; I do not know that Moore should have used the paradigm-case argument for the expression 'material thing', but he did mean to imply that if a material thing is "something to be met with in space" the above use of the argument, per implication, made a proposition such as "We do not perceive material things" of questionable use. Passmore's conclusion, which is that philosophers' arguments cannot either be sufficient reason for banishing or retaining expressions, is then insufficient for dismissing the paradigm-case argument - if that is a philosophers' argument at all. His strategy thus fails to force the philosophers' paradoxes upon the plain man by sending him through sense-datists' stories. For such an adoption really presupposes that the situations really are there and, moreover, that the plain man stays that way after the adoption of the datist's paradoxes. Ordinary language is not arbitrary in this sense; and reference, e.g. by using the paradigm-case argument, to incoherence with common usage is not, therefore, without force.

Identification.

I do not think that we have to be so easily satisfied. Hartnack has characterized realism as the assumptions that stands if the arguments against it fail ¹. One such assumption I said was that the things (and their properties) exist independently of whether they are perceived or not. Or, as he puts it, many arguments seem to show that there is no numerical identity between things and the visual pictures one is presented with when one sees, and therefore concludes that numerical identity is essential to naive realism.

The use of language requires that both the speaker and the receiver understand what is said. The receiver must understand what it is the speaker is talking about, that is, unless the possibility of such an agreement exists, there could be no language. It is thus essential that a receiver is able to identify that which is talked about. In line with what I have already said, an identification is successfully done when it cannot be doubted. Let us take a look at a case: how do I know that the cup I am talking about is identical with the cup you are talking about or take me to be talking about? Of course, first of all, I must be able to identify the cup more precisely either by pointing at it or give its relation in time and space to some or other thing

1. On seeing, *Danish Yearbook of Philosophy*, 1964.

the identity of which we agree upon, i.e. is beyond any reasonable doubt. Two questions that have to be answered in order to identify a thing successfully are thus when and where. Next of course you go through the same procedure and if your result corresponds with mine, we both know which cup is the subject of conversation.

We can even say more than that. Suppose I, for some purpose, wanted to know that the coffee cup on my desk is the *same* cup as I left there this afternoon. First I will take a good look at it from all angles, knock at it, test it chemically, perhaps, &c.. Further I shall ask my wife whether she has replaced it or noticed whether anybody else did, &c.. And when I have checked not only as above, its location in time and space, but in all the relevant respects, established what we could call the cup's causal continuity, I am at last convinced it is the same cup. The point is that I am in my good right to be so, for what is it I have performed? I have ruled out that the cup is an illusion, a cardboard, a substitute, noted characteristics such as color, shape, a scratch in a certain place, &c., in short I have no further reason to doubt the cup's identity. Further doubt would be merely trivial in the sense that I would not have accepted any cup and people could rightly claim that I had grown sceptical. Note that this set of conditions is entirely contingent, since any of this cup's characteristics might have been otherwise, and there need not be any other cup precisely the same in all respects - that would indeed be very un-

likely. These logical features of the concept of 'identity' corresponds to what has been described¹ as a cluster-concept, that is, the application of 'identical' is controlled by a whole cluster of criteria all of which can be regarded as synthetic.

Two features deserve a comment here. First, the question of the causal continuity does not present a problem of whether we are able to observe the cup continuously, but is a question as to whether the relevant respects in which it could have been interrupted is checked out; and if I, e.g., did not trust my wife's statement, it could be tested as any other statement about the past, which is a general epistemological issue not here at stake.

Secondly, it should be emphasized that in some cases the whole cluster may be missing, thus its contingency, without jeopardizing the concept of identity. For example does it make sense to ask me whether it is the same cup, if I had not left my desk during the afternoon? What serious answer is possible to my response: "Well, what do you mean! The same in what respect?" Another example could be my own identity as it makes no sense either to say that my identity changed without my noticing it. What may change my personality or body, say certain experiences, at the same time constitutes the very causal continuity that guarantees my identity.

1. H. Putnam: Brains and Behavior, in *Analytical Philosophy*, Second series, ed. Butler, Oxford, 1965.

I have gone into some detail concerning the concept of identity to show (1) what we mean by saying that a thing is numerically identical with a thing that I have seen before or another person has seen before or is talking about, since identification was a necessary presupposition for language. It is thus seen that also that part of ordinary language which concerns the space-time system and the existence of things which can be identified are necessary conditions for having a language. (2) That it is not a vacuous claim that realism is *the* conceptual frame for thinking, talking, and acting. There might be objections to this analysis of 'identity' - I cannot see any. But even if there were, the important point is that without this conceptual frame, without the possibility of identification we could not possibly understand each other - we would be, so to speak, no longer language using beings, in which case, of course, the difficulties referred to could not arise. This is the fourth and last step that might also be put: ordinary language is not only all right as it is, it has to be as it is. (3) Because, as we shall see, this has obviously special significance in connection with the sense-darist's doctrines.

To sum up, I started out granting Austin his point that mere reference to or analysis of ordinary language is not the last word in a philosophical debate. Additionally it has to be shown, viz., what kind of force such reference or analysis of common usage has. And further that since our common-sense "assumptions" - naive

realism, philosophically speaking - are necessary conditions for having a language, ordinary language not only is all right, but has to be as it is.

Thus I have "left everything as it is" - the task is to get clear about what is in ordinary language. One way of finding out is to show what is wrong in philosophical doctrines that contradict or deny common sense. That is, the puzzles, which motivated philosophers to try to correct our common views, should not after all be in ordinary language. Paradoxically enough, as we have seen, it *is* sufficient to repeat, perhaps more carefully and clearly, the common sense views. Or rather it ought to be sufficient, because, unfortunately, it is a fact that a good many philosophers even when confronted with the paradoxes or absurdities following from their conclusions, still are inclined to move away from common sense regarding the phenomena that tempted them in the first place. To remove the temptation is also needed to provide a better understanding of these phenomena, and preferably at least of all the phenomena which they maintain can be adequately understood only within their theory. That is, in my discussion the sense-data theory of perception. Only so is the defense of common sense completed.

Given the success of my arguments so far, my position is that these are no problems in the philosophy of perception. Pe-

cular as it may sound, I know in advance that whatever the sense-datist may say, there is something wrong in it - we do not need his solution. In a metaphor which was given to me, I am in a similar position to the patient who can tell his doctor: "I reject your cure, because I have no disease". When our ordinary perceptual and epistemic ways of speaking are challenged by the diagnosis of either fallacious logic or disregard of facts, certain cures are prescribed. I have given an answer to the delicate question: Why it is sufficient to repeat our common sense views when they are objected to - it is not the naive realist, but his opponents that need a cure in order to see the nature of his claims and of the realist's arguments. The cure I now shall offer is to lay out the problems that the datist finds himself confronted with; examine his attempts to solve these problems; and then indicate why he fails.

"The problem of error".

Let me start with the most conspicuous class of phenomena offered as providing unavoidable arguments against common-sense. It has, I think, happened to us all, let it be "unsaid" how often, that one of our perceptual statements has turned out to be false. I have stated something to be the case, which I succeedingly realize it was not, or somebody else points out to me that it is or was not the case. Whatever the way, I admit that I was wrong. Suppose I, in the rush hour among the crowd, on the opposite sidewalk, see one of my friends, say, Jack. When I arrive home, I at the dinner table tell my wife that I saw Jack, although I believe he did not see me, due, perhaps, to the number of people in the street at that time. She is surprised and ask me whether I am sure, to which I answer that of course I am sure, I saw him. She is not satisfied and tells me that according to her knowledge Jack has been out of town for the last three days and is supposed to be away this week also, which may, considering her general reliability, make me admit that I was wrong. However, I may be so sure that I saw Jack that I insist on having seen him, wherefore to settle the matter we call Jack and ask him where he was at the time I claim to have seen him, take witnesses, I take an optical test, &c., &c., and at last I must admit that after all I was wrong. Given the described circumstances I could not possibly

have seen Jack at that time at that place.

However, I obviously saw someone or something which I took, but took mistakenly, to be Jack. What was it I saw? Here the datist proposes that the only way this phenomenon can be accounted for adequately is by saying that what I saw was a sense-datum. Only by introducing sense-data are we able to account for the fact that even when my perceptual judgment is false I saw something anyway. But if this is so, he continues ¹, then it must be the case that whether my statement is true or false I see a sense-datum, since whichever one of my perceptual statements I pick, my reason for rejecting it is that I take some other statement(s) to be more trustworthy, *in casu*: what my wife, Jack, the optician, the witnesses, &c., &c., says. It is a fact that we reject some of our statements because we accept others; but from this it does not follow that those we accept are true. Further, the datist claims, this is a challenge to the realist: how will he explain what I saw, which has been put in the slogan that the naive realist is unable to cope with the problem of error. But is this not, *prima facie*, still better than being unable to cope with veridical perception?

Several things that are wrong are involved here. I shall

1. See, e.g., A.J.Ayer: *The Problem of Knowledge*, p.38.

deal with two of them here and leave the rest to the subsequent sections.

a. What I regard as the central issue that goes wrong in this reasoning is in Austin's words ¹ (slightly adopted) that talk of falsity only makes sense against a background of general non-falsity. We cannot be fooled all the time. It must be possible to recognize what is false by checking the odd case against more normal ones. Thus, as a first suggestion, we may ask on what basis do we accept some statements rather than others? We might get as an answer that some are trustworthy while others are not, since no statements would be specially open to distrust unless some were trustworthy. But still it does not follow that we are not mistaken in trusting those that we do trust. Then we may ask why we find some statements trustworthy while not others? We might get the answer that some are reliable while others are unreliable, since no statements would be especially ..., and so forth. Quite a few steps might be taken in such a spiral; but sooner or later it will reach the point where what is questioned again is the semantical rule of truth-telling ², the denial of which simply is

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1. *Sense and Sensibilia*, p.11. Similarly: G.Ryle: *Perception*, in *Dilemmas*, Cambridge, 1966, p.94f.
 2. This rule shall, of course, not be confounded with the moral rule of truth-telling, which could be formulated thus: it is (morally) wrong to tell a lie. One difference logically speaking, is that lying implies knowing the truth, while saying something false does not. Another is that falsity is not conditioned by the speakers intentions. Cf. further, e.g., F. Waismann: *The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy*, New York, 1968, p.294.

absurd. This rule is simply that unless something true is said, which in turn brings us back to the possibility of identification (cf. previous section), we cannot understand what is said. Violation of this rule is simply failure to say anything. A language that could not be corrected is no language at all. This is why the background of non-falsity is general.

