

BERKELEY'S EXTERNAL WORLD

This is a lightly edited transcript of a text in Berlin's papers. No attempt has been made to bring it to a fully publishable form, but this version is posted here for the convenience of scholars. A great deal more work is needed before the transcript is faithful to the text in every detail. The bracketed numbers refer to the pages of the original text, which is partly typed and partly in MS.

Lecture I: Introductory

1. Everyone knows what made Berkeley notorious. He said that there were no material objects. He said the external world was in some sense immaterial, that nothing existed save ideas – ideas and their authors. His contemporaries thought him very ingenious and a little mad. Dr Samuel Clarke thought there was no way of refuting a man who thought life was a sort of coherent dream; only it was such an absurd view. Descartes, who died fifty years before, thought the same: only a beneficent deity guaranteed it wasn't so. Dr Johnson refuted it 'thus'. Dr Whitehead still thinks it is not quite true but cannot be refuted. The Russian Marxist refutes it in three moves: children of minds = parents one = nonsense.

2. Berkeley would have been very shocked, and all his life protested that he meant no such silly paradox. Of course he knew a real gold coin or a real noise or a real fire as well as anyone else. Fires singed and burnt you and the idea of fire didn't; a real gold coin buys something, the idea of one, even the painting of one, doesn't, etc. He was saying nothing paradoxical or odd, he was saying only what everyone knew to be true. But he admitted that the words in which he chose to say it might sound odd to some people. Why then did he do it? Only because the ordinary way of saying these things led to something he thought much too strange and dark – to talk about material substance, or physical matter, which according to the physicists and philosophers was colourless, soundless, tasteless, odourless etc. Nobody had ever seen any, or heard it, or touched it, or smelt it, or tasted it; nevertheless apparently wise and respected persons not only claimed that it

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

existed, but said that virtually everything *consisted* of it, and seemed to know a good deal about its properties and habits – such as that it was composed [2] of a very large number of very small spherical bodies whirling inconceivably fast and possessing mysterious powers, such as gravitation or impenetrability, which nobody had actually come across (as they had across qualities like scarlet or sharp, which ordinary things had), but which nevertheless the learned Galileo and learned Dr Newton had proved were *there*, somewhere *there* all right, and Descartes and Leibniz and Locke all agreed.

The more an ordinary man thinks about such questions as ‘What is matter?’, ‘What is everything made of?’, the more he is liable to get into a state of mental cramp. Thales said everything was made of water, and Heraclitus of fire, and Pythagoras of numbers, and Plato of imperfect examples of ideas, and Aristotle of primal matter. But this was not the answer he really wanted. ‘What is coal?’ A black hard globular combustible etc. substance. ‘No, I mean what is it *really*? Not what does it look like?’ Appearance alters, coal remains, when someone spoke of molecules of carbon, hydrogen etc. moving about and colliding, composed of whirling atoms etc., he was in a muddle: what he saw was a black hard shiny heap, perfectly still, not moving and apparently continuous, occasionally with tongues of flame or a dull glow etc. How could one and the same object be both continuous and broken into globules, at rest and in motion, black and colourless? Scientists offered no help, then or now; they merely said that things could ‘*really*’ be *one* and look ‘the other’, and provided some rules for passing from one to the other, plus propositions about brains, eyes, optic nerves, effects of light, laws of refraction etc. But all this language presupposed two levels – of invisible physical entities and the world as we thought we knew it – and didn’t explain the original paradox of the two worlds, and how the one of physics came in at all; and how you got from one to the other.

This has puzzled people ever since. It is *this* that Berkeley thought he could answer; this which he regarded as a philosophical, not a physical or grammatical, puzzle. His treatise is a model of how philosophical puzzles are stated and should be treated.

[3] So the puzzle is: What do scientists *mean* by atoms, electrons etc., and generally what do people mean who say that an object

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

may be different from what it looks like? How do clouds come to look like snowy mountain tops, or mountain tops like clouds? And how do we ever know which *are really* mountain tops, and which are *really* clouds? This doesn't matter for an impressionist painter: he paints what he sees, the picture does not tell you which is which. Nor does the camera, and if you later say you did discover, because one of the cloudy whiteish shapes was hard to the touch whereas the other was filmy and you flew through it in an aeroplane – when you say that, how do you know that what is hard is a bit of a mountain, and what is filmy and penetrable is a cloud? You say you mean by mountain something hard, and by a cloud something you go through; but then how do you know the mountain was *really* hard and did not merely *seem* so? People are subject to strange errors and delusions, we are told.

The argument from illusion

Locke's argument is that if you have a bowl of water which feels hot to one hand and cold to the other, it follows that the water, which cannot be both hot and cold at the same time, cannot be either, but since it exists it must have some other properties which give rise to or cause different sensations in the observer. Berkeley points out that if this is supposed to prove the subjectivity of secondary qualities, it does it equally in the case of so-called primary ones. If I cannot decide by mere touch whether the water is *really* hot or *really* cold, by the same criteria I cannot decide by using my senses whether what I am seeing is one thing or two, round or square, at motion or at rest, fast or slow, long or short, etc. In other words, that primary qualities are no more exempt from delusions than secondary. No doubt delusions create difficulties. But once again he repeats that this perplexity, even if it is real, this doubt, even if it is irresolvable, cannot demonstrate the existence of matter, which is a meaningless word in any case; nor yet of primary qualities, which, if they do not resemble those provided by the senses, equally seem to mean nothing.

Since the Argument from Illusion has often been used to prove that something non-sensible exists, it is worth dwelling on it. What is the argument *for* or *against*? It is considered to be a powerful argument against what is called naïve realism, against the view that the external world is what we think it to be before we start philosophising. We are said to believe that objects *are* what they *look*, that they really do possess the colours they appear to have,

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

really give forth the sounds which appear to proceed from them, etc. This of course is also Berkeley's view; he thinks in some curious sense that all these attributes are mental or ideas, but he does not believe in any dualism. The main obvious difference lies between monistic and dualistic views, that is, views which distinguish physical reality from appearance as two kinds of being, and those which do not, etc. By this classification Berkeley and the naïve realists believe in one world, not two; that is, they reject the theory of the Iron Curtain. In this sense Berkeley may be called a naïve idealist. The Argument from Illusion, which Berkeley recognises, draws attention to the fact that a physical object, say the wall of my room, looks darker when no light appears to be shining from anywhere than when it is sunlit or artificially lit. But what can be meant by asking what is *the* colour of the wall? We feel it to be self-contradictory to say that an object has two colours in the same sense at the same time in the same place, yet it seems equally queer to ask which of the many colours which, we say, the wall 'takes on' as the sun sinks, is *the* true or the real colour. Philonous points out to Hylas in the First Dialogue that clouds which *look* red and purple are '*really* dark mist and vapour'. Dark looking? If so, to whom? Or 'really dark' and invisible? A thing which looks to have one uniform colour to me may present a kaleidoscopic variety of colours to the eye of a fly. It may look yellow to the sufferer from jaundice. Why do I persist in saying that the colour is *really*, say, pink, although it 'appears' to be variegated or motley to the fly or through the microscope, yellow to the jaundiced observer, still odder to the man who takes the drug mescal, etc. Well, which is the true, the real, colour or pattern of colours?

Similar anomalies occur in the case of visual shape. The microscope, the gnat's eye, the distance at which the observer stands make smooth surfaces seem ravaged by hills and valleys, square towers seem round, round pennies seem oval, and so forth. And this applies to all sensible qualities.¹ Or what happens to a headache? I have a violent headache; I take a drug, and the pain, we say, decreases in intensity. Do I say that the headache is as violent as before, but *seems* milder, or is it actually milder? What is the test I use? What is the *difference* between the 'objective' yellow of paper painted with yellow paint and the 'subjective' yellow of

¹ cf. Gulliver and the Houyhnhms.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

what the man with jaundice sees? Yellow is yellow and the rest is a causal story. Or again, how do I measure the time that passes quickly when I am absorbed, and very slowly when I am bored or in pain? Or again, take Locke's instance: if I put my hand into a bowl of water, then one hand which previously felt colder than the other now feels greater warmth than the other, being plunged into what is surely *the same water*. How warm is the water? For it cannot be both as hot and as cold as it feels to one and the other hand.

To all this common sense tends to reply that there are certain objective standards. 'Is the wallpaper really yellow?' can be settled only by a spectroscope and a vibrometer, which settles the question of how many light waves are emitted. The shape of the tower or the penny can similarly be determined by photographs taken in a standard light from a standard distance. The length of time is settled by a chronometer or a metronome, and so on. So far so good. There is no doubt that, so far as this goes, it is perfectly true and is a useful guide to our use of the adjective 'real' as opposed to 'seeming' in such cases. Is a given image a mirage or is it not? What we mean by mirage is that a photographic camera placed roughly where our eye is now would not have recorded any palm trees waving round an oasis, or alternatively that if we approach what looks the place where the palm trees are, they dissolve. 'An oar looks bent in water but is not really so': that means that if we feel along it with our finger we shall not experience the feeling of an angle; if we pull out the oar, it will look straight; nor is there any reason for supposing that water bends or breaks things in the way that a blacksmith does; and so on.

To all this Berkeley need say only that the findings of cameras, metronomes and any other so-called objective criteria are just as sensuous as what they are supposed to check and verify. All we are really doing is to draw an ultimately conventional and arbitrary distinction between, say, real yellow and apparent yellow, by calling real yellow that which can be correlated in a certain prescribed fashion with other visual data, namely the recordings of dials, continuity, similarity to more than one observer, and so on. While apparent yellows could be correlated with abnormal, i.e. *rare*, events such as the experience called jaundice, or the projection of yellow light, that they are likely to be intermittent, not last long, be confined to one observer, the observer has something wrong, i.e. differences with brain, eyes, to other observers, etc. To say the oar

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

looks but is not bent in the water is merely to say that, contrary to the normal state of affairs, visual data which usually can be correlated with a tactual datum called 'feeling an angle' in this case cannot. And cases where they cannot can in their turn be classified as examples of reflection of light in a certain way, and so become normalised again. If the question arises whether an oar which looks bent should, or should not, be called a bent oar, that is a matter of convenience. By calling a thing bent we normally mean to indicate a correlation between visual and other sorts of data. In the case of the oar the correlation is an unusual one; for this reason it is not convenient to use the same term, and we prefer to speak of a systematic or necessary illusion; but if we know the facts, the illusion no longer deludes, though force of habit may make us forget a particular correlation. Do we still call it an illusion? Yes, to call it something to indicate an unusual correlation.