We can now spot the fallacy in the datist's moves. At each step in the spiral his claim has been that the argument either way is not decisive, since all the statements we pick might be false. But what is the consequence? That all perceptual statements we pick are ..?.. where he each time decides in favor of falsity, thus adhering to the distinction he just denied we can apply. But how can he give us any reason for believing his doubt is relevant? An ideal appears vaguely (which I shall deal with later) that we shall prove our claim that some particular statement is true. But how, then, can he even formulate his objection?

Here precisely the datist begs the question. He set off by the claim that we know that we sometimes make false perceptual statements. Let us grant him that it is sense-data we are seeing when non-veridical perception occurs. Then he says that there is a difference between what we see and what is there to be seen. This in turn implies that we, at least, sometimes see what there is and that we know that. If he gives up this claim he is back in, and liable to the errors of, the representative theory which

it was his declared aim to restore. Otherwise even the notion of 'false' perceptual statement loses application - *contra* his own hypothesis. He has to keep the rule of truth-telling in order to make himself understood, and to get his objection off the ground he has to establish one false statement, which leads to the other point. The datist actually did check against the non-false case, his general objection is an objection against his own presuppositions.

How did we establish that my perceptual statement, that I saw Jack, is false? Among other things, by asking people who were on the opposite sidewalk as witnesses. Leaving hallucinations, &c., for later, what these witnesses establish is that the person I saw was not Jack but someone else, or else the datist loses even his false statement. What is most important here is to note that it is simply a *non-sequitur* to argue: that because I was wrong, it must have been a sense-datum that I saw. It was not Jack or a sense-datum I saw it was some other person. When the datist thus substitutes sense-data for a person in order to account for perceptual errors he involves himself in paradoxes, such as establishing the falsity of statements about unidentifiabes, realizing perceptual mistakes without checking, and the like. Both bottles and flies are created.

b. The datist might, however, say here that it is not because we can establish the facts it is true that Jack was absent and

that some other person was what I saw, that I was wrong. But because we can imagine what it would be like if I was right; consequently it does not follow that we actually have a false perceptual statement, and his point that of course there are true statements we just do not know which they are, is saved and the introduction of sense-data legitimized. This is beside the point, indeed, since it appears to me that to argue this way he slips into a hypothetically edition, so to speak, of the whole issue. And saying something hypothetically, i.e. I might have been wrong, if I conceivably might have been right, which would be like so and so, &c., is just a - perhaps a polite - way of saying that it did not happen altogether. Thus I was not wrong, I did not see Jack, nor someone else, I did not perceive anything, I was not there - and what do I know. The question is not at present what we might perceive, but what is it we do perceive?

What has been said in this section obviously involved the argument of the polar concepts, which also has been attacked by Passmore¹. His conclusion that

there is no general argument from a predicate's having no opposite to its being 'senseless', or even useless

is certainly agreeable. Thus I should, perhaps, shortly make it clear why the above use is one that works. There are predicates the use of which are only intelligible if there is something to which the predicate does not apply, and, fortunately enough,

1. *op.cit.*, pp.100-113.

Passmore provides a few examples both of predicates of which this is true and of which it is false, such as 'copy', 'counterfeit', 'imitation', and 'simple', 'describable', 'natural', respectively. An attempt to outline a plausible general criterion goes far beyond the present discussion and, maybe, my capability. My contention has been that 'false' belongs to the former of these kinds in that it is a necessary category, that is, one without which language is impossible, - not the one, that is, as a general logical principle about the nature of predicates.

One of Passmore's reasons for denying the validity of the application of this argument in general is that for certain purposes it is quite legitimate to operate with universal predicates¹. For instance, in the context of a given philosophical controversy, he claims, it makes perfectly good sense to say that "All statements are vague". So, for that special purpose one may disregard common usage. Moreover, given such circumstances, it is no objection to employ or appeal to the (supposedly) common sense principle of excluded opposites. Let it be granted that this is one of the relevant criteria - I am not sure what a purpose of pure philosophic controversy serves. But even such an excuse is not available to the datist, since (i) his philosophical statements have the purpose of correction of common sense (we shall later see him withdraw into the sphere of pure philosophic controversy), and (ii)

1. However Urmson has a point indeed: "... there is always some universal, some principle of classification, to be found under which they both fall. This is absurd." in *Recognition, P.A.S., vol. LVI.*

such purpose cannot, if any at all, justify neglecting the conditions for saying something altogether.

We may conclude that the phenomena of perceptual error provides no reason for introducing sense-data into the analysis of perception. In fact, precision of that sort only provides embottled flies.

Illusions, &c..

However, perceptual error is not the only class of phenomena that the datist claims is a chief obstacle to the realist. The second class where there is no perfect coincidence between appearance and reality, the latter even in the sense so far dealt with, is illusion. Obviously that description of the cases in question needs a definite context, since, *prima facie*, it is not at all clear that any appearances are not part of reality, and, once more, we meet the assumption that the realist position is more or less identified with the materialist's above, in that the datist points out that we are not always perceiving 'material objects'.

My justification for treating these phenomena separately and not as a subclass of perceptual error is, as we shall see in more detail, that they comprise categories of their own, categories that are easily distinguishable and to a great extent recog-

nized and reflected in common usage. Only under the assumption of the materialistic position as the datist invites us to oppose, is it true that perceptual error includes illusions, mirages, after-images, &c.. Although a very heterogeneous class, none of the latter phenomena are, as the former, to be classified as misidentifications or misdescriptions. In fact such a claim only makes sense in the context of the materialistic assumption. Describing or referring to something as a mirage, e.g., is not an erroneous classification of that something as a material object, but a proper classification without which our language would be incomplete for talking about the factual world.

I should, perhaps, say preliminarily (1) that I do not pretend to offer an exhaustive "geography" of the perceptual concepts pertaining to these phenomena, but (only) as much as suffices to show the adequateness of the realist, compared to the datist position. (2) That, with exception of perception in dreams, it seems obviously an exaggeration when philosophers have referred to these phenomena as a massive part of our perceptual experiences¹.

The phenomena usually cited in connection with the so-called argument from illusion could be exemplified as follows. (1) Suppose I am in a plane flying above a railroad track; at any given time I will see the two tracks as running together at a point at some distance, while, when the plane reaches that point, I see

1. In the philosophic context this observation was made by Austin, cf. *op.cit.*, p.12f.

that they still run parallel to each other. (2) If I press my eye with a finger, while looking at a candle, I can see two candles; when the pressure is relieved I see that there is only one candle. (3) While I look at the cinerama I will see, e.g., a thousand slaves build a huge pyramid of awful heavy stones; but when the light is turned on again, I realize that there are neither a thousand people nor any stones on the screen. (4) Mr. Elwood P. Dowd's sister from time to time saw the pooker 'Harvey', while the rest of the town's inhabitants did not see any 9 foot tall rabbit. Besides these cases there are a series of others, such as after images, mirages, dreams, &c., &c..

Now the datist says that what were seen in these cases, i.e. converging tracks, the double candle, pyramids and slavemasses, and Harvey, are obviously not material objects. Yet it is just as obvious that some things were seen; and these somethings he calls 'seeming objects' or sense-data, as they are very like real objects when perceived. In so far that the perception of material objects and of seeming objects are alike, the datist claims, their analysis shall follow the same pattern; and are we bound to say that we see seeming objects - sense-data - in some cases, this holds in all.

1. Ryle has argued against the sense-data theorist, that to see is always to have seen¹, from which it follows that seeing

1. *op.cit.*, p.102 ff.

does not and cannot refer to the experience of a seeming object, in fact that no such experience exists; thus there is no need for 'sense-data' either in veridical or in non-veridical perception.

However the datist insists that there are such experiences. And he is right, I actually saw the converging tracks, the double candle, &c., and these are, moreover, repeatable phenomena. This objection fails because it makes perfectly good sense for a person in, say, an optical test to answer: Yes!, to the question: Do you see now?, which, of course, is not to be taken as a question of whether the test-person has the ability of seeing - blind people do not attend optical tests. So the person is using the present tense of the perceptual verb to see without any implied transformation of it to the past tense.

Furthermore, such a transformation (taken as a logical implication) would involve a contradiction: if I at time t_1 say "I see the rainbow" and this means strictly speaking "I have seen the rainbow", then "I see the rainbow (now)" must be true at t_0 , which *ex hypothesi* implies that I have already seen the rainbow at t_{-1} , and so forth; i.e. that for any t before t_0 it is both true and false that I have seen the rainbow.

2. An objection more to the point is, however, obviously that when I see, let us say, a horse in my dream, I am seeing a horse and not "a seeming horse" or something that "looks as a horse"; or, for instance, in the traditional half immersed stick case, I

am not just "thinking or seeming to see" a bent stick - I see it. In fact, that I do see these things in these cases is just the *sine qua non* for the existence of phenomena of deception, illusion, hallucination, &c..

3. This does not mean, of course, that all such cases are alike. When the datist is tempted to point out in these cases that what I saw were not material objects - in which he is right, indeed - it is suggested that the realist thought so, which, were it true, could be a reason for using the predicate 'naive' about him. Consequently, it is claimed that the realist is in error, because in these perceptual situations no material objects are perceived at all. But as Austin points out ¹, actually even when we are having an illusion, hallucination, &c., it does not follow that we are also deluded. I know perfectly well that the tracks do not converge, that there is only one candle, that no slaves or stones are in the theater, and so forth. Admittedly, I would be a bit naive if I actually tried to meet these things, I would suffer from 'grossly disordered beliefs'; or rather my conceptual frame would be incomplete.

Actually, quite exceptional circumstances are required even in cases of illusions, &c., to be deluded; I know, viz., perfectly well that I went into the theater, &c.; a drunkard need not be totally ignorant about his D.T.'s, neither could anybody ignore

1. *Sense and Sensibilia*, p.22 ff.

that the stick is immersed, even Elwood P. Dowd himself knew that some people failed to notice Harvey. But admittedly, delusions do occur, just as an illusionist, if his trick is well done, can make us see a handkerchief change color continuously and thus puzzle us as to which color it really has - if you try hard enough, it is possible to deceive even the best observer.