There is nothing *mysterious* about a mirror. It presents data *similar* to ones we normally correlate with tactual ones, but *for once* not so correlated. We know this in a general way, yet we sometimes try to walk through or into mirrors. This is no more mysterious than that we forget that some red berries are poisonous though others just like them are not, and suffer the consequences. In the second case the colour red is not enough to ensure digestibility. In the first case visual data in general are not [enough] to guarantee touchability or walkability through. The tower *is* square and looks round. The pillar box is and looks round. The moon is larger than a dinner plate or half a crown and yet sometimes looks like one or the other. The earth seems immobile yet is said to rotate. As Berkeley says in the Third Dialogue 'a man is not mistaken with regard to the ideas he actually possesses, but in the inferences he culls from his present perceptions'. The inference is that if he approached the tower it would still look round, but if he approached the moon it would still look no bigger than a plate, and that the earth would still look still even if you stood on a convenient star and watched it through a telescope. You jump to these conclusions from force of habit or whatever cause you like, and you are wrong. That is all there is to it. That is Berkeley's view. 'We do not see what we feel,' says Philonous; 'neither is the same object perceived by the microscope which was by the naked eye.' But we do not like to multiply names indefinitely for each differentiable experience, because it makes

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

things difficult to refer to: hence common names given to regular clumps of co-existent or successive data. The datum yielded by the microscope and that to the naked eye are of course different in a describable way. I give them the same name because I can always infer one from the other. The great mistake is treating what has the same name as literally one and the same. The names stand for strings of different data given to different senses or to the same sense at different times under different circumstances. Identity is thus resolved as by Hume into a regular succession, uniform similarities, performance of analogous functions, and so forth. So that the only thing distinguishing the coherent dream from reality would be difference of vividness, coherence of the rest of experience, i.e. validity as testimony for what happens next, support by the testimony of the majority of observers, and so forth. But then what about Descartes' opinion? Perhaps everybody is dreaming dreams which fit each other and coherent experience is nevertheless in some sense unreal? And though there are no criteria to distinguish it from reality, nevertheless it could be a dream and we not know? But this would then be rendered meaningless, for the meaning of the word 'dream' and the meaning of the words 'waking reality' are drawn from a distinction in the field of sensible experience, so that to say that everything is a dream is to use the term 'dream' in a new sense, and when that sense is examined it is seen to be the same sense as that in which the term 'reality' is normally used. What we mean by a dream is something which we shall wake from, or something at any rate which other observers do not experience. What we mean by saying the penny is really round is that it looks round, at least from above, and feels round at most times, and looks elliptical from the side. So far from its elliptical appearance casting doubt on its reality, it is one of the principal ingredients of what we mean by a real penny. It is if it *ceased* looking elliptical that we should begin to wonder whether what we had before us was a real penny. It is if the oar emerged from the water *still* looking bent that we should ask ourselves whether something gravely perplexing had not occurred, whether the laws of refraction of light had not failed us, and the water had not acquired new and wholly unexplored physical qualities. Whether, in short, we were not dreaming or having hallucinations. The real is the normal, and our standards of normality rest on a certain amount of experience of what sensations go with what others under what conditions. If we do

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

not have enough such experiences we are apt to make mistaken inferences, i.e. predict wrongly. And if someone says 'How much experience is enough?', the answer is pragmatic, 'Enough is enough.' When we no longer make annoying mistakes of wrong correlation and wrong induction. All life and science is a like trial and error. Trial and error as to what experiences go with what others, and when and how often and how intensely – and can they be repeated? Can the water be both hot and cold? Yes indeed, it is cooler than one hand, and hotter than the other. What we mean by its objective temperature is something to do with the position of mercury on the thermometer dial. What we mean by its felt warmth is whether it is warmer or colder or indiscriminably the same as the felt warmth of the limb with which we test it. The Serpentine will seem warm in spring to persons who bathe in it in the winter, and icy cold to the inhabitants of South Sea islands. It does not merely seem, it *is both*. Its so-called *real* warmth can be gauged only from what all these different witnesses have to say. When we have heard the testimony of the Eskimos and the South Sea Islanders about the warmth of the average day of spring in Oxford, and discount accordingly, we shall know roughly what to expect. There is no mystery and no problem. A thing is real and not illusory when it fits into our framework of beliefs and expectations. The frameworks of different sorts of observer will naturally be somewhat different, but if communication is to be possible, they must be correlatable. The world describable in terms of such regular correlation is 'real'.

Objections

When a correlation seriously breaks down, the result is called *prima facie* illusion, and demands a special new correlation to fit it into the real framework. As to how the correlation works – and what is meant by saying that observers exist and are in place, etc., these are difficulties that we shall have to deal with. But there is one objection to even this which eminent philosophers such as Professor Moore and Professor Price urge against this treatment of the Argument from Illusion, and that is the case of double vision. A thing may indeed be said to have all the properties it has depending on the place from which it is observed, and the conditions and the physiological state of the observer and so forth. To say the penny is round and oval – and *is* bright is to say it *looks* bright to X from Y in conditions Z, but dark to A in B in

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

conditions C. So a bright light is in this sense really both bright and dim; depending on place and physiology etc. As a book is intensely interesting or dull depending etc., so it is both equally *really*. But if on pressing my eyeballs I see two glittering or dim disks instead of one, am I not forced to say according to this view that one penny occasionally displays the property of two-ness or doubledness which is one of the attributes which constitute the meaning of the word? But two-ness is not a property. Can I really say [that to say] there are two pennies in my pocket is to say there is any *one* entity there qualified by two-ness? We say that, in the case of the subject–predicate Aristotelian logic, to say that a thing may have two-ness is to entail that it may have three-ness or four-ness; though that may entail that there is only *one* thing in the Universe which is sometimes 77 or sometimes 210, and that robs the term ‘one’ of any meaning. How does one differentiate one from 1,000? If a thing may, as it loses redness and turns purple, lose its three-ness and turn to two-ness, why should it not lose its one-ness and revert to zero-ness? And if so, could it be a something which is a nothing? Two-ness is no more a property than oneness or being or existence is. At first this seems a formidable objection, but it rests on a mistake. Of course two-ness is not a property, but then what we mean by ‘one’ is not as simple as it seems. If I say that Lewis and Short’s Latin Dictionary is *one* book and not *two*, Lewis’s book and Short’s book, I do not mean that it is not composed of many different constituents. The fact that a whole is in some sense describable as one, although its parts are not, seems too trivial to need elaboration. But what is relevant is that we use the term ‘one’ in certain contexts to mean something which in another sense is many. Now, applying this to our case, to say of a penny that it is really one is to say many things about how it would look to different observers in different lights, etc. But it is also to say, so it turns out, that under certain circumstances my visual field will contain data in it of a certain sort, which, when I count as sense data are counted, I call seeing *two* circular patches: and when this happens in the way it does, we normally speak of there being only one *real* object. That is the rule for using the term ‘one’ in the case of physical objects; i.e. when two or more similar data appear under certain more or less specified circumstances and are not believed to be likely to appear except under those circumstances, and only one datum of this sort appears under a much larger variety of often experienced other circumstances, we

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

we speak of 'one' object, whereas when two data appear under a great many more kinds of circumstances, but sometimes only one appears (e.g. if two trees in the distance appear to coalesce into one blurred whole), we speak of *two* real objects in spite of the one-ness of the rare, or blurred, associated datum. It is not a question of *attributes*, it is a question of a rule for the use of *words* like 'one' or 'two' in such a way as to supply information which you check and find correct. We discover the rule by discovering what in fact we would say.

Sometimes there are funny borderline cases when we aren't sure what to say.

For example:

- (a) *echo*: doesn't count: if we hear a note and an echo or a note and harmonies, *one or two*?
- (b) like melting headache: does *it* disappear and can '*it*' be 'suppressed'? I have a pain in my tooth, sometimes it seems like two pains, sometimes 'like one' – *which*? Like *colour of the sea*, sometimes bluish gray, sometimes greenish blue, etc. Well, which? It alters in colour? And what about different observers at the same time? It is colourless? Then what do poets talk about?
- (c) Sometimes it becomes silly to ask 'how many?', e.g. how many colours does a continuum of colours – from blue to yellow – have? I can establish conventions: e.g. 'Whatever I discriminate after looking for 5 minutes', or if A is like B, and B like C, and A not like C, then A, B, C are different. *But* these give *different* results or just *vague* [ones]. Conventional, depends on purpose or usage.

Physics cannot answer this – nor does it pretend to. Typical philosophical puzzle. *Now*. There are broadly two methods commonly employed for answering questions: (1) empirical, (2) deductive.

1. *Ordinary empirical investigation*. In order to discover what happens you use your eyes etc.

In order to find out how kangaroos behave in cold climates you watch kangaroos. In order to discover whether people are happy under dictatorships, you watch their behaviour, or ask them questions. In order to discover what happens in the centre of the earth, you observe other portions of the earth, and bring the

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

results of other sciences to bear on the formulation of general propositions from which you infer conditions at the centre of the earth. This needs a lot of logical apparatus, but the data are empirical, i.e. gained through the senses.