It should be noted also that delusions form a category of their own, which need not involve any perception at all. If I have a delusion of grandeur, say, and think firmly that I am Napoleon the Emperor, it does not seem plausible that this involved that I perceive the world otherwise than most other people do. Delusion thus involves more than merely being deceived by one's senses as to the existence of material objects.

4. But, the datist wants to say, rare or not, delusions do occur and that fact proves his point. That is, as I said above, we actually do see things in illusions, dreams, &c, and we are deluded because the handkerchief changes color, my dream horse actually ran wild, &c., I cannot tell the difference between the experiences I have of reality and of illusions, &c.. They are *qualitatively* identical. During my hallucination moreover, I may not be able to tell whether it is a hallucination or a "live" event, it is possible that I am so deluded that I believe that these events do happen. This is what we mean by "a real hallucination". To the datist this provides yet another motive for adop-

ting the sense-data analysis, since when I can see the things and events which are not there and firmly believe they are, then what I see in the two cases must be identical.

This phenomenon may provide a motive for the datist, but actually the situation is no different than that as when I am here, I cannot tell what is going on in the next room. From the fact, or the claim, that I cannot tell (in certain circumstances), it does *not* follow that I cannot tell at all. To say, therefore, that since the experiences sometimes are identical irrespective of the presence of real things, what we see *is* the same in all cases, i.e. sense-data, is simply a *non-sequitur*. To provide any reasonable motive this inference need one further premiss, viz., that we cannot find out, one way or the other. For instance, Descartes thought that we could not find out - we might be deceived by an evil demon all the time. But nobody has ever reported a waking up from our waken life analogous to go to the next room to see or to get over the last attack of hallucinations, so we have no reason whatsoever to think that it should be the case. Giving credits to that premiss without any reason is just as absurd as accrediting the logical doubt to the possibility of human beings flying on their own, and leaves the datist with the *non-sequitur*.

5. Even the realist will admit that the phenomenal uses of expressions like 'seem', 'appear', and 'look' are fundamental in certain contexts; but such statements are still about part of the

world and not about myself. For example we use statements such as "the coin looks elliptical from a certain angle", while "it looks round from another angle". But why do we introduce the term 'look' here?

One use is in "The man down in the street looks like Jones" where I am indicating that I am not sure whether it is Jones or not. When I in normal circumstances or even in testing circumstances use such an expression, I am indicating that I have reason(s) to believe that I am being cheated, or that it is not a real person, or the like. If I have no such reason(s) I would say (correctly) "It *is* Jones down in the street".

Another use is illustrated in one of Austin's examples by saying "Gasoline looks like water"; surely, I say something about the world, not about me. Nor is this merely a guarding-expression, since knowledge of the external world is implied, such as how water looks, &c.. This expression might be used as a warning: be careful what you drink, i.e. even though it looks like water, it could turn out to be gasoline, because it is not easy to tell the difference.

Why do I, then, want to say that "the coin looks elliptical from a certain angle"? Obviously I am referring to the fact that I already know that I am in a special position or under special circumstances. Certainly I am not deluded - then I would have said:

notice, the coin is elliptical. The expression does not have to be a guarding or warning expression, as I am not only indicating that I believe so and so; I have to be quite sure of the special circumstances to use it in this way.

Again, of course, in order to have any significance, to make any sense, these special circumstances will have to be contrasted with normal circumstances. My suggestion is therefore, that these 'appearance-statements' simply are used to contrast the way things look under special circumstances with the way things *are*, that is, how we describe them correctly under normal circumstances. This latter notion is, of course, not the same from context to context, but in general we know quite well, say, how much light we need to get a good look of something, the circumstances of correct perception, and we know also that when we single out special circumstances we get special effects.

Such special conditions are actually not very context dependent, they are pretty consistent in a good many cases. For instance, the professional conductor of visual effects in a film-team has a very detailed concept of appropriate lightning, the ophthalmologist has a clear concept of normal vision, and even the plain man, attending a sports game or hunting has a very good notion of his favorite conditions for observation.

6. Pretty much the same considerations are true of the other

expressions the datist uses, such as 'appears' and 'seems'; in some cases they reflect or are associated with other areas than the barely perceptual aspect of situations; for instance 'The man looks/appears/seems guilty' in which case each has special uses¹. Also the datist's use of 'seeming' in expressions like 'seeming to see' and 'seeming object' neglects several distinctions of ordinary usage. Thus 'seem to see' could be used in cases where the speaker believes he possesses evidence against what he sees, (for instance, if it were my wife who saw Jack); 'see a seeming ..' when I see something which likens a '..' to which I am unable to tell the precise difference (say, a dummy), or in cases where I see something of which I do not know the proper description/name of or miss the criterion of identification for (flying sourcer/ plane), to mention a few inexhausted instances of the variety of uses these expressions have.

7. It could be noted also that 'delusion' has no applicability to, for example, dreams and mirror-images. This is so simply because the ontological status of our statements of these phenomena is already given when I tell you that it was in a dream, say, that the horse ran wild. If I start my statement with 'I dreamt that ...' the existence or reality of what follows is already decided. Such statements do not form part of my history, but of my 'dream-history'. The same can be said, *mutatis mutandis*,

1. See *Sense and Sensibilia*, also for more examples, pp.33-43.

of hallucinations, illusions, &c.. (By the way, this is nothing peculiar to our perceptual language, an analogous set of features belong to statements that start with expressions like 'I know ...', 'I think ...', and 'I made up ...').

Are dream objects, then, material objects or sense-data?

They are dream objects, &c., and there is nothing more to be said on that matter. The datist will of course, once more, refer us to the qualitative similarity between real and dream objects, &c.. But, having done away with Descartes' demon above, note that even if I am not able to tell during a dream whether I am dreaming or not, it does not follow from that, that when I am not dreaming I cannot tell that I am not dreaming - another *non-sequitur*. How do I then tell that I am not dreaming just now? Well, one way, Austin remarks, is that what I am doing now is connected with a whole lot of antecedent behavior on my part and on many other persons', and it leads to a lot of consequent behavior as well. There is no room for reasonable doubt.

To sum up a bit: They may be rare, but we do have illusions, &c.; it is also true that the "content" of the experience during delusions, may not differ qualitatively from the "content" of an ordinary perception. But it does not follow that we are not able to tell when we are subject to delusions, &c.. Telling so consists in a number of things, such as that we know the conditions and circumstances, and when they do not obtain, there is no rea-

sonable ground for holding that we are having illusions, &c..

Not only are the datist's analyses of these groups of phenomena in error; but also the epistemological reasons he offers for the introduction of 'sense-data' are misconstrued, the discussion of which I shall now turn to.

Existence of Things.

Now it has been shown that, although perceptual errors, illusions, &c., admittedly occur, such phenomena are no obstacle to the realistic view, the soft spots the datist polemicly attributes the realist's epistemology can equally well be shown to stem from misconception of the considerations he has been compelled by. Several interrelated mistakes are committed; in this connection I shall treat them one by one. For a start, however, let us get clear what the type of consideration is.

Everyone agrees, I take it, that an outstanding instance of human knowledge is a correct mathematical conclusion. This is trivial to point out, but it plays a significant role indeed in this connection. Plainly and shortly put, what is at the root of the datist's epistemological worries is that we may perceive something, say so, and then find out that it was false. For example when I said that I saw Jack, told it to my wife, and found out 'I saw Jack' is false. More technically and generally put it means that the occurrence of the experience which gave rise to my perceptual judgment is logically consistent with my judgments' being false. This has far reaching implications because it must be the case even in the very best perceptual circumstances, such as when we, normal or better than normal perceivers, look at this piece of

paper in daylight in the distance of optimal vision, it is nevertheless not logically deducible from our experience of this paper that there really is a piece of paper there. Ayer has put it very sharply this way: the statement that the paper exists

does not follow logically from any statement, or indeed from any finite number of statements, which are limited to describing the content of the observer's experience.¹

Hence this content must be an entity of a different kind from the paper for which he finds 'sense-datum' suits. Since this trait characterizes all our perceptual statements, which also is said to be our, or at least to be the basis of our, empirical knowledge, this is a reason for classifying it as uncertain. This is a point of logic obviously, as indicated alone by the phraseology. That is, there is knowledge which is entailed by the evidence, and there is knowledge not entailed by the evidence. The former type is certified by deductive means, whereas a logical gulf separates evidence and knowledge of the latter; this gulf cannot be bridged and it is merely, according to the strength of the evidence, more or less certain. Unfortunately, perceptual knowledge fell in the latter category. But this account, he maintains, is the only one consistent with a satisfactory analysis of perception.

It is not quite obvious whom the datist is arguing against

1. Has Austin Refuted the Sense-Datum Theory?, *Synthese*, 1967, p.119. His clause of the *finite* number seems to imply that the entailment could be gained by an infinite number, that is *eo ipso*, (under any reasonable interpretation of 'infinity'), logical entailment cannot be gained, - Ayer holds both that entailment could not be acquired and could be acquired (in this context).

here, the realist or the idealist. Presumably he has taken the liberty of identifying a realist with the position I above called materialistic. In any event, it is fairly obvious that the direct opposite view would be of the type that when we see something, we acquire certain knowledge about material objects. This is indeed very far from the realist position that I have sketched. But there is not much value in accounting for how much damage a view, were it true, might do to common sense. Of more interest is it to see an elaboration of the points where and why it is wrong. Let me try to single the central ones out.

Inferred Things.

The datist's analysis of perceptual statements was that, logically speaking, statements about the existence and presence of the paper are not deducible from statements about our perception. The certainty of perceptual judgments is not based on logical entailment, hence our statement about the piece of paper goes beyond the evidence. The existence of the paper, the alleged material object, is inconclusively inferred "knowledge".

To see a little more of the body of this doctrine, let us remember that the datist, in his attempt to avoid the fatal objections to the representative theory, gave the answer that what we perceive are collections of actual and possible sense-data, which are things or material objects. But how can the inference then be inconclusi-

ve ? We could in the first place object that the answer just referred to is circular, because the datist cannot specify which data constitute a certain material object without referring to the object, i.e. without saying that they are data of or about this and that thing. A datist might, however, reply that this merely is a verbal difficulty, which can be settled by constructing a pure sense-datum language. Will such an answer do?