2. *The second or deductive method* is that used in formal disciplines, principally mathematics, but also other sciences where the rules and concepts are defined in advance, e.g. games, or heraldry. What happens there is that maxims, definitions and rules are laid down in advance, so to speak, and the practitioner's skill consists purely in seeing what is and what is not permitted within the [4] framework, or compatibly with the definitions of the rules, etc. You do not, in the case of geometry, if you study conic sections, try to catch them at it in order to see how the creatures behave. You do not, in Latin grammar, having laid down the rule 'Let adjectives take the same case as the noun which they qualify', suddenly expect one fine morning to find various adjectives, examples in your book of grammar, behaving eccentrically, rebelling and refusing to agree with their nouns. When I say you do not find this, I do not mean that it is unlikely that you will, or even that it is a Law of Nature that you will not, but that it is somehow nonsense to suggest that you will. Words, numbers, symbols, chessmen behave as they do because you have laid down the plan and defined numbers, chessmen etc. as whatever follows the plan. If somebody one day makes his King in chess move across three squares instead of one, or breaks a rule of bridge, you do not say 'Nowadays chess Kings are more enterprising or *mobile* than they used to be, and get further.' You say 'I see you have ceased playing chess; what you are playing, if you are playing, must be some other game, say Royal-Chess.'

Now what about philosophy? Does it follow the first or empirical method of noting what happens, and trying to formulate general rules to cover this, or is it a game whose rules you yourself impose? Too large a question, too many answers. Metaphysicians think it is observation of data, but in a special non-sensuous manner which gets the best of both worlds, i.e. you try to describe the behaviour, i.e. the structure, qualities, relations of real, i.e. not invented, entities, but they are guaranteed against ever altering in their behaviour as much as if they were fictions obeying rules invented by an author. Kant gave a somewhat different answer. Certain modern logicians want to say that whatever is *not* logically certain – i.e. follows from rules which you have *invented* or have

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

accepted from others, but which could easily be replaced by another set of rules – whatever is *not* deducible from such rules, or is such a rule, is empirical, i.e. subject to natural science and not suitable for philosophic enquiry.

[5] (1) The problem may be seen to be composed of two or several quite genuine problems confounded together, and when a distinction is drawn, as Descartes recommends, a solution is thereby at least partially provided. Example:

What is Life?

- (1) Tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.
- (2) Dictionary definition in biology (chemical process within organic entities involving metabolism etc.)
- (3) Mrs Woolf: 'life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end.'²
- (4) Series of actual and hypothetical behavioural data which differ in certain assignable ways from data defining deed or inanimate entities.
- (5) That which the Lord infused into Adam. See Genesis 1. 4.³

Which?

Mental Cramp.

Who answers question?

Mystery etc. – and empirical one about origins.

Suppose someone says 'What is the University of Oxford?'

A. Name of a group of buildings of various shapes and ages in S.E. Midlands.

Yes but Q. How can Oxford have defeated Cambridge? Names don't defeat; nor [do] groups of buildings.

A. = a group of persons selected by other persons etc. who have to be admitted etc. *not buildings*

Yes well Q. Oxford University has always been a home of lost causes.

² Virginia Woolf, 'Modern Fiction', in *The Common Reader* (London, 1925), p. 189; this article was previously published, anonymously, in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 10 April 1919, but this passage (p. 189, col. 4) has been somewhat altered.

³ sc. 2. 7.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

[6] Does that mean that a group of members of Oxford University, selected by a certain process – a team were engaged in working for something which they could not gain? Absurd:

Men – people in Oxford always did that.

How many? When? Who?

Ob. Vague. Can't specify. Some members of it at almost all times are doing a Sisyphus.

But what is common? 'Light' – cause. 'Foot' – genetic. *Working class* – similar. Etc.

'Matthew Arnold wrote a poem about Oxford University' doesn't mean 'wrote about buildings – or name: although he did say something: not about selected teams: nor about a sufficient number of persons there at most times' – etc.

Context supplies meaning. Words vary with context – conditions: words direct men. *We do*: we are right etc. What is common and what is different. True. This a very late discovery: [it is] because it wasn't made that much intellectual nonsense [occurred] and scientists had to put up with so much nonsense from philosophers.

Descriptive theory: 'Why does clock strike 12 when Sun is high in sky?' [back to 5] 2 questions. (1) Clock mechanism. (2) What motive has clock? Why do I say 'It is 12?' Because I *want* to. Clocks don't *want*: hence question absurd. Loves and hates of atoms is earlier view why this not grasped.⁴ (3) Problem can be shown to be meaningless and due to a confusion of words or thoughts, so that when it is analysed it is seen to be such that it can no longer be taken to be a real question. Example: Can substances interact? What is the purpose of the Universe? Is time unreal? Is space crumpled? And if not, what surface has it? Is it smooth? Or curved? Or crescent like a moon? Etc. *Genius* means the power of rendering paradoxes as platitudes. The very fact that they are platitudes makes them unnoticeable. To realise how much we owe to Berkeley we must try to project ourselves into the atmosphere of the seventeenth century, let alone the Middle Ages. Exactly this sort of question we asked. Descartes liberated us in the matter of geometry and to some extent in philosophical method; Leibniz on space and time and certain mathematical techniques. But Descartes and Leibniz both believed in the ontological argument, that is, they believed that the existence of something could be deduced from a

⁴ Very hard to read, and obscure in import; also the position isn't certain.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

description of our idea of it. Leibniz believed that if your intellect was powerful enough you could deduce [7] all the facts of Caesar's life. Joseph believed that causality could be deduced from the First Law of Thought. Spinoza and Leibniz believed that atoms dimly think, and so does Dr Whitehead.

It is not only philosophers who breed such problems. Children who ask what happened before the beginning of the world, or outside it, have to be answered somehow. So do people who want to know what is meant by saying that the table is a solid extended brown-coloured object at rest, of a definite size and shape, and at the same time a whirl of dancing atoms and electrons or gamma rays or beta particles which have no colour, no smell or taste or hardness, and shape and size only in a very curious sense of the words; and when they are told that it is really a collection of packets of energy moving from one point to another in space, without traversing the intermediate gap, they cease understanding altogether. Or else if one asks the plain man whether he does not think that everything in the world might suddenly become six times bigger than it is, including our own body, he says yes, it might; but then how would he notice that? And why should not everything be becoming much bigger or much smaller, as it were, all the time, uniformly, so that everything retained proportion vis-à-vis everything else, and merely escape notice because the measuring instruments were changing in size too? He has no ready answer. It is by emancipating people from obsessive questions such as these – e.g. that life is a dream from which there is no waking – that philosophy does her work. Berkeley and Hume were great liberators of this type: Berkeley with regard to matter or substance, and Hume with regard to causal connection.

Berkeley saw (1) that puzzles arise *not* because we can't define our terms: we *can* (see Mrs Woolf etc.) but because definition *not* = meaning; (2) that 'meanings' are not discoverable a priori; (3) that empiricism [is] not compatible with Dualism: Real v. nom[inal] essences.

I propose to begin with Berkeley's *Principles of Human Knowledge*, which mainly deal with this topic of what the external world, referred to by us, is, and therefore cannot avoid dealing with the views of matter prevalent when he was [8] a young man.

What would a seventeenth-century scientist – and scientists were philosophers in the seventeenth century – have said about a material object? Matter is that which can be described in clear

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

terms, i.e. quantitative; possesses mathematical and logical properties, e.g. measurability and causal necessity. These discovered by non-sensuous intuition. Empirical Knowledge can be clearer and darker: at one end is total confusion and darkness – at the other perfect knowledge, utter clarity. All philosophers believed this till the seventeenth century.

Locke rebelled against the *centre* of this doctrine, which was that of real essences. Real essence: the search for the nature of that permanent, irreducible, ultimate *reality* which lies behind or under the appearance; for something which cannot be doubted; something which when once looked at seems incorrigibly known to be true. What Popper calls essentialism, something given to a special mode of cognition, something which the vulgar see only dimly. When you know it you know it, and if the facts of observation do not seem to corroborate it, so much the worse for the facts.

This metaphysical dogmatism is a continental tradition which was never very popular in Great Britain. Descartes *knew*, he didn't believe or suppose or wonder; he *knew* that matter was colourless, extended and had causal properties. Leibniz *knew* that the soul could never stop thinking. Kant *knew* that what was right for one man was right for ever and for everybody despite appearances. Hegel *knew* that the political State was an organism with a right to absolute obedience on that part of all its subjects. Filmer *knew* Kings had divine right. And so on.

Locke could not be so sure. He believed in the absolute correctness of what the scientists said, but could not be sure why this was so. He was sure the world was full of tables and mountains and planets, and sounds and thoughts and persons, but he could not be sure how he knew this, so he attempted to discover the sources and methods of information, and to describe what the scientists or theologians were talking about in terms of what he was sure he did know directly.

Locke's account of substance and physical matter

Matter's primary qualities, extension, figure, number, [9] solidity, motion, rest, very different from the use of the same words by Descartes. Account of Locke's primary sources as wobbling between empirically given[?] and c[omplex?] powers.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

Locke's confusion between (a) metaphysical substance, (b) logical particulars, (c) reality versus appearance and (d) scientific substratum:

Substance: what is permanent through change. That of which the real essence can be apprehended. That whose qualities belong solely to it. That whose behaviour can be discovered by considering solely its inner structure or function or purpose. A kind of island, a self-subsistent closed windowless something. Something about which everything could in principle be known and to knowledge of which no information about other things could make a difference. Something which is what it is, and not another thing, which could exist and go on by itself even if everything else ceased to be. In fact what we mean by ceasing to be is confused with that which *cannot* cease to be – i.e. the permanent substance: it can change, because it is that in terms of which change is change. A substance is something which is completely independent, describable by a set of words not applicable to anything else, because it cannot be qualified by anything which is true of anything other than itself. Consequently eternal. If it were not eternal the definition of it, which is not in time, being an eternal truth, might not apply to [it] after it had perished. But we *know* the definition to be true, and it cannot therefore ever cease to apply.