Put in what Carnap has called the "material mode", as Saunders and Henze suggest ¹, this answer is easily seen to be untenable. The problem runs thus: Are the data of experience private in the sense that they are conceptually independent of anything that someone other than their "owner" might experience? Certainly an affirmative answer won't work, unless the point of the arguments in the second section above, some of which are based on Strawson's *Individuals* ², is entirely wrong. I said that the identification of a thing is conditioned of the concepts of 'time', 'space', and 'causal continuity'. These conditions are clearly not satisfied, if we only refer to sense-data, since it is impossible to exclude that the data we presently perceive belong to another collection of data (a thing) which is qualitatively but not numerically identical with those we previously perceived.

It may appear that the objection could be avoided by referring

1. *The Private-Language Problem*, New York, 1967; p.11.

2. London, 1964; Part I.

to data as data of or about such and such a thing - but then the circularity stays. It appears also possible, of course, that it could be avoided by denying the possibility of identifying things; that is to maintain that indistinguishable entities are identical. But in that case the task of explaining what we call perception of material objects is obviously abandoned. It seems that only two other ways of avoiding this objection exist. One is to maintain a methodological principle of causation, that is, not that the perception of material objects requires a causal relation between data and objects, which would bring us back to a representative theory, but that perception is of data belonging to collections of data and, further, that the features and behavior of these collections are explainable on the assumption of some source "generating" them. It seems, however, questionable in what sense this theory meets the objection, since how could such *supposed* sources guarantee the identity of the collections? In any event, this way yields no epistemic perception of material objects, because hypothetical sources cannot possibly influence the perception of collections of data - it is, analogous with what I said earlier, just a polite way of saying that they might as well not be there. In fact, this theory is very like the idealism of Berkeley's, added is only an assumption of method.

The last course open, and the one the datist takes, is to go the other way round and say that we perceive sense-data and, on that

basis, infer the existence of material objects. Only in this way can he maintain both that material objects are collections of data and that the inference is inconclusive. Here the facts of perceptual error seems to play the epistemological role the datist puts them to, which at first glance was a bit surprising. Does perceptual error really, then, exclude a deductive, an entailment relationship? If so, which relation then? The datist answers an inductive. But then, is this relation one between evidence and conclusion at all? There are several ways the notion of 'inference' may enter the analysis of perception.

Put more generally the question is: Does "X perceives p " entail ' p '? The outline of the realistic answer I shall argue in detail below, runs as follows. Both yes and no, sometimes ' p ' is entailed, sometimes it is not - in any event a general answer can only be reached by disregarding the nature of perceptual judgment. Since, as we saw, for instance, that although the converging of the tracks was not entailed by my seeing them, it was nevertheless perceived veridically; and, as we shall see, that if it is not entailed by my drinking water in the middle of the desert, that there is an oasis, deduction is totally irrelevant.

Whole Things.

The most expedient and most widely held, I take it, way to warrant an element of inference in perception is the fact that we

only perceive one "aspect" of things. What we see, feel, hear or smell in a perceptual situation is always from a certain point of view, that is, the perceiver is in a certain spatio-temporal relation to the perceptual object. When I did not list taste, this is because this sense is a little tricky in this connection; it is, of course, true that a certain spatio-temporal relation holds between a perceiver and the thing he tastes, but it is unclear to me what sense it makes to say that I only taste 'one aspect' of what I e.g. eat, or what I taste is conditioned by my position. Perhaps this obscurity is due to the fact that we (usually) "surround" the things we taste - it may be said that, for instance, the food I eat however meticulously I masticate, always have an 'inside' or a 'kernel behind the surface' which I do not taste; or when I am drinking, some of the fluid passes down without stimulating the relevant organs. As a matter of fact it is also true that I cannot see what is behind an opaque wall. However, I think it also is a common experience that certain gasses can be tasted, and I do not see that it makes sense to talk of a (definite) surface of a gas in general. A similar difficulty pertains to objects we feel; some objects are of a size that we can "surround", some are not, e.g. rubble and paving stones, respectively. (What would be a criterion for 'surrounding'? No air between the fingers or between the object and our skin? What is the use of 'no air' here?). Analogous to the taste above, what shall we say about feeling a liquid running through one's fingers or between one's toes? Further,

how do we see surfaces of gases, e.g. atmospheric air - let alone touch it - or transparent liquids and materials¹? There are a lot other examples.

Noting these provisos, we may look at how the perceiver's position is thought to necessitate an inferential element in perception. When I, for example, look at a car and pass the judgment that "this is a car" it is said, that strictly speaking I do not perceive the whole car but merely one side of it. As I did not say "this is one side of a car" this means that I must have inferred from what I saw, i.e. one side of a car, to pass the judgment "this is a car"; which implies that also what I do not see of this thing is a car. Or when I am touching the car and then pass my judgment, it is implied that also what I do not touch is a car, e.g. the inside of the fender, &c..

Sometimes² this implication is expressed in terms of possible or even expected other perceptions such as that if I walk around the car or take it apart what I would perceive is already implied by my initial judgment. However, this seems to be the less significant interpretation, since a conjunction of perceptions from different positions will eliminate the uncertainty of the inference. It is

1. Moore felt this difficulty, but did not seem to realize that it only is one in a series of borderline cases. See his "Visual Sense-data" (1957), in *Perceiving, Sensing, and Knowing*, ed. Swartz, New York, 1965.

2. E.g. M. Merleau-Ponty: *The Primacy of Perception*, in *The Primacy of Perception*, Northwestern U.P., 1964.

thus not at all true that all perceptual statements are inferred.

More significant is the interpretation of the implication according to which a conjunction is vitiated with the same excluding clause as each of its members above. On this interpretation any perceptual statement is inferred. This might seem to be a perfectly legitimate consequence drawn from the trivial fact that we cannot see both sides of a thing; for example, we have to change position to see the other side of this sheet of paper. But the above cautions appear highly controversial, and that we happen to be unable to see both sides of a coin perpendicularly at the same time, touch both sides of a house, &c., is by no means sufficient warranty for saying that we do not perceive the things at all. It only follows that we do not perceive both sides of a coin simultaneously, &c.. The point has also been put in the way that our perceptual statements go beyond our evidence. Now seeing one side of a coin is simply not having evidence for seeing a coin - it is seeing a coin. Touching one side of a house is neither part of an inference to "This is a house" although we might say that a house we could not touch validates the inference that it is not a house. Perceiving things is, simply, not collecting evidence.

Assuming, however, for the sake of the argument, that it is right that we do infer our perceptual knowledge, it, once more, follows that we have to allow for the possibility that, say, there might be single sides of cars without, note, a back, other, &c.,

side. Or that something might be the one side of a car while the other is subject to instant changes. This is certainly peculiar. Such account, fails to explain what we understand by as well whole as aspects of things.

The most fatal failure of the inferential account is it's negligence of the fact that in a huge amount of cases of perceptual claims no inference is present at all. If an inference is a series of thoughts, arranged in certain ways, which has as a result a belief, thus held on the basis of the other thoughts in the series, then, obviously, no such inference forms part of ordinary perception - actually I cannot think of any natural situation in which this happens. On what I called the less significant interpretation above, it may happen, if I am in doubt as Descartes was in his Second Meditation, that I sum up for myself that I see a hat, a coat, certain characteristic movements, &c., &c., before I pass the statement that it is a person I am seeing in the street. But note, that even in such case, it is required that I have a specific reason to be so reluctant, for example as Descartes I suspect the person of being an automaton ¹.

This is, however, not at all the contention here. What is claimed is that whatever I see or say I see, I at the same time, am assuming that it has a side which I do not see but which I maintain per implication of my statement that I inferred is there. Any per-

1. Cf. L. Wittgenstein: *Philosophical Investigations*, #346.

ceptual claim I may make, carries this implication, that when I, let us say, see the hat worn by a person or an automaton, what I actually see is something black, of this and that shape, &c., but never a hat. Seeing this hat involves this *and* the inference that granted these things, they have another side, an inside, &c.. This is not true, not because, as has been pointed out¹, we can imagine a world in which legitimate perceptual claims were made in a flash and always justified *ex post facto* without any previous series of thoughts at all, which at best might prove that an inference is not a necessary element of perception but leaves the possibility that, although a contingent fact, *our* perception actually necessarily involves an inference of the kind referred to, but because it simply disregards too many facts.

Confronted with this counterevidence of common sense, defenders of the perceptual inference view, often resort to speaking of "unconscious inferences" and thereby refer to an assumption such as that we actually make inferences, but due to their high frequency, they are carried through habitually or automatically. If this were true, they should be detectable by careful introspection at least in some cases. Note here that retrospection will not do, since this process would be indistinguishable from the account at issue.

Now the stronger claim is made that the inferences are made not

1. L.S. Carrier: Immediate and Mediate Perception, *Journal of Philosophy*, 1969.

only habitually, automatically, or unconsciously, but *subconsciously*, that is, they are non-detectables or non-observables in principle. Carrier (*op.cit.*) suggests that a notion like "subconscious inferences" only serves merely to keep a theory consistent, since it has no good independent justification. The only instances of apparently similar type are instances of what we remember; it might be said, rightly I believe, that for example a certain knowledge that is not at present at use, is there all the time. The relevant difference¹ is obviously that if such knowledge although occasions for it's use occur, is never used, there is no reason to hold the assumption of the person's possession of that knowledge.

The conclusion is that when there is no reason to suppose an inferential element in perception, perceptual statements need not exceed any evidence and there is no reason, as yet, for the introduction of sense-data to characterize this alleged evidence. To say that it follows from the fact that we do not perceive the entire thing, that we do not perceive the thing, but something that might be called sense-data, is to maintain a *non-sequitur*. From the fact it follows, tautologically speaking, that we perceive parts of things or perceive them in part, which cannot perplex anybody, since it would be logical impossible to, e.g. see a thing from all perspectives simultaneously.

1. Obviously it is also true of most of our knowledge that we do know or others can tell us, when and where we learned it, while nobody seems to have learned or needed to learn the alleged inferences of perception. I find it fairly safe, too, to exclude that these perceptual inferences as innate principles.

Bits of Things.

Nearly the same reasoning applied from another angle might yield warranty for an element of inference in perception. Thus it is claimed that my perceptual statement, e.g., "I saw the cat" goes beyond the evidence if I actually only saw its hind end. I just said that of course I may see the cat without inspecting it all over; now the question to be examined is that although it is true that I only saw a (small) part of a thing, is it then true that I cannot say that I saw the thing without admitting or implying any exceeding of my evidence?

If I should be questioned I might, of course, retire to the position that after all I did not see all of the cat but merely its hind end; but then add: how could I see its hind end without seeing it? But do I have to retire? By saying that I saw the cat this is no claim to see all of it. In fact to say that, for example, I see part of your arm, but I do not see your arm, is certainly peculiar; likewise to say that I only caught a glimpse of the chairman as he ran past, but I did not see the chairman, is simply absurd; that is, it makes perfectly good sense to say that I see part of your arm or a flash of the chairman, though not your whole arm or not a thorough look at the chairman, and saying so does not entail that I do not see the arm or the chairman. I am "only" saying that I "only" see just so much of it or him that it constitutes one of the parts of the arm or him.

Ordinarily, when I say that I see the whole of a thing, I say that I can see as much as can be seen from this perspective, which means that what I am looking at, is not obstructed, either by another object or from an especially peculiar angle in relation, or distorted by the distance, to it. For example when I see a wall when I am standing perpendicular to it, I might correctly say that I see the whole wall; but when I see it from a strange angle I might say that I did not see the whole wall. Of course it is not always true that seeing a part of a thing is seeing the thing. For instance in a different context, say, visiting an electronic plant, I can see the parts of a radio without seeing a radio. Or, a third use is exemplified in the question "Did you see all of it?" directed to me when leaving the hall of fame; I might answer "No, I missed the upper gallery" or simply "Yes" thereby indicating that I spent the day reading all the names in the hall. But these are not at issue here. What is at issue applies equally well to the part of the radio or of the hall I actually saw. Am I exaggerating or otherwise violating any facts, when I count how many cartridges there are in a box by seeing their upper ends? - Certainly not.

Thus, when I say I see the whole thing, I mean that my vision is not obstructed by the circumstances such as another object, bad lighting conditions, &c., &c., - I am denying that my vision is obstructed.

Surely it is a strange use of 'obstruction' to say that my

vision is obstructed all the time because of the fact that I am always only in one place at one time. For example, that my vision (of the other side of) a door is being obstructed by my being on this side of the door. No less strange is it to say that seeing a part of a thing, because some of it is hidden behind another thing and thus obstruct my vision, is not to see the thing at all. For example, that I do not see the door when you are on your way out.

Let me say, paying the datist whatever is his, that I from some or other bizarre reason would submit to these strange theses. It still does not follow, first, that I could not see the other side of the door simply by changing my position; and similarly that I could not see the whole door, as referred to, when you were gone. Nor does it follow, next, that I could not see both sides of the door even simultaneously - I might place myself in the appropriate spatial position to do so; and similarly, that I could not see both the whole door and you by so changing my position. There is nothing compellingly important about the fact that I at a particular time am able only to see one side or part of a thing.

The major point against the datist is, finally, that it does not follow either from the fact that I am only able to be in one place at a time and thus am only able to see one or two or three sides of a thing at one time, that I am seeing a sense-datum. When I see one side of a door or the hind end of a cat, I see one

side of a door or the hind end of a cat, not a sense-datum of one side of a door or a sense-datum of the hind end of a cat. This is so, of course, due to the quite general point that ends of cats and sides or parts of doors are not just that, but parts of cats and doors; and although cats are made of skin, flesh, and bones, and doors, let us say, of pieces of wood and glass, none of them or their parts are of sense-data.

The Unspecified World.

Having seen how the realist handles all these phenomena with ease, we are in a position to wrestle the conclusion the datist repeatedly draws from the classes of facts I have referred to. Generally put his reasoning is: The naive realist does not think that his belief in the existence of material objects needs justification. It contributes to his naivete that he plainly believes in the existence of material things around him, such as houses, pencils, flowers, &c.. He knows, of course, that people sometimes are deceived by their senses, and he may have had such experiences himself, such as seeing blue rabbits wearing bathing-suits during a dilerium tremens, or having made a mistake when reaching out for something covered by water, &c.. But this does not, as seen, lead him to suspect his perception either in general or in actual cases; while the datist concludes that material things are not directly perceived. What is directly perceived is the special sense-objects - sense-data.

I should like to develop an objection of Austin's, which I call the argument from the unspecified world, because it spots in an excellent way an indeed peculiar feature of sense-data theory. Noting first that neither 'material thing' nor 'perceiving' are expressions ordinarily belonging to the plain men's usage, Austin argues roughly as follows ¹: the datist puts forward the notion of 'material thing' to cover

the *class* of things of which the ordinary man
both believes and from time to time says he
perceives particular instances

such as cups, pictures, papers, &c.. But is this "class" really comprised of "moderate-sized specimens of dry goods", he asks, and lists a few things the ordinary man sees, smells, or hears, such as voices, rainbows, vapours, &c..

The point is, I take it, that all such things do not form a class, they do not represent some single *kind* of things. Hence 'material thing' cannot function as an alternative to sense-data when characterizing things we perceive; it cannot even function in the role of a hopeless insufficient contrast to sense-data in which the datist puts it. He is misleadingly constructing an exclusive dichotomy between sense-data and material things.

The datist admits that this is a point, a point, however, which does not shake the contrast he wants to make and which can

1. *Sense and Sensibilia*, #1, p.7f.

be dismissed as rather irrelevant to the central issue by clarifying how rainbows, vapours, &c., fit into his scheme. Let me try to construct the outline of his story in the case of a rainbow as an instance. The plain man sees a rainbow, and believes therefore that the rainbow exists, he even knows that a statement as "This is a rainbow" is true. He also knows that he sometimes is deluded by his senses, but still this does not lead him to suspect that he actually is not seeing a rainbow. The datist approves of all this, but even so, he does not admit that the rainbow is the object that is directly perceived, but is a sense-datum. The term 'object' is here, he claims, used in a 'neutral sense', as to refer to a "visual datum" without implying anything about it's status, and thus the objection is shown to be one of mere verbal classification.

But does this manoeuvre meet the objection minimizing it to a point of (verbal) oversimplification on the hand of the datist? I should say no for the following three reasons concerning the dichotomy.

1. The datist's mistake is not only to lump all perceptual objects under one heading. The first point I shall make is that even if it were correct that we do not perceive material things, it is not right that what we do perceive is of one single kind. Since sense-data, supposedly, is one single kind in the relevant respects, the datist cannot meet the objection by agreeing to the

specification of things perceived. The further the point that we do not perceive one of two kinds of things is developed the dichotomy breaks down, and since this obviously can be done - not only into rainbows, &c., and dry goods, but also as we saw in the preceding sections - such a dichotomy is not worth holding.

2. However the datist might choose to repeat his argument in a slightly different form. He might plead only that the objection and his agreement amounts to establish that the notion of 'material thing' is vague. Thus he can admit that the notion of material thing is hardly, if ever, used by the plain men. And further it has very vague boundaries. But then add, first, that the term is not that loose - things that clearly are material objects are of the "dry-goods type" - and he uses it to designate this and its extension, such as gases and vapours, &c.¹; secondly, that a term is vague is not to say that it is defective or even useless - to which I must agree. So the objection is far from decisive. Is this true?

It seems that this argument will turn out to be destructive to the datist's own position. If he, viz., admits that when somebody perceives something, and that it is in this vague sense a term belongs to the class of material things, it actually does

1. E.g. Hirst: *A Critical Study of Sense and Sensibilia*, in *Symposium on J.L.Austin*, ed. Fann, New York, 1969; p.246.

(some) work; consequently, the more work he can ascribe to 'material thing' the more the need for 'sense-data' will decrease. In fact, once he has entered this path, it seems undeterminable and followingly leaves no reason for introducing sense-data.

As we saw above, for instance, when I thought that I saw Jack and it turned out to be somebody else; or that seeing one side of a thing still was seeing the thing; or he would even loose illusions such as the bent stick (cf. p.35), the occurrence of which has been said to provide the possibility of ostensive definition of these sense-objects ¹.

3. But I am in an even stronger position as I can say that no matter whether the notion of 'material thing' is vague or not, the dichotomy still does not bring the datist the crucial step to sense-data in hand. I can allow the datist his logical point that our senses not only may deceive us but also that they do sometimes deceive us ². But it is the assumption that we are either perceiving material things or we are not perceiving material things that blinds the sense-datist. For example, when I am looking for a

1. Roderick Firth: Austin's Argument from Illusion, in Fann, *op. cit.*, p.257f. Note my comment p.81 below.

2. Note one more *non-sequitur*, that it does not follow from this that we are actually at present deceived, cf. p.36; and that, even if we were so, it does not follow from that either that we could not find out, cf. #4, p.37 - in fact, it does not make sense to talk of a 'mistake' if it could not possibly be detected and/or corrected, cf. pp.27-29 above.

dinner plate under the bed, I may be seeing a shadow, but because he has a single-minded classification, he maintains that since I *am* not seeing a dinner plate and a dinner plate is a material object and I *am* seeing something, then I must be seeing something to be called a sense-datum. But from the fact that I am making a mistake in a perceptual judgment, in my claim, let us say, to see a dinner plate, it does not follow that in saying I must be seeing something else that I must be seeing a sense-datum - this is simply a *non-sequitur*. In fact it was a shadow, but it might as well have been a hallucinatory object, a mirror image, something else, &c., &c.. Surely, only on such assumption it would occur to anybody, plain man or philosopher, to say that we only perceive one single kind of things. In fact as here seen, it was a shadow, and a shadow is a shadow, which evidently is of a different kind from both material things and, say, dream objects or illusory objects.

To summarize, then, it is in any event a mistake to leave the world unspecified - a mistake that, we know now, is tied up with the very idea of sense-data to the effect that there is no starting point for the sense-datist's argument. The objection is no longer merely a verbal point, but a logical as well.

Sense and Sense-Data.

It is about time to comment briefly on the notion of 'sense-data' itself. Whether referred to as 'sensations', 'presentations of sense', 'sensible appearances', 'sensa', 'qualia', 'givens', is hardly relevant to the arguments I am dealing with and offering. There are however certain differences. For instance 'presentations of sense' seems to suggest that what is referred to are mental entities - images or affections of the mind (Descartes) - of which their *esse est percipi*.

The notion 'sense-datum' has on the contrary been thought to be void of such associations. That is, using 'sense-data' to refer to the special sense-objects, should not imply anything specifically about their nature - whether they are mental or not, a substance or an event, or they are something which qualifies certain mental acts as a definite way of sensing.