One of the ways of thought which lead to the view that there are substances, say, as held by Aristotle or Descartes or Spinoza is the general principle, which crops up again and again in philosophy, that movement implies rest, change implies permanence, uncertainty implies certainty: therefore error implies truth. Pre-relativity notion of Absolutes: Absolute Space: Absolute Time: without which nothing for exact science to be about. Develop. Connected with belief in non-sensuous intuition of matters of fact; if such intuitions are incorrigible, that which they are about must be for ever and ever what the intuition says it is. Hence a rigid unchanging world as solid and firm as the incorrigible intuitions which assert its existence. But if there are no such intuitions then this [10] world turns out to be a myth or at least a misleading way of describing the world. This obtains support from Aristotelian subject–predicate logic, where it was thought that whatever was a 'true' subject could not be a predicate. If I say 'The kangaroo is brown', there is something denoted by the word 'Kangaroo', and something else denoted by the word

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

'brown', and the Kangaroo may cease to be brown and still be a kangaroo, but it cannot cease to be a kangaroo and be a kangaroo, and will be *a something of* which the attributes are the attributes; the attributes may come and go, but *the something* is permanent and immovable, and has a nature of its own distinguishable from its attributes. But if the subject–predicate logic is at fault, i.e. does not always adequately describe our experience, this by itself won't be sufficient to demonstrate this thesis.

Examples: 'Alexander is the son of Philip.' Which is the subject? If so could the attributes of the subject change without affecting the attributes of any other subject? Or 'Nine men came into the room.' Which of the nine men is the subject? i.e. of *which* single substance is the proposition true in particular? A came in and B came in and C came in etc. If I say 'Nine men didn't come in' – 'Group of nine' is not doing something else.

(2) The next notion is that of particulars as opposed to universals. This is a logical entity and simply refers to the subject of predicates, which is what names denote. It is what has qualities and relations. It is that which in some sense exists or is or occurs even if only in my imagination or thought. It may be analysed as things or experience or the flow of experience or events or point-instances or here-nows or whatever you like. Cannot be *described* because all words classify; but can be pointed to. If you strip it of its qualities and relations it will be nothing, yet it is the only thing that exists. Can be learnt only by ostension.⁵ It is not what words stand for at all. Words always describe. If it were not so, all names would denote characteristics [11] and all propositions would be analytic for us. 'This desk is brown.' Someone might ask 'Which desk?' Answer 'This brown desk, of course.' But 'This brown desk is brown' is not very informative. So I say something is deskish in form and brown. But what is *something*? Something made of wood. But then if I say 'Is this desk made of wood?' – yes. *What* is made of wood? Something brown and darkish; i.e. it is now brown and darkish and wooden. What is *it*? In the end, if this peeling goes on, nothing will be left of the desk.

Particulars are instances of qualities. Or *what* occurs in experience (whether or not it is described). Words can refer only

⁵ Take proper names: 'Charles is here.' And you have to say 'The Charles who has long hair: the one with the long nose and a squint and all the rest of it.' But that means 'The man etc.' who is 'called Charles', and this is an attribute.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

to what anything has in common with other bits of experience, but is not itself that which is common to various bits of experience. Otherwise there would be no bits. Not all statements grammatically about particulars are logically so; for instance, if I say 'Inattentive listeners to lectures are very *reprehensible*', there may be no such inattentive people in the room or the world. If so, yet something seems to be said about somebody or something. Or if I say 'Nobody has ideas of genius nowadays', it is difficult at first to see what particular bits of experience or space or time that is about, for it cannot be '*nobody*' we say it about. If we mean by *nobody nobody*, then there is nobody to say it about. Particulars are what everything consists of, but can't be precisely mentioned save via the qualities that clothe it.

(3) *Reality*.

Quite different from preceding. If there are substances they must all be *real*, but not all realities need be substances, certainly not all particulars need be real, nor all realities particular. 'Reality' very dangerous and confusing word which does not stand for a *single* characteristic as words like 'blue' or 'disagreeable' or 'expensive' on the whole do stand. Yet out of the proposition that it does so stand metaphysics has derived its hold and its glory.

Examples: This is a *real* sheet of paper. That usually would be taken to mean it is a *material* object and not an illusion or a mirror image. This is a real omelette made of real eggs, i.e. nothing to do with hallucinations; we mean not of egg-powder or some other substitute. A *real bearskin*, i.e. not an artificial one, made of plastic. A real owl, i.e. not stuffed. A real rainbow. A real mirage. A real man. A real train, i.e. not a toy – not as opposed to hallucinations or synthetic material. A real disaster. [12] A real event, i.e. not fictional. But 'He is really a character in a book', i.e. not mistakenly inserted into it by me. An image really in a mirror. Clearly this is a matter of context, and 'X is real' means the word 'X' is being applied in the normal and approved manner, and not something about a single characteristic which all real entities have as opposed to real or less real entities which lack it. Old view was 'Is it real?' = 'Is there substance behind it?'

(4) *Newtonian Physics and Atoms*

What do scientists measure?

What is mathematics applied to?

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

- (a) Identical through space and time.
- (b) Susceptible to precise description.
- (c) Independent of idiosyncrasies of particular observers of their physical position, mental condition etc.

It is the owner of causal properties. It is certainly particular. Everything which composes the universe is. That is merely saying it is *something* and not *nothing*. It is not a substance because it is empirical. If it is empirical, it is in some sense in space and time. It used to be thought of as composed of indestructible minimal particles, i.e. atoms, but this is only a particular physical hypothesis, and physics continues to use terms not drawn from ordinary life, although this hypothesis is no longer held in its original form. It is certainly not the same as 'real', since the Greeks and Romans knew perfectly well what they meant by the difference between a 'real' manuscript and a forgery, or a 'real' palm tree and a mirage, or a 'real' mirage and somebody's false idea that he was seeing one when he wasn't. They knew all this, whatever theory of physics they may have held, or even if they held none at all. So they *meant* by 'real' something distinct from whatever physics may say.

Now Locke, when he talks of material substance, confuses [13] these four notions hopelessly. I do not wish to go into his arguments here, but:

Four arguments for four different conclusions:

- (1) His view that matter is permanent through change, that all changes are changes of it, but of an 'it' which remains fixed and unaltered, is an argument in favour of substance.
- (2) His argument that when we ask what a cherry is, then we take away one by one its sweetness, its redness, its moistness, its particular texture, its spherical shape, we have nothing left but an unknown something or other, is the search for bare particulars.
- (3) His argument from illusions, that things are not always what they appear to be; that square towers look round in the distance, and the same water seems cold to a warm hand and warm to a cold one, is an argument to prove that there must be something materially real as against appearance.
- (4) His argument in favour of primary qualities as the causes of our perceptions, i.e. atoms, vibrations etc., is an argument in favour of the existence of entities which physicists

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

investigate and describe, but which have life histories in time and space unlike substances. Small wonder that his conception of matter is so dark and so bewildering.

Berkeley rightly saw in the concept of matter one of the main obstacles to progress, and attacked it from two sides at once – as an abstract idea and as something unperceived and imperceptible. The work in which this done most thoroughly is *The Principles of Human Knowledge*. (It might be best to follow the plan of the *Principles*, and to start at any rate by taking it as the text to consider the development of the argument, as he presents it very coherently there.) Worth mentioning the method he employs:

[14] What emerges from Berkeley's treatment is that his method is something like this.

(1) There are certain topics such as theology, morals etc. where he repeats what his predecessors said, i.e. that it is discovery by means of a special light with which we are endowed by God etc. but

(2) With regard to the topics which interest us, namely 'What is a material object?' 'Does it exist outside our consciousness?', 'What is a concept?', 'Has it a counterpart in reality independent of our thought?', 'What is a colour?', 'Does it characterise something within or without us?' – with regard to these questions Berkeley thinks the proper method is to examine how we use the words which are thought to stand for these entities, and he claims that if you consider very carefully what you mean when you notice such words as 'thing', 'real', 'red' etc. you will realise that certain theories about what they are will mean nothing to you, or are even self-contradictory, i.e. contradictory to the meanings which you originally claimed to attach to them. Now this is of course Euclid's method in Geometry, and so far it is deductive and does not depend upon the facts of experience. But the original meanings which the conclusions are said to contradict are not defined as a rule in a conventional manner. Berkeley, for example, argues that when you say you feel pain, and when you say you feel heat, you may be referring to the same sensation. Whether you do or not is a matter which you can settle only by, so to speak, looking within yourself and considering whether you do or don't, not by looking up the original definitions and rules at the back of the book. The [15] method may be deductive, but the data are supplied by experience, experience of what we mean, i.e. what we want to say

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

by using this or that word. And this, in a sense, is an empirical investigation of how people use such words as 'colour', 'a physical object', 'perceive', 'is' etc, and whether anything can be discovered from this about themselves, or the world. An investigation on just this subject is what Berkeley begins with when he attacks the notion of abstract ideas.

[16]

Lecture II (23 January 1947)

1. Berkeley begins *The Principles of Human Knowledge* by saying that, before getting on to such large topics as 'What are things?', 'What are minds?', 'What exists?' etc., he must say something about the part played by words. He thinks if any problem seems unanswerable in principle something is wrong in the formulation. It is only we who put difficulties in our own path in the matter.