It has been maintained that 'sense-data' is an entirely neutral expression for the purpose of evaluating the advantages of the philosophic theories and the common sense view, respectively ¹. That is, that philosophers should have introduced the notion of sense-

1. Don Locke: *Perception and our Knowledge of the external World*.

datum for what we, e.g. see of a certain shape and color, and leave it an open question whether it is a material object or sense-object.

I think this is wrong, since, as we have seen, what the datist has been most concerned about is to prove that sense-data cannot be identical with material objects. Why then take the pains of introducing a notion supposedly neutral as to the philosophic theories and naive realism, and, immediately turn right around and do away with the latter in a way obviously revealing that the datist behind that terminology not for one moment was neutral?

For instance Price called 'sense-data' a theoretical neutrally expression ¹, while the context reveals what type of theory he was thinking of. He rejects the traditional notions of 'idea', 'impression', and 'sensation' on the ground that they should commit us to the view that sense-data are mental events; likewise the notion of 'sensus' because it suggests a 'third kind' of status, neither mental nor physical. It is however obvious, that when he introduces 'sense-data' ¹ with the red and round tomato, although he proceeds as if he was occupied with a precise scrutiny of the perceptual situation, it is not in any sense neutral. The context reveals that his statement that what is perceived is a red round something, depends entirely upon the reasoning that

1. *Perception*, London, 1964; pp. 19 and 3, respectively.

this is what he can be certain of since he also would see that something if he had a hallucination. Here are, then, precisely the motives for sense-data theory.

The term 'sense-datum' was first introduced, I take it, by Moore¹ in order to meet the idealist with a notion that avoids the suggestion that sense-objects exist in a mind. Notions like 'sense-impression' and 'idea of sensation' had been used both of the object of the impression or sensation and the impression or idea of it. To avoid this ambiguity, and to make it evident that the former, the object of the impression or sensation, does not exist in the mind as the latter, Moore suggested that it be called a 'sense-datum'. But for that reason sense-data, considering the arguments thus far, does not cease to be coherent.

Knowledge and Sense-Data.

Let me now return to the epistemological question. It will be remembered that the datist held that a person X claiming to perceive *p* legitimately may be asked to justify that claim. The only way to do so, according to the datist, is by establishing an inference based on whatever evidence X's senses provides. Obviously this inference cannot be of a deductive nature, since the special sense-objects perceived, are independent of material objects; hence,

1. The Subject Matter of Psychology, *P.A.S.*, vol.10.

by hypothesis, sense-data statements do not entail material object statements. The datist instead suggested that the required inference must be inductive.

But now, the datist argues, since our perceptual statements are material object statements, there is a logical gulf between our warranty and what we state, a gulf that *per definition* cannot be bridged by any number of sense-data statements. Hence our knowledge of material objects is derivative and uncertain, whereas sense-data statements are not vitiated with any uncertainty, they are non-derivative since perception of sense-data does not involve any inference.

I have agreed that the possibility that I am mistaken or hallucinating is a fact, but also noted that from that very possibility it does not follow that I at present am mistaken or hallucinating. It can thus be granted the datist that our perceptual knowledge is not necessarily true, my evidence for perceiving, say, a car or what appears to be a car, to borrow his terminology for a moment, is empirical.

But, then, if what appears to be a car is visible, tangible, audible, has causal continuity, &c., &c., does it make sense to say that it (only) appears to be a car? The datist will claim that it is still logically possible that I am deluded. I have no other answer than: So what? I am still perfectly entitled to say that

it is a car.

First, what would the alternative to the car be if all these things hold true? As pointed out earlier, even if it, for instance, does collapse when I touch it, it does not follow that what I perceived was sense-data. It may have collapsed because it was a cardboard; it does not even follow that it was not a material object. It follows that it is exactly what it is, viz., it is a cardboard made so that it looks like a car.

Next, as I touched upon earlier, although I can grant the datist that sometimes we cannot bridge the logical gulf, it does not follow that we never can. His claim that all perceptual statements, our empirical knowledge, is vitiated with uncertainty, is false. If I see what appears to be a car, it is tangible, visible, &c., and further, if I can get into it, start it, drive it, turn it, break it, &c., &c.; if all this is the case, which most of us have experienced, then, to maintain that it is still logical possible that it is not a car, is an absurdity simple and purely.

The datist's point that the relation between evidence and conclusion is inductive is thus not universally true. If I can do all these things to a car, and still say that I do not know it is a car, is not only an empirical mistake - it is a logical mistake as well! Alternatively, one would commit an epistemologically quite harmless, semantical mistake: one would simply not know what a car is.

(c) It should be noted, (1), that this shows that what is wrong about the datist's account is his logic. If I assert a perceptual statement, for instance, "The bathwater is hot" this is not at all a conclusion of an inductive inference. Although it must be recognized that this feels as hot bathwater does not entail that it is hot bathwater (in all circumstances); that this looks as hot bathwater does not entail that it is hot bathwater (in all circumstances); that this smells as hot bathwater does not entail that it is hot bathwater (in all circumstances); &c., &c.; but, then, what about a conjunction of these? As we saw the datist will say that if none of them singularly entails the material object statement, they do neither in conjunction, (cf. p.52). This is simply false, for the reason that all the criteria in conjunction might be sufficient ¹. For instance it does not follow from the fact that X is unmarried that X is a bachelor. That X is unmarried is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition of X's being a bachelor. But if we learn that X is eligible, has never previously been married, &c., &c., then the conjunction certainly entails bachelorship. When claiming that no perceptual statement entails material object statements, the datist is merely engaged in very bad logic. If the datist can come up with other examples in which he is right he just proves my point; while he still commits a logical mistake - hasty generalization.

1. Cf. p.73, note 1.

(2) It will be remembered also that the datist at one stage maintained that there are material object statements that are true, but that we cannot know which they are. Actually this implies that we have no (empirical) knowledge, at least not that we know of. But is it intelligible, I objected, to say that some statements are true without anybody knowing it?, and showed that such an assumption is unintelligible in case someone knows a specimen of the opposite, i.e. a false statement, since this in turn implied checking against the sound case. This the datist has repeatedly insisted on he knows; so, surely, when claiming that there are true perceptual statements, but we do not know which they are, he is making a hasty generalization in contradiction with his own presupposition.

(d) Even in cases, where the datist is right, that was, in the absence of entailment, it does not follow from that, that we cannot correctly claim to know. I showed in a previous section that we perceive all kinds of things, so let me now pick one of the more controversial cases. Suppose I, during an endurance test through the desert see an oasis although my map tells me that there cannot be an oasis where I see it - I am seeing what appears to be an oasis. So my map may be wrong or I am - assuming that my map and I cannot both be correct and be wrong. That, of course, does not decide the matter; but concluding therefore that it is impossible to decide because I, both when looking at the desert in front of me, seeming to see an oasis, and at the map, am seeing sense-da-

ta disconnected from things I consequently cannot know, needs the additional premiss that I cannot find out what is the case. Can that premiss be established?

I may or I may not be deluded. If I get closer and find water the map was false, and if I find sand I am wrong, the oasis was a mirage. The datist will however hold that the matter is still undecided since the evidence does not entail the conclusion - there is still a logical possibility that I am deluded in both cases. That is the very question.

Suppose now that I get closer to what appears to be an oasis, and the sun continues to burn in spite of the palms I see, when drinking from the well I get sand in my mouth, &c.; is it still a logical possibility to maintain seriously that it was after all an oasis? Or if I get closer, I come into the shade, the water is fresh and cool, there are plenty of dates, &c.; is it still a logical possibility to maintain that it was not an oasis? Well, even if it is still logically possible, it is certainly the most silly thing in the world to say. It is grossly misuse of language. It is not even a logical possibility. Or if it is, entailment is totally irrelevant. Ironically enough, that is (now) the delusion! If I on my test wandering meet such a man, filling his mouth with sand and sand, I tell him that this is not an oasis and he answers that we cannot know decisively, I shall say that he (is) - not I

am - deluded¹. It may not be entailed, but we *know* that that man is deluded.

Obviously, (e), even if it is true that I am deluded, I continuously put sand in my mouth, it still does not follow that I am eating sense-data. My delusion is not between sense-data and some thing, but between the "material object" water and the "material object" sand. My delusion consists in perceiving or having a mirage, which, just like the other things mentioned such as illusions, dream contents, mirror-images, &c., is not a special kind of object called sense-data, nor a peculiar kind of "material object". Choosing either of these would, logically speaking, be roughly like putting a sign across the seeming oasis saying that "This is an illusory oasis". This has the result, naturally, that it is incapable of deluding anyone. For that reason it is not a sense-data oasis, but then, just because it is non-delusory it does not automatically become a real oasis either: since it requires a word, why not say that it is a mirage, which is a perfectly good category of our knowledge about the world.

When the datist now compares with the, allegedly, strongest

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1. Although Locke's notion of 'intuitive knowledge' does not clear his representative theory for inconsistency as referred to (cf. p.10 above), he says pretty analogous to this: "we are provided with an evidence that puts us past doubting". *An essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Fraser, New York, 1959; Bk.IV, Ch.II, #14.

or "most certain knowledge", e.g. deductive conclusions in mathematics as mentioned ¹, he finds the relevant difference to be that no empirical propositions are certain since it is always logical possible for an empirical statement to be false. That is, an empirical statement it is possible to deny without contradiction in terms. It has now, I think, been shown decisively that this is at best a gross exaggeration. From the fact that I may be mistaken it does not follow that I am mistaken, nor that I cannot find out whether I am or not. That I may be mistaken is a simple logical point indicating only that empirical judgments are just that - empirical. But that my empirical knowledge (in those cases where the logical possibility of error or illusion is not excluded) is empirical is certainly no reason at all why I cannot have empirical knowledge of what there is. To require entailment in all cases of knowledge regardless whether it is empirical or a priori matters, is, as Hare has strikingly expressed it in a slightly different context:

to succumb to one of the oldest temptations in Philosophy: the temptation to try to prove synthetic conclusions by logical considerations alone. 2

An obvious question might here be: Why not do (entirely)

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1. By the way, comparatively, how many errors are made in learning to calculate and to observe?
 2. In: *Pain and Evil*, rep. in: *Moral Concepts*, ed. Feinberg, Oxford, 1970.

away with logical entailment since, as shown, we do not need it all the time, although we sometimes can get it, i.e. logical entailment is not a necessary condition either for saying 'X sees *p* or for saying 'X knows ..' ? Why should we be interested in achieving entailment in some cases and not in others ? Well, first, because it is a distinction which is worth drawing in a lot of contexts. But next, and no less important, another reason is that the recognition that what is contingent is contingent *is* a necessary logical point.