We should believe that God has dealt more bountifully with the sons of men, than to give them a strong desire for that knowledge, which He had placed quite out of their reach. [...] Upon the whole, I am inclined to think that the far greater part, if not all, of those difficulties which have hitherto amused philosophers, and blocked up the way to knowledge, are entirely owing to ourselves. That we have first raised a dust, and then complain, we cannot see.⁶

Hence the need for looking for false principles of enquiry as the source of our difficulties (Important. Pseudo-questions: if we understand a question we must know what *kind* of answer it has – otherwise meaningless), and this involves us in considering the 'Nature and abuse of language'. One of the major abuses of this sort is that which involves belief in the existence of abstract ideas. Normally if we ask what a thing is – say a Kangaroo, or mate in three moves – we can produce a specimen. Wherever it is a thought, e.g. in the case of entities like 'Oxford University' or 'life' or Truth or Reality, we appeal to abstract ideas. ἵππον μὲν ὄρω, ἵπποτητα δ' οὐκ ὄρω.⁷ We intuit 'horseness', an abstract idea. In sections 7, 8 and 9 of the *Principles* Berkeley gives a very reasonable

⁶ *Principles*, introduction, paragraph 3.

⁷ 'Ἴππον μὲν ὄρω, ἵπποτητα δ' οὐκ ὄρω' ('I see a horse, but I don't see horseness').

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

account of what Locke, for example, must sometimes have meant by, say, the 'Idea of Colour in Abstract'. That which is common to red, blue and white in virtue of which we call them colours, according to Locke, is itself neither red nor blue nor white nor any other determinate colour. Now this cannot exist, but we can think of it in some sense. Nor can colour exist without extension, yet the mind can 'frame to itself by abstraction' the idea of one of these without the other. The notion of 'man' or 'humanity' or 'human nature' leaves out the ideas which it has of Peter, James and John – those 'circumstances and [17] differences which are determinate to any particular existence'. Motion is 'neither walking nor flying nor creeping, nevertheless it is motion, though difficult to conceive'. Berkeley observes of this: 'Whether others have this wonderful faculty of abstracting ideas they best can tell. For myself, I dare be confident I have it not.' He then says that he can imagine new combinations of the original ideas. 'I can imagine a man with two heads or the upper part of a man joined to the body of a horse or a nose or an eye by itself.' But 'I deny that I can abstract from one another or conceive separately those qualities which it is impossible should exist so separated or that I can frame a general notion in abstracting from particulars in the manner aforesaid.'

Locke said that the capacity for abstraction is what divides men from brutes. For 'brutes abstract not'. Berkeley fears that, if this be the criterion, then a 'great many of those that pass for men must be reckoned into their number'. The reason why brutes are excluded is, it seems, because they do not appear to use words or symbols. But it can follow only that what they lack is power of *abstraction* if 'the use of words is impossible without having abstract *general ideas*'. What sort of thing is an *abstract* idea? Berkeley does not deny (section 12) that we may in some sense have '*general ideas*'. 'An idea which considered in itself is particular becomes *general* by being made to *represent* or *stand for* all other particular ideas of the same sort.' The geometer's particular black line, an inch long, becomes general by 'being made a sign', 'so the same line by being a sign is made [18] general'. A line is general because it refers to 'the various particular lines which it indifferently denotes'. And again, 'A word becomes general by being made the sign not of an abstract general idea, but of *several* particular ideas, *any one* of which it *indifferently* suggests to the mind.' The word 'any' is going to give trouble later. He then quotes Locke, book 4, chapter 7, paragraph 9 of the *Essay on Human Understanding*, where

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

Locke (very unfortunately) says that 'A general idea of a triangle is neither oblique nor rectangular, neither equilateral, equicrural nor scalenon, but all and none of these at once.' But this, so to speak, jumbles all these together in its haste to communicate some general notion. Berkeley mocks at this and says that if anyone believes that they can perform such an operation he can think of no argument against it, and invites the reader to look into his own mind and see whether he can find *something in it* which is neither oblique nor rectangular, neither equilateral, equicrural nor scalenon, but all or none of these at once. Of course Berkeley is right: it is to say the least *difficult* to frame such a notion. Not difficult but obviously quite impossible. Something can certainly not be qualityless. 'Particulars can be bare' is self-contradictory. Locke says that it will be found a hard task for children – a hard task for that tender age. 'Is it not a hard thing to imagine that a couple of children cannot prate together of their sugar plums and their rattles and the rest of their little trinkets before they have first tacked together numberless inconsistencies and so framed in their minds abstract general ideas and annexed them to every common name they make use of?' Of course there are *universal notions*, which merely means that 'a particular triangle doth equally stand for and represent *all* rectilinear triangles whatsoever'. This is considered quite different from abstract ideas (read quotation from Sections 18 and 19; also marked bits in sections 23 and 24). Now the difference between *general* ideas and abstract ideas is obviously crucial. Suspend this. Consider what Berkeley wants to say first.

[19] Berkeley's principal motive for discussing abstract general ideas is to kill the view that there are entities in the *external* world *not* perceived *through the senses*. If there are such, no telling what may not be postulated. Of course Locke had routed innate ideas as advocated by Descartes or Leibniz, and showed that we 'did not discover such within us, implanted from birth', but Locke had not gone far enough, and was still deceived by words. The war between intuition and empirical knowledge must necessarily be war to the death. You cannot have it both ways. If the mind is capable of deriving information from sources other than the stream of empirical impressions, it can construct an entire world therefrom. The proposition that it can do this is derived from the view that certain words have no obvious empirical counterpart. While most sync[ategorematic] words have empirical counterparts – 'red', 'sweet', 'mountain' etc. – there are words – like *substance*,

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

cause, infinite divisibility, square root, triangularity, humanity which have none. But they mean something. Therefore they must have some counterparts in the external world of which they are the proper names; if these words are proper names, their owners, since they could not be seen, smelt, heard, touched etc. can be made to present themselves only by some other faculty: the named entities were non-sensible, the faculty was a non-sensible mode of acquaintance, the science that dealt with this was ontology or metaphysics and subdivisions of it were physics, mathematics, logic etc. Innate ideas might not exist; Locke might very well have shown that infants at birth or untutored American Indians or congenital idiots did not enjoy innate information; it comes only later with adequate mental development. It is, as Leibniz believed, potential. In mind, not before it, etc. But no matter how or whence it comes, if it comes at all, non-empirical knowledge is possible, that is knowledge which is neither of the data of the senses nor yet knowledge of how words and other symbols are used; awareness that is neither of particular colours or scents or sounds [20] nor yet of the rules of language or the rules of chess or the rules of mathematics, all of which might be represented as man-made. And once that is allowed, the enemy is within the gates. If non-sensible information was a principle allowed to be possible, then how was one to deal with persons who maintained that you see brown extended patches and touch hard extended surfaces, but know in some other way that these are merely appearances of 'real things' which you know are there in some other way? That in hallucinations or dreams, or indeed in the stream of images or daydreams which a hearty visualiser could summon up at will, what is lacking *is precisely* the presence of *this* hard, non-sensuous, substantial core? *That* and nothing else is what is *meant* by distinguishing your data into appearance and reality, into the physical world and the world of dreams and imagination. And then would arise the appalling problem which faces anyone who takes any such view as this of answering the question. 'What is the relation between the two worlds? Is it resemblance? Or causal? Or special and unique? And how can you tell what if any relation it is without seeing both ends of the relation at once, seeing which is appearance and which reality in one act of cognition? But if you see both, why should you bother with appearances at all? Why should you bother with the senses at all?' That is what Plato and Descartes, St Thomas and Spinoza all

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

thought. But if ordinary men certainly did not have the insight which Plato and Descartes said they possessed, and did not see the superior entities of the purely rational world, we are back with the choice between one or two mutually exclusive sources of knowledge. If the second, metaphysical, one exists, the first seems unnecessary; if the first, i.e. the empirical, tells us all we do in fact know, the second is either a shadow, an unnecessary copy of it, or unintelligible, and this latter is in fact Berkeley's position.

[21] Berkeley read the metaphysicians, and apart from his theology and doctrine of Selves and Relations, which is another and later story, convinced himself that he attached no meaning to their concepts, and did not possess the faculty of intellectual intuition, superior to and different from the senses. How did they come to make the vast mistake of thinking they had this power of almost mystical vision when in fact they did not? Berkeley thought he solved the mystery. It was due to a gigantic fallacy about how words mean. The fallacy is one I mentioned last time. It is that of *unum nomen unum nominatum*, i.e. that corresponding to every syncategorematic word there is always some *one* entity for which it stands – of which it is the name; this presupposes that language is unambiguous, that words neither alter their senses nor stand for related but different entities or are used in different ways to mean differently in different contexts. He has in mind persons who really think that in order to be aware of anything at all I must (as used to be said) apprehend the universal in the particular; or 'extract' universals from particulars; a kind of process which leaves particulars bare and unrelated like a kind of slag-heap of coke after the valuable substance has been taken away from it, the valuable stuff being the universals which I extract, strain off like a precious juice from the grape; people who think that tend to argue that if it weren't so, I should not even be able to think of things as being 'green' or 'grass' because having seen green grass once, how could I recognise it as green the second time I saw it? Unless I had in my mind some notion or concept which I could apply like a measuring-rod or a standard to see if it really is green and grassy? And what is this but the ideas of green and grass, abstraction of a universal, extracted from out of the first green grass I saw, retained ever after in my mind's eyes, which is a non-empirical intuition of what it means to say that: [then not that?]. So, you see, a non-empirical intuition is required even for empirical knowledge: but

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

this once granted may have objects of its own, number, substance and all.

Again: *words*, we said, classify: to call a thing grass is to put it in the same category with other things also called grass; what all patches of grass have in common is grassiness. And I do not count even[?] grassiness as I do this[?] grass – but unless ‘grassy’ meant something to me, ‘grass’ would not. But it does: therefore ‘grassy’ does. So I *must* have a faculty for apprehending it which functions whenever I *identify* anything as ‘such and such’. Of this I can say only that in that event the brutes dismissed by Locke, who *ex hypothesi* cannot perform such intellectual non-sensuous operations, must be able to *taste* or *smell* abstractions, for unless we think animals automata we certainly think that it is the fact that there *is* a common quality between two experiences, say the look of milk that makes the cat go for the milk or the dog recognise its master the second time it sees it/him, or makes it avoid the fire after singeing its claws once. Animals do ‘recognise’ the sound of a bell, or the looks of things: by intuition? But this is irrelevant. This is not a lecture on logic or the nature of universals and I cannot therefore discuss the general problem involved, but this much must be said: Berkeley must get rid of non-empirical analysing of what it means to say that a given triangle becomes generalised by being made to stand for any other triangles, or a given patch of grass for other patches. The puzzling phrase is: ‘being made to stand for’ or ‘standing for’. How does something ‘stand for’ something else? Because we make it do so. Words do not mean by nature, nor [22] do geometrical designs on blackboards naturally stand or fail to stand for anything. They are what they are, visual or auditory experiences.

Now if I say of a given geometrical pattern, ‘Let it stand for all triangles indifferently’, there are two difficulties at once.

1. In virtue of what do they do this? The triangles are composed of thick black lines, let us say. Why then do they not *stand for* a particular brand of black paint or draughtsman’s charcoal? They are drawn on, say, paper. Why do they not stand for a particular brand of paper as opposed to cloth, or something else? And so forth. In other words somebody might say that it is *in virtue of* only one property or a set of properties that the given triangular patch in my visual field stands for triangles in general, and this phrase ‘in virtue of’ is then what the defender of abstract universals would say refers to the presence of, is the name of,

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

universals. That, according to logical realist or conceptualist, is what this triangle and the triangles it stands for actually have in common, and they actually have it, this single common property, triangularity; the individual triangles are so many particular entities, like headaches, or sensations of red, or loud sounds or bitter tastes. I do not invent them, I come across them. And triangularity is something else again, and they all have it in common, and I don't invent that either, I find it *in* the triangles, though what 'in' means it is harder to say.

Berkeley gives countenance to such talk. In talking of triangles Berkeley does not mean, or should not mean, what modern mathematicians would mean by geometrical triangles, for these obey rules which according to some theories are invented by us, like the rules of chess, and if so have only that in common which we put into them. We don't learn about this by looking for common qualities they have with other triangles any more than we learn about Kings in chess by examining hundreds of chessmen. He seems to mean the vaguely triangular shapes one might meet with in nature, say pyramids or the flaps of envelopes; and the difficulty is what is meant by saying that a given triangular shape stands for, even[?] 'in respect of' its triangularity. Now the *word* 'triangle' doesn't have anything in common with the triangles it stands for, and therefore the [23] question 'In respect of what special characteristics of it do I use it to stand for triangles?' does not arise. I use any symbol I please: *anything* will do if I make it serve me thus. But the difficulty lingers. The triangular shape stands for whatever this, that or the other triangle have in common. What does this 'whatever' stand for? What do entities called triangles have in common? And if, as Berkeley thinks, there is no one single 'it' which they all have in common, and which 'triangle' is the name of, what is meant by saying that it is proper to use any *one* symbol for them *all*? Berkeley's answer is that the relation of 'standing for', 'in virtue of', etc. is really founded on that of *similarity* between the various instances and this is very important. First glimpse of light in the wood. (*Note*: What Nominalism is; and explain difference between two types of nominalism – where terms stand for *similarity* and where they are purely arbitrary, i.e. collective noun: no *general* term can be purely arbitrary: and no *term* if it is a token of a type.)

But if similarity is the cardinal relation, then the objection some philosophers bring against it is something of this kind:

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

You say that you call two patches of colour 'red' or 'scarlet' or even 'this particular shade of scarlet' because they resemble each other or look similar. In other words you christen some particular constituent in your experience with the sound or mark on paper 'red' as a name and say that *anything* which resembles it will be called 'red' too. 'Red' means 'like the specimen'. So far so good. But now what about the word 'resembles' (let us use one word, 'resemble', and drop 'similar'). How is that used? By analogy with the way in which we explained how the word 'red' is used, we have to say that the word 'resembles', like all words, is used to denote that something resembles something else: in this case whenever two or more relations of resemblance in their turn *resemble* each other. But if so, the definition is either circular or leads to an infinite vicious regress. Either the term 'resembles' is defined in terms of itself, and you say 'Two things resemble each other' when the complex consisting of these two things 'resembles' some other complex originally christened as the model or specimen of [24] the resemblance relation, and that the word 'resembles' is used throughout the expression in the same sense; in other words if 'X is red and round' = 'X exactly resembles the original sensation we agreed to call red' *then* 'X resembles Y' = 'The X-Y relation resembles the relation we agreed to call resemblance.' To get out of this circle we might try and hold that the sense in which 'this red patch' and 'that red patch' resemble each other is a *different sense* of 'resemble' from that in which the resemblance of these two red patches and the resemblance of those two blue patches resemble each other. But *then* you have to say that *the special sense* in which only the complex entity or pattern consisting of two red patches and the complex consisting of two blue patches are said to *resemble* each other is given by the archetype specimen in which these resemblances *resemble*; namely, there has to be postulated a supercomplex consisting of the two single complexes; and there has to be postulated a new relation of resemblance between this supercomplex and some other supercomplex also consisting of two sets of two characteristics tied by the same network of relations of resemblance. But of course the two supercomplexes, in order to resemble, must be conceived as connected in a super-supercomplex which has its own relation of resemblance, still [mind?] out, sensibly observed, with another super-supercomplex, and so on to infinity. And this seems not merely complicated but definitely wrong.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

a. Because the regress is infinite and proceeds backwards. Each foundation crumbles as the foundation under it needs propping. Each case of resemblance means something else, and we cannot even say they resemble each other in resemblingness – because that yields a new resemblance. *tritoj a'nqrwpoj*.⁸

b. It is not true. I can say that I know what I mean when I say that two sounds which I do not name, i.e. even classify, are exactly like each other, and if I am told that I do not mean that unless I mean by likeness this infinitely regressive series of resemblances of resemblances of resemblances, then I must protest and say, 'But I do not mean that, for I am sure that the two sounds sound as one when they occur together, but I neither know nor think about the resemblances between combinations of combinations of a increasingly elaborate kind in which this sound might possibly be involved.' I must, as Berkeley says, be allowed to know what I am trying to say, and reject any attempt to represent me as stating something which I am not stating.

1. This is the objection to similarity analysis urged by Russell and others, and it is pretty formidable. Are we then in despair to turn back to Plato or Aristotle and speak of 'real universals'? But relations between them and their instances, and between them among themselves reproduce these difficulties in much worse form. Perhaps the answer to it is somewhat along the following lines: that awareness of resemblance is not a judgement asserting that two things have been compared in terms of a criterion which is itself outside them (which therefore needs accounting for, justifying etc.) but is immediate (develop a little).

2. Less formidable is the objection that Berkeley when talking of ideas means *images*, that this is his reason for being perplexed by abstract ideas: for of course nobody ever thought that I could have an abstract and general *image* of something. Of course I cannot have an image of something which is not red or blue or green or coloured. Of course I cannot have an image of a circle of no particular size or position or thickness etc., but general ideas are not images, they are *thoughts*. Not all, perhaps not much, thinking is thinking in images. When I think of a myriagon, i.e. a figure with ten thousand angles, I do not imagine it. Or, if I do, my image of a figure with ten thousand sides and my image of a figure with nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine sides are not very

⁸ 'Tritos anthrōpos' ('the third man').

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

different. Yet this does not prevent me from realising that their properties are very different. But because Berkeley talks loosely, his opponents cannot score as heavily as they think. Berkeley's thesis is that knowledge may be analysed into ideas – = sensations and images and any other empirical data – and *words*. What this means is that any proposition claiming to assert a matter of fact – not a law or a logical truth, but to give information about the world – can be analysed into basic empirical data and compounds thereof – Locke 'simple' ideas. I cannot imagine (i.e. I cannot see it as) a myriagon. But I can both imagine and give rules for constructing a pentagon: and I can imagine what it would be like to have a powerful enough intellect to imagine a myriagon. The image of one is not absurd. Whereas that of something without sensible attributes is. That is Berkeley's case. (Indicate that nevertheless the basic currency is empirical = ostensive.)

3. A far more fatal difficulty, on any empirical analysis of language, is about general terms such as 'all', 'any', 'if', propositions about the past, and notions such as those of material things, persons and scientific entities. These difficulties are not solved by a non-nominalist view of universals. Let us consider one of these. Generality[?].

[26] It seems clear that by his method of killing abstract ideas Berkeley kills off too much. After all, it might be possible that, although the data of experience could be defined in purely sensible, ostensive ways – reds, blues, hard – and soft – touch sensations, scents and flavours, sounds and inner images, muscular sensations and emotions such as discomfort, rage, surprise, hate, perplexity, sense of similarity or congruence etc. – although all propositions of a factual kind might be reduced to this, the relations between the data might be of a special or peculiar nature, i.e. in some sense not derived from simple data of sense or introspection or memory: that is, what propositions are *about* would always be empirical, but the *structure* of what they were about, whether it was hypothetical, [], or past or future etc. might be due to something like thought or reason, e.g. coloured or extended. All Ideas *concrete*.⁹

This is a very primitive way of suggesting some of Kant's later theories, and it may lead to conclusions repugnant to Berkeley's

⁹ Transcript corrected up to this point by Henry Hardy, hereafter by James Chappel. HH will correct the rest in due course.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

empiricism, but the reason for it is that his form of it involved difficulties of a scarcely less formidable nature, (and although this takes us away a little from the external world) it is just worth a glance:

1. We have already dealt with difficulties about similarity. Now consider difficulties about generality. How are we to analyse propositions about 'all x' or 'if x': what '*idea*' corresponds? 'In the higher [] *all* cats are grey': I have idea of this cat or of a very large number of cats: e.g. resemblances between the various cats I think but even if number of cats in mind is finite and I have labelled it all, 'all cats' now cover all possible cats [] infinite number possible and I cannot collect infinity: all men, this and this and this and this *etc* and *etc*' cannot be diluted – into a finite collection: I cannot point to a collection and say 'that is what I *mean* by "all"'. I can say 'A, E, I O U Y' are *all* the vowels of the English Alphabet: but that means 'nothing not there *is* a vowel *etc.*' and nothing [], not X nor B, no letters [] – and that is infinite. 'Lecturers who talk too rapidly are apt to be misunderstood'. *Who* are these lecturers? [] We cannot tell: We cannot run them all: and say these are all the lecturers there are. [] [There] *could* be others.