Lastly I want to pick up two things that were only lightly or implicitly touched upon so far.

Incorrigible Statements. In contrast to our ordinary perceptual statements, allegedly liable to so much error, an advantage of sense-data theory should be that statements about sense-data, sense-data statements, could not possibly be in error, since they refer exclusively to whatever a perceiver experiences. The datist thus swallows my objection above that a language referring to unidentifiabes is no language at all, saying that of course they are unidentifiable since no two perceivers possibly could perceive the same sense-data, i.e. they are distinct perceivers *sui generis*. Only I can have my hallucination, and you and you alone perceived your dream. Hence no way is available for others than me or you to talk about and "identify" such pri-

vate entities. In turn this implies assuming that you are not joking, lying, cheating, &c., a sense-data statement is, unlike a material object statement, unretractably true. This is the so-called incorrigibility thesis.

a. But it is not true that other persons cannot correct a speaker's sense-data statements. Let me show this with the much utilized example in this debate, the case of Macbeth's visionary dagger. Macbeth states that he sees a dagger; *eo ipso* the situation gives us all reasons to think that statement retractable, so we ask Macbeth to describe what he saw. Suppose he then says that what he saw was a slim cylinder with a red twisted line on a white ground. Assuming that Macbeth is serious he is obviously wrong. Two ways are open; first, Macbeth might admit we are right, after all it was no dagger, he just made a verbal slip. Or on the other hand he may insist both on the description above and the identification as a dagger, on the ground that we of course did not see his visionary dagger. But, surely, irrespective of his rather foolish insistence, his initial sense-data statement is corrigible - it was not a (visionary) dagger he saw.

In the one case we can correct his verbal slip as we can correct any other verbal slip, and in the other, even granting the privacy of his vision, his sense-data statement is not incorrigible.

b. Note further that in either case it is implied that

somebody is entitled to claim that the description in question is incorrect. The features listed by Macbeth do not apply to daggers. This in turn implies that we are entitled to claim certain features of daggers, i.e. we possess perceptual knowledge about daggers. In other words, if I say that something, for instance in a vision, illusion, &c., looks like a dagger, that presupposes that I know how daggers look; hence statements about the way daggers look are statements about material objects, viz. daggers.

This relation of presupposition may also be termed thus: that sense-data language is parasitic on "material-object language" ¹. We cannot make sense out of sense-data statements *per se*; the very intelligibility of sense-data language depends on a reference to common perceptual knowledge. The admission of the notion of privacy as a characteristic of sense-data fails to meet the objection ².

c. To find incorrigible statements we do not have to retreat to these obscurities. Repeating the argument of the preceding

1. Cf. also William P. Alston: Is a Sense-datum Language Necessary?, *Philosophy of Science*, 1957.

2. As a question of whether common classification allows for "differences in sensation from person to person" by terming privacy as 'undetectable differences' one eliminates all those circumstances which ordinarily give meaning to 'difference in sensation'. See J.L. Cowan: Publicity, *Analysis*, 1965. Further I think, even the sceptic's attack on common classification of perceptual qualities on such grounds can be laid to rest; see F.H. Sibley: Colors, *P.A.S.S.*, vol. LXVIII.

section from this angle, it is important to realize that the opposite of private, i.e. public, does not exclude incorrigibility, nor does the nature of things or, if you like, material objects.

Moore pointed out, I mentioned, that there is perceptual knowledge of which it is absurd to maintain that it should be derivative and on that basis be corrigible. As such an instance I can think of none more obvious than his own famous:

.. saying, as I make a certain gesture with the
right hand, 'Here is one hand', .. 1

The datist will say that this statement is corrigible since we can always be made to retract it on the finding of new evidence.

Allow me to cite Moore once more:

How absurd it would be to suggest that I did
not know it, but only believed it, and that
perhaps it was not the case. 1

Let us for a moment imagine what, if any, additional evidence may prove the perceptual statement about my hand to be false. Suppose, for instance, that soon after my statement, my hand fell off at the wrist and dissolved into dust when it reached the floor. Any such objection rides, I take it, an assumption such as 'a hand is not the kind of thing that like a soap-bubble - not to mention a visionary dagger - pops, so to speak, out of existence' 2.

1. Proof of an external World, *Philosophical Papers*, London & New York, 1959.

2. In passing it would be interesting to learn for how long, say, my hand has to exist to fulfill the condition of 'endurance or persistence through time' which the datist attaches to 'materi-

I can grant that my hand which I perceived would not be a hand unless its existence at any given time were logically independent of my perceiving it at that time - my statement is a genuine material object statement. In fact, this is why it is absurd to suggest beliefs or mistakes, and warrants the expression here that if this is not a hand, nothing is. What has to be proven is not that my hand at some later time does not suit our (usual) concept of a 'hand', nor that what fell from my wrist and dissolved into dust at some previous time was my hand - but that it was not a hand at the time I perceived it and uttered my statement. But everyone will agree, I think, that this strange occurrence actually happened to *my hand*, and what is wrong in the objection is thus the paradoxical assumption that it is possible and actually was the case that it was both a hand and not a hand at the time I perceived it. The only other possibilities are that I like Macbeth may have made a verbal slip or insisted stubbornly, both of which we can safely ignore.

The pursuit of the incorrigible is thus not any more successful in sense-data language than in material object language; moreover, since the former is parasitic on the former, and consequently must be supposed to be vitiated with the same defects as the

al object'. Note also that the polar opposite is not 'not to exist in time', but 'to exist for no time' - are there any such things? To me it seems a rather silly criterion for sorting out 'material things' from the class of things.

latter if any, no reason is provided for the adoption of sense-data language from such considerations.

Sensibilia. From what I have said it is obviously implied that perceptual activities are epistemic. That is, the justification of 'seeing' statements, like 'knowing' statements, requires that we go outside the persons who claim to see. In contrast to for example persons' beliefs, we cannot give a purely dispositional account of either knowing or perceiving. 'X sees *p*' informs us about X, but certainly also about the status of *p*. Perceiving is epistemic in that it must be the case that there is a *p* to perceive; but, once more, it is single-minded to allow *p*'s of only one kind, e.g. moderate-sized specimens of dry goods. By claiming that there is no *p* of a particular kind, it is not excluded that there might be a '*p*' of another kind; the variety of *p*'s and the various locutions reflecting them in common usage, such as 'It seems that -', 'It looks like -', 'There appears to be -', &c., I have dealt with sufficiently.

To account for this feature of perception datists have felt compelled to postulate sense-data as existing entities, let me follow Austin's phrase in calling them *sensibilia*; in order to avoid assimilation to the idealistic position, i.e. that sense-data, like ideas, should be purely mental phenomena whose *esse est percipi*, the datist regards *sensibilia* as enduring possibilities for perception, or/and, most likely, independent existents,

However, to meet certain objections, let it be clear, that to decide or find out whether there actually are such existents such as 'sensibilia' is not an empirical question like, e.g., whether there is a monster in Loch Ness. It has been quite successfully, but as well quite irrelevantly been pointed out that sensibilia cannot be given meaning by any sort of ostension¹. I find such failure quite irrelevant for two reasons; (a) it is no crux to the datist because there are a lot of other terms referring to existing things in the world that cannot be attached meaning ostensively, such as 'thoughts', 'numbers', 'rules', 'pains', &c., - even for 'material object' we might get into trouble; (b) an empirical procedure as for example observation or an experiment are clearly ruled out since any re-viewing or manipulating on my part only has the effect of replacing one sensibilia with another. This the datist can and has to maintain to avoid committing exactly the same mistake as was committed in the representative theory; he may do so simply by insisting on that the relation between material objects and sensibilia is not as in the latter one of 'representing', but is one of 'inference'.

The question about the existence of sensibilia is not of that kind at all, but analogous to the character of the debate about "material objects" above (p.59ff.), it is a question whether the adequate analysis of perception requires entities of that kind;

1. O.K.Bouwsma: Moore's Theory of Sense-Data, rep. in *The Philosophy of Perception*, ed. Warnock, Oxford, 1967.

it is a question about the conceptual foundation of what Hartnack has called an ontological language.

As was noted above, *prima facie*, there is nothing incorrect in saying that, e.g., appearances or, for that matter, mirages, double-images, &c., are part of reality, since this notion then must be given a very restricted interpretation in case all our optical, physiological, &c., knowledge about these things should be said to pertain to imaginary, phantastical, artificial, or whatever the appropriate opposite may be, activities. Maybe more subtle categorizations would seem to lend more plausibility to the datist's view, but certainly not help him much.

Needless to say, he obviously cannot, on pain of inconsistency, relate sensibilia to material objects in any univocal manner. But then the assumption of sensibilia has some very peculiar implications.

a. Suppose that two persons are looking at the lighthouse simultaneously; both of them are competent perceivers and the conditions are perfect. Now, by the hypothesis of sensibilia, what these persons are seeing cannot possibly be identical as each perceives his own sensibilia, although, by hypothesis, they see the same thing. What they are seeing exists, but by attributing the object of their perception to sensibilia rather than to the lighthouse, saying that is the 'same thing', i.e. the lighthouse, loses

its meaning and simply overcrowds reality. There are just as many lighthouse-sensibilia as there are perceivers. This is simply absurd.

To say that because I am perceiving the car from my seat and you are from yours, there must be two sensibilia, is a *non-sequitur*. It does not even follow that we are seeing anything else than the car. What we are seeing depends admittedly upon our circumstances and perceptual make-up, but this is an individuating feature of perceivers not of things; and, of course, as we started out by specifying such differences, what follows is that you and I are distinct perceivers and nothing else. Because two (or more) perceivers are not identical, it does not follow that they cannot perceive the same thing. Nor that they cannot perceive it simultaneously; that does not require two (or more) existents, but merely two (or more) sets of circumstances.

b. But not only does the datist create absurd ontology, at the same time he creates epistemological paradoxes of his own. It is, viz., implied by the alleged fact, that whatever I am perceiving is a distinct sensibilia, that they cannot be otherwise than I perceive them. Since sensibilia do not represent or are not appearances of anything, they cannot conceivably misrepresent or appear differently from anything. The datist admits that questions like "Does it seem greyish blue?", "How does it

look from behind?", &c., are non-sensical. It has been said:

If we interpret this as meaning it is all it appears to be and nothing more, then the possibility of learning anything about a sensum is cut away at once, for the very good reason that we know all there is to know about it by simply having it. It is, I think, a very odd fact, if true, that there are existents such that their being known at all entails their being known completely.¹

Since all we can perceive are sensibilia, and this implies that we perceive all there is to be perceived, it oddly enough, follows that any epistemology is superfluous. There is no reason to doubt any of our senses' testimonies - none are veridical, none are non-veridical. The concept of delusion which earlier in the theory occupied the datist so much, turns out to be an impossibility. This is certainly, a peculiar implication if anything is. All we can know, we do know.