2. On B's view geometry becomes odd, very odd. We have just seen that the notion of *infinity* is unintelligible, because again we can never say '*etc.*'. This perhaps is a special case of generality. But worse is to come. If I say that a given visual surface is infinitely divisible that means that it has an infinite number of parts. What can this mean for Berkeley? Obviously the number of parts which I can actually distinguish with the naked eye is finite and I could, I [27] suppose, count it if I was careful enough. But only that which I can discriminate can exist, for to say that there is something else is all to him nonsensical and therefore meaningless. Therefore I cannot infinitely divide and subdivide an empirical datum or an empirical surface. Therefore surfaces do *not* consist of an infinite number of parts, but only of so many. But as geometry, according to Berkeley, (and algebra,) do purport either to describe or symbolise the world, the notion of infinite divisibility is an absurd and meaningless one. This odd conclusion he boldly embraces. Of course someone might say 'What about an eye differently constructed from ours, say the eye of a fly (Berkeley speaks of a cheese mite), to which an inch on a table surface may present many more discriminable data than to our eye; and what about the bit of the table seen magnified by the microscope', again many

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

more data etc. To this Berkeley replies that the fly and the man with the microscope literally *do not see the same* thing as the normal observer with the naked eye. What the microscope reveals is literally bigger and with more parts than data of naked eye. And we say that what we see through the microscope is the same as what we see without it in a very peculiar sense of 'same'. It is not literally 'same'. It is 'same' in a special sense of 'same'. But that we shall have to deal with in discussing identity of material objects. In the meanwhile if five lines are not infinitely divisible, the doctrine of infinitesimals on which the differential calculus of Leibniz and Newton is based, as well as the doctrine of the incommensurables which it is meant to solve, go by the board. (Give brief exposition here of irrational numbers). E.g. if extension equals collection of minima sensibilia, only those lines can be bisected which contain an even number of them, i.e. a line containing an odd number cannot be said to have two halves at all: v. odd. Berkeley literally says that $1/10000$ part of an inch *doesn't exist*: and that explaining what we mean ($1'' = 10000$ miles, which is $1 \text{ mile} = ?$) contradicts himself. [28] Now this, although it seems absurd, cannot be brushed aside. There is a sense in which Berkeley is right, and people do not see an infinite collection of points or magnitudes infinitesimally small, and the application of or relation of a formal system like arithmetic or algebra to the sensible world are in any case a problem which the Greeks failed to solve, and the solution of which by modern thinkers is not *so* clear as to be *self-evident*. But the conclusion Berkeley reaches is that Newton and modern mathematics and physics are simply wrong in using such concepts as infinitesimals. That everything is made up of a finite collection, either odd or even, of minima sensibilia not further sub-divisible, but varying from time to time from place to place, from observer to observer, from type of eye, brain etc. is kind of sensationalist atomism, at least equally paradoxical and if worked out, absurd. (How many? How to specify conditions?) It makes mathematics an empirical science, and all proofs approximations, as Mill finally said it was. And whatever else it is, we are clear that it is not that.

All this is done in order to get rid of arguments for the existence of abstract ideas, under cover of which there is a liability to smuggle in the mysterious and undesirable *sub-stratum matter*, alleged by other philosophers to be the object of our knowledge and the cause of our sensations. Words cannot show for non-entities. Hence no abstract ideas. The world consists according to

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

Berkeley of sensations and selves, and symbols, and also God. But what then misleads us into thinking of abstract ideas or words A: *World*.

Let us briefly deal with symbols next.

There are 6 views in Berkeley of what these are:-

1. They are specific objects.
2. They are images.
3. They are names.
4. They are meanings.
5. They are signs.
6. They are notions.

On the first view anything may stand for anything. This observed desk 'stands for' all other desks. 'Stands for' means 'I make it [29] stand for'. Thinking then means shuffling about objects in this sense. Very much as I count on the fingers of a hand where the fingers are the symbols. But (a) manipulation might be too clumsy to make it useful frequently (b) we have no way of knowing when arrangement 'natural' and when 'conventional' (c) Confusibility with representation. Several Terms – 'If' etc. not very easy to represent with desks. – *not* desks e.g. or if desks, or *some desks*. Easier than desks, but not too many[?] of that and (c) still should.

2. *Images*. Useful stress by Berkeley on images for images' sake (artists and daydreamers) versus images as deliberate symbols.

3. *Symbols are names*. This won't do, because names can be only labels attached to specific entities, and not to classes defined in terms of a property which if [it] has [a] name of its own becomes Berkeley's worst enemy, – an entity, the abstract universal. Fido can be *name* of this dog, but 'Dog' name of what? Caninity? Which is what?

4. *Meanings* – Symbols are *meanings* is even worse if what words stand for are unqualified are 'meanings'. What are meanings if they're not 'meants' – entities – non-sensible objects of the mind. (golden[?] mountains) [] objective of false or nonsense propositions.

5. *Symbols are Signs*. If this merely means that they in fact conjure up whatever the words are thought to refer to, it will not do, since we distinguish between precise *meanings of words* and their casual causal associations.

6. *Notions*. This is a valuable and interesting idea indicating that Berkeley realised the need for generalisation, but at the same time

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

wished to guard against the idea of having to have objective counterparts of general terms i.e. of looking on all, including general terms as names of things in the world; which would entail that some entities – named by general names have no particular but only a general nature i.e. there are universals as entities; this is thought to be absurd if only because of the infinite regress which Plato and Aristotle had pointed out (if universals are entities then relations between them are entities too and require further universals to relate them. Also Entities. Midas Touch. While found in fallacy that *meaning* is *transitive* correspondence. 'x' means x means if I want[?] 'x' [] etc. You will grasp the X whether it is so or not: what 'grasping that X' is is another question, which involves [the] whole of metaphysics, theory of knowledge and logic. Fortunately irrelevant.

Things.

Having got rid of, as he thinks, abstract ideas, and determined therefore that whatever ordinary men or physicists mean by material objects cannot at any rate be abstract, Berkeley [30] is at last in a position to spring his great new principle on the world. 'The obvious though amazing truth' as he calls it in the Commonplace Book, of '*Esse est percipi*' – 'to be is to be perceived'. How is this reached? 'Consult, ransack your understanding'. How Berkeley ransacked his understanding has been revealed to us by his Commonplace Book, which was not meant for publication. He began thinking about the nature of Time, and observes, 'Time is a train of ideas succeeding each other' (Commonplace Book 158) and then 'duration not distinguished from existence' i.e. whatever exists last, whatever lasts exists. But duration is longer in pain than in pleasure, so measuring time differs from moment to moment, and from individual to individual. The same *tō nūn* (the now) not common to all intelligences', therefore 'Time a sensation, therefore only in ye minde'. '*Tempus est percipi*' but '*esse est tempus*; therefore *esse est percipi*'. That's how the startling conclusion is reached. No doubt there are a thousand contexts in which the word 'Thing' or the word 'Matter' could be employed, but what we are after is what people mean by material objects as distinct from mere ideas or mere images or illusions and the like. Berkeley uses the term *idea* roughly to mean what we should now mean by *sense data*, of 'sense-experiences'. He *can not* mean that 'to be' and 'to be perceived' are *interchangeable* terms although he often talks as if he did. That is, he does not mean the proposition is analytic or a tautology. And he

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

does not mean that because he thinks that there is something in the word besides ideas or sensations i.e. percipient minds, these minds clearly also *exist*, they have '*esse*', but they are not necessarily perceived. Consequently '*esse est percipi*' is either not an analytic proposition i.e. to say of a thing that it exists without being perceived is not self-contradictory, but merely false in some way, or else [] it is ambiguous and '*esse*' means something quite different in the case of sensations, and therefore physical objects on the one hand, and of selves or spirits on the other. It becomes fully analytic only in later e.g. Müller[?] or Ayerian phenomenism.

At first whatever sense we take '*esse est percipi*' in, whether analytic or not, it seems an obvious paradox. The following immediate and obvious objections spring to mind as they have to those of many subsequent philosophers:

1. When I say that I perceive X – say a tree, do I mean that I see it, or do I mean that I touch it? And is not 'it' common to sight and touch and if so is there not something which is neither seen nor touched, but is the same whether seen or touched.

2. What happens to X when I am not seeing it? Does it disappear, clicking in and out as I open and close my eyelids? When I say, upon returning to a garden after an absence 'I see the tree is still here' do I really mean 'Here it is again'? Not 'still', but 'again'. Or if my fire has gone out in my absence, do I say, 'Oh, I should have remembered to keep my idea or image of the fire vivid and warm in my mind – or before my eyes; because I was thinking about and looked away at other things it went and expired'?

3. What about my own body. Does that bob in and out of existence as when I or somebody else choose to indulge in an act of sensing or to cease doing so.

What about *Exists?* When I ask 'does the material table exist' is it like 'Does Queen Victoria exist' [or] does the Queen of France exist? Or Does Queen Semiramis exist? Or does Fairy Queen (Mab) exist? Or does the Queen of Spades exist? Or does The Queen Bee exist?: Does the [] Man exist? [32]

4. If the tree is described as 'my own sensations' how can they also be somebody else's. Is there *one* tree or *two* (2 observers)? My tree and yours? If *one*, is there *one* headache (provided at least one observer feels it)? Is there not something absurd in saying that I can feel someone else's headache by mistake in the sense in which I can pick up their overcoat by mistake ('How ghastly, I have

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

walked into Jones' headache, and that always lasts a few days'). This is *impossible*: [] impossible? Anyway: 2 headaches. One *not* substitute for other. Surely visual data ditto.