This does not follow the datist might answer; of course delusions are allowed on my account. For instance, if you (seem to) see pink elephants on the wall, this is what you cannot be mistaken about, since they are sensibilia; the delusion consists in inferring that there are pink elephants, i.e. material objects, on the wall, i.e. material object. The delusion resides in faulty inference from sensibilia to material objects.

This answer does certainly not eliminate the implications I

1. Winston H.F. Barnes: The Myth of Sense-Data, rep. in Swartz, *op.cit.*.

draw. The point is, that he maintained (i) that whatever I am perceiving it is an existent of which mistake is impossible. (ii) Since there is a logical possibility that any inference made to material objects may be faulty, I can have no (certain) knowledge of them.

It is now implied in his terms, by (i) that, if a delusion consists in perceiving something which is not there, it is impossible to be deluded. The datist cannot switch to material object talk, since he cannot *know* anything about them; it would be peculiar if he defined 'delusion' one of his key-concepts in terms of something that not only is unknown but also cannot be known - in which case delusion *is* unknown, i.e. unheard-of. By the way, *we* can add, for all the datist *knows*, there might as well be - or at least is it a logical possibility that there are - pink elephants on the wall. By (i) and (ii) it is implied, that we cannot know anything (for certain) about material objects, but all that we *can* know (for certain), viz. of sensibilia, we do know.

Moreover the datist is now contradicting not only the presuppositions he has in common with the realist, but also his very own. He, not the realist, started out with a problem of perceptual knowledge; next, he argued that the solution to his problem is that perceptual knowledge is of inductive nature, and due to the gulf there can be no certain knowledge of what there is. Now he

draws the consequence that only what we perceive we can know exists, sensibilia, and all that we perceive exists and that our perceptual knowledge about what exists, sensibilia, is complete not by bridging the gulf, nor by induction, but by perceiving it. This is not merely a peculiar feature of or an odd fact about the sense-darist's theory, it renders the position ridiculous. Because this view, that perception yields *knowledge* of what exists, he started out with ascribing to the realist and which he found then called for correction. If there is a problem of perception, sensibilia cannot solve it; if there is none, they are not needed either.

Summary abstract.

Everything has an end, except some of Leo Tolstoy's novels, a talented Dane has said, without, I presume, knowing Aristotle's *Poetics*. Although I hope the reader will agree that this is one of the topics wherein one is justified in being somewhat repetitive to get one's points across, what follows is intended to be both very summarily and somewhat abstracted from my preceding presentation of my case.

Odd as it may sound, the sense-data theorist finds that certain common experiences and the ways they are referred to by the correct expressions of ordinary usage afford grounds for doubting other common sense "assumptions". Consequently, on his analysis, the ordinary views implies puzzles and paradoxes, which the realist and idealist are unable to deal with to philosophic satisfaction. My contention has been I think justifiably, that the main puzzle the datist sees in our common sense views is an assimilation of cognitive and perceptual activities. Common sense rooms, he says, at least two paradoxes.

The first mistake, alleged on the realist's hands, is the

assumption that perception always is a relation between (a) perceiver and (some part of) the physical world, reality; clearly this is not true of all perceptual situations. The next mistake, alleged on the hand of realists, is that since there is no unequivocal relation of perception, claims to empirical knowledge are never fully justified - it is a relation of inductive, not deductive, nature; hence no empirical propositions are certain.

But look, even more oddly, the datist turns right around, presenting the following dilemma to represent the realistic view: either we do not perceive reality at all or perceptual claims are not claims to knowledge at all, and suggests the solution that what we perceive and what our perceptual knowledge is about is sense-data. Interestingly enough, he feels compelled to adopt his solution on the principle that unless perceptual knowledge involves a deductive relation between a perceiver and reality, it is a misuse of 'knowledge' altogether. This is the same principle that he found was at the root of the plain man's innocent prejudices and caused the realist's alleged puzzles.

By his persistent discountenancing of the testimony of senses as providing (certain) knowledge, the datist reveals himself merely to be raising a demand which it is logically impossible to satisfy and which therefore can safely be ignored. The more so as puzzles and paradoxes pile up by imposing this rationalistic *ideal* on the analysis of perception; the exposure of which I have seen

as part of my task.

Where there is no problem, there is no need for solving a problem, and certainly none for inventing one. Another part of my task I saw as to show the artificial nature of the problem of perceptual knowledge. Surely, it is self-inflicted puzzlement to think that, e.g., hallucinations are an obstacle to the possibility of perceptual knowledge; for to say of an image that it is an hallucinatory image is already to assign it a non-neutral status in *rerum natura* - it is not even a visual experience *simpliciter*. Or to think that the possibility of error excludes (perceptual) knowledge of "material things" is an absurdity, for the reason why I cannot, in logic, put sand in my mouth without perceiving material objects is the same as the reason why I cannot, in logic, speak without using language.

My conclusion, then, is that sense-data theory is laid to rest. Laid to rest in circumstances, to relieve a little of the dramatic of this undertaking, which, I think, may be said to be a natural death of a philosophical doctrine, namely that it did not get off the ground unless one is prepared to pay the price of absurdity. I should repeat that I have shown so by dealing not with all possible characteristics of variants of this type of theory, but with those any of which any sense-datum theory necessarily has.

It is by now a commonplace that philosophical mistakes are rarely downright howlers; they have a point, we gained an insight. This is true also of the datist's mistakes; I suggest the lesson is just how big the cost is for neglecting a fundamental distinction in our conceptual scheme, the distinction between necessity and contingency. Our award for unraveling this mistake is the recognition of the nature of empirical knowledge and that it forced us into an adequate analysis of perception, that is one in accordance with both facts and ordinary language. This is the synthetic nature of philosophical analysis.

Revisionism.

When it is said that sense-data theory is laid to rest, some may say that it is not appropriately buried. To indicate just what kind of burial I think to have provided for it, let me briefly indicate what area of the happy hunting grounds of philosophy it has gone to.

My conclusion was, that what is left for the datist, is that to make sense of a theory based on the concepts of 'sense-data', 'sense-data language', and 'sensibilia', he has to categorize sense-data in a way congruent with the way perceptual experiences are categorized in ordinary language; sense-data language as another way of saying what is expressed in ordinary language; and

attribute sensibilia features equivalent with what is reflected in common sense's "assumptions", viz., our public knowledge.

If a sense-datum theory can be made, which there seems no reason, why it could not be done, that fulfills these jobs we have a choice between a sense-datum language and our common usage; in other words, what the datist's function at this point is, is merely to recommend a revision of language.

It is a conceptual truth, however, that it is against any common sense to revise merely for the sake of revision - if one wants to revise something, one will have to present reasons for revising whatever it is one wants to revise. What reasons has the datist to offer?

If it is claimed that sense-data language or theory can be recommended on grounds of elegance and convenience, I do not think we have to listen to that recommendation, before he has worked his sense-datum language out in detail which is a project we only know is claimed possible in principle, but never actually has been presented as a *fait accompli*.

For the persistent datist only one possibility is left, namely to say: Well, in my view it is still recommendable to shift to sense-data language because I want to preserve notions like knowing and perceiving for cases where entailment holds between the "knower" and the "perceiver", and what is known and perceived.

The appropriate question is now: What justifies such a restriction, what are the advantages and disadvantages of following the recommendation? Let me choose a particular point picked on by the datist, 'knowledge', and illustrate what the point is of such tug-of-war.

Suppose the datist has carefully - with due consideration to the changes here argued - marked off the distinction between necessary and contingent knowledge and now repeats his conclusion that we have no right to use the term knowledge when, because of the difference, we make perceptual statements. Notice here that some of his work is good philosophy and that some is only rhetoric. The latter is the part where he claims that his analysis shows that we do not have the right to use the term knowledge; it only shows, if true, that the term 'knowledge' may be put to more than one job.

He may, however, admit that this was a rhetorical part, but then repeat the move slightly differently. Well, I did not say, when I concluded that we have no right to use the term knowledge, that this was an analysis of knowledge, but that because of my discovery that what we ordinarily call perceptual knowledge *is* different from what we call deductive knowledge; as you admit the term is put to various jobs, thus I recommend a revision.

Two answers are now possible. We might perfectly well recog-

nize the multiple jobs 'knowledge' can be put to do; but as long as we recognize this we do not get into difficulties or absurdities. So the recommendation ceases, revision is not to the purpose - it is superfluous. Or we can say, that we can talk about perceptual knowledge as opposed to deductive knowledge, but recognizing all the differences between having good perceptual and deductive notions, what is gained by saying that the one is not knowledge? Nothing but mere sounds! That is to say, that perceptual knowledge is perceptual, and that deductive knowledge is deductive. That is all there is to it; if somebody wants to use other terms he is free to do so on the condition that he chooses some term that does not confuse us. However, if he uses one already in ordinary language, say 'opinion', its introduction as a technical term is going to have misleading associations, for he may now begin all over again also analyzing the various jobs 'opinion' can be put to do, since he obviously cannot mix what we now call perceptual knowledge with opinion referring to mere guess or unfounded belief, &c., &c.. He may go on and on this way. Or he may at each step invent an entirely new term, say 'glop' to refer to what we now call perceptual knowledge, 'pip' to refer to the unfounded beliefs we now call opinion, &c..

But now we can see what the revisionist's magnificent project of recommendation amounts to. He is either fooling around with sounds, or he is willing to risk ambiguity in some terms but not in

others. Since he wants to get rid of all ambiguities he has to coin new terms, while agreeing to the common distinctions. He is left with new words, merely, for the common distinctions do and must remain. This is the level of embarrassment, which thus is the sign on the sense-data theory's resting place.

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