5. 'Exists' There are two main questions which emerge from this:

(1) Are we in some way compelled to assert that beside our sensations there *exists*, as sensations exist, something else, whether or not in specific relations with our sensations – but quite unlike it and insensible? And more radically, what would make us believe that this is true? Or false? And further still, does it make sense to say that? Is it intelligible? *A fortiori*, if it is not sense it will not be true, and if it is not true nothing other than psychological causes can compel us to utter a set of words which turns out to be meaningless. And that is Berkeley's central thesis about material substance.

(2) What is meant by saying that something – possibly sensible but unsensed, continues to exist though not actually and continuously sensed or perceived by us? And to this question, which cannot be evaded on any theory of knowledge, Berkeley has several conflicting views. The best way of treating this whole topic is, I think, not by selecting Berkeley's various replies subject by subject, but by going through the Principles in Berkeley's own perfectly logical order and considering what he says point by point. This is both an exercise [33] in philosophical method and illuminating in itself. (There are 33 distinguishable points, each of some interest and importance, which Berkeley makes, and in one form or another they cover everything of interest that he had to say. To these we must apply ourselves. They deal with arguments or psychological causes which make people suppose that matter exists. There are some inconsistencies in Berkeley's answers, nevertheless the argument in general is very coherent. The remainder of these lectures will therefore be divided into 33 sections of very unequal importance.) I propose to treat the most important arguments of subsequent philosophers, e.g. those of Kant, Moore, Broad, Stout etc. under the relevant heads, but I shall try to preserve Berkeley's order as far as possible.

[34] What is matter? We don't know but scientists use it. The position is one rather like mysteries in Religion: we believe certain sentences to embody true propositions but don't know, or are not sure, what they mean: all we know that they mean *something* and that *this is true*.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

Berkeley's method consists in beginning by supposing that *something might* be meant by matter, in order to see whether, if we leave it so, that is, even if we simply leave the meaning of this expression vague, and say that it is whatever helps philosophers and scientists in the way in which they think it does, we can then show that such a *postulate*, (it has any meaning) could not even then perform the function claimed for it either because it is meaningless or, if it has meaning, i.e. if what is described exists, because it does not explain anything. Leaving aside for the moment the notion of what is meant by attributing 'causal activity' to matter in the sense in which Berkeley says that ideas are passive and only minds are active, the first point that he makes is that some philosophers think that matter must exist to be the possessor of *primary* qualities. Locke had spoken of the difference between primary and secondary qualities. The matter is in great confusion in Locke. Descartes' primary qualities are of course not sensible at all. In Locke they oscillate between being sensible and being powers or causes in things which make us aware of sensible qualities. The primary qualities are: extension, figure, impenetrability, number, motion and rest. In Descartes they are clearly not sensible, and intuited by the powers of natural light or reason with which God has endowed us. Locke, who rejected such non-sensible powers but retained the distinction because it seemed sustained by science and commonsense, had to find sensible meanings for these terms. Consequently there emerges a curious view that whereas the colour, taste, smell, [35] sound, touch, and hardness of a thing somehow depends on the observer and are subjective, a shape, on the other hand i.e. atomic structure, motion, number etc. are *not* subjective although all seem equally discoverable only by the senses.

Let us take Berkeley's refutation of Rep. Perceptions from *fearful mare's* nest: Locke maintains for reasons which will appear that my ideas are confident to me. I cannot have yours. But they resemble entities which cannot be directly perceived. 'Ideas' are sensible experiences: and the ideas of secondary qualities resemble nothing and are mere by-products in me. Ideas of primary qualities do resemble. Berkeley has no difficulty in disposing of this. If the primary qualities are *not* sensible, then what can it mean to say that they resemble ideas which are sensible? Can statue of J. Caesar resemble non sensible original Caesar? If my so-called idea is visible, whatever it may resemble it cannot be invisible:

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

resemblance, by definition entails *common* qualities. Even if commonly that = resemblance. A colour patch cannot resemble the invisible, a flute-y sound cannot resemble the inaudible. If there are such things in nature as entities not firm to the senses, then what is perceptible to the senses cannot be known to 'represent' them. If it were, you could not know this without being able to comprise them i.e. being aware of both terms + the relation of 'being represented by'. And if it were neither firm to some nor giveable, then it could not only not be *known* to you but could not represent them. We are left by Locke with the absurdity of supposing ourselves screened off from reality by a screen which *ex hypothesi* we cannot know to be a screen or an iron curtain. If the curtain is not absolute we would get glimpses of the [] entities behind it. If it is as perfect as we are told [36] it is then *ex hypothesi* how can we tell that there is anything behind it i.e. that it *is* a curtain and not all there is, reality itself; and suppose, that without evidence we suspect that there *is* such a reality, which is which? – we know because the curtain is thought in some respects to resemble that which it conceals. But we cannot tell whether this is so or not because we have *ex hypothesi* no means of getting at the originals to compare them with the curtain; but one thing is certain and that is that if the originals do resemble the curtain the difference in primary and secondary qualities breaks down because the whole case for primary qualities is that they *cannot* be perceived directly because, unlike secondary qualities, they are *not* sensible. But if they are not sensible they cannot resemble the curtain which is sensible. In which case gazing at the curtain will tell us nothing about them, save only that they may be the unknowable and indescribable causes of it and with that Berkeley deals later and less exactly. In other words, when we say that something is say, extended or figured, we either know what we mean by these words or we do not. Either the word stands for something empirical, or it does not. If it does, then it is drawn from experience and cannot mean something behind the curtain – *which* is in principle incapable of being directly experienced; if it does not, then no sensible presentation of it is possible. On this point Locke was routed completely, and except for later appearances among some Materialist and Marxist writers the theory is never heard of again. Berkeley goes on to spoil his argument slightly by saying 'Extension, figure, motion, abstracted from all other qualities are inconceivable' because 'it is not in my power to frame an idea of a

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

body extended and moving' only. What he means of course is that he cannot imagine a body whose only attributes are extension, figure and motion. But then either [37] he means by these words – extension and motion but no colour no shape sensible qualities, in which case one would have thought that Wells' Invisible Man was something which one could define empirically, although not perhaps have an image of, or else they are not empirically definable in which case they do not refer to anything in [] experience even if conjoined with colour and shape and it does not merely depend upon my inability to frame an idea which suggests a merely psychological deficiency and not meaninglessness of the terms.

So much for Rep. Perception. Now for [an] argument that is [the] answer [to] a real need: Argument from Illusion. [38]

Phenomenalism

'Sensible things are nothing but some sensible qualities and combinations of them'.

Arguments that things cannot exist unperceived:

1. Heat is pain. Pain [is] not [the] *effect* of heat. Pain [is] subjective, and isn't 'out there', therefore heat [is] subjective too. Is unheard thunder 'terrifying' unheard? If not, only noisy?

2. Principles Paragraph 53. Can you conceive sensible things to exist outside the mind? Yes, trees and books.

Argument: All you do is to frame ideas and you omit to conceive this. You try to conceive the unconceivable. You are really trying to think of the unseen tree and the unseen books as being seen unseen by you. When you think of the unseen tree, what are you thinking of? The unseen tree – and that is the very tree of which you say it exists outside the mind, and here you are thinking about it. This is an appalling fallacy even for Phenomenalism. It identifies my image or thought of X with X, and destroys the difference between true and false propositions. Supposing I say that there are three unicorns at present tethered in the High Street to the building of the Examination Schools. There must be some sense in which I must be allowed to maintain that that proposition is not necessarily true because thought of by me. According to Berkeley's argument, if words mean anything there is 'in my mind' 'the idea of' three unicorns tethered, admittedly in an 'ideal' way, to the Examination Schools, they being also in my mind. Therefore it is *true* that they are so tethered. They may lack some property of tethered beasts, e.g. if I go out to look I shall for

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

example, *not* see them, fail to touch them, etc. But merely imagining a seeing and touching of them should be enough if objects are collections of ideas, and as the ideas of unicorns being tethered etc. are [39] recurring, so do the objects. To say that something is unseen is then to say that in a sense it is seen. To say that something never happened is to say that it is happening now. To say that Napoleon tweaked the ear of Marshal Ney is to say that an image of Napoleon in my mind is even now tweaking the ear of an image in my mind which is part of the reality of Marshal Ney; and this is self-evidently absurd. Whether I think in terms of images or not, and what they are doing to each other in my head, has patently no relation to whether my proposition is true or false.

In other words the position is this: if I say that I understand what a sentence means, I do not mean that I am having an image of some sort; still less do I mean that when I say the sentence expresses truth, I mean neither that I understand 'I am having images', or that understanding cannot occur without images. Berkeley's argument is that to think of an unseen object is to 'see it in the mind's eye'. This is in the first place untrue. In the second place, even if it were true, it would make nonsense of negative and hypothetical propositions, and general ones as well. ('The Radcliffe Camera is on fire' would entail my having an image similar to it, and an image of the fire etc. but what image would 'The Radcliffe Camera is *not* on fire' entail, or even, 'if I do not know whether the Radcliffe Camera is on fire or is not on fire' – does that mean that I have an alternation of tongues of flame followed by nothing, followed by more tongues of flame, followed by nothing, etc.?). Alternatively, if I do have a procession of images parading in my mind, if I am day-dreaming or musing, I am not necessarily saying or asserting anything. If we translate Berkeley's language and suppose ideas not to be images but something more transparent and similar to what Locke said – to be psychological entities of some sort – even then the theory will not do. Supposing I say 'Let us assume there is a Number X which nobody happens to have thought [40] of and that it is the product of two primes'. Then surely it is absurd to say 'Ah, but now this Number X has been thought of and therefore loses the property – that which "nobody happens to have thought of", and is therefore not what we were talking about. Therefore an unthought of number is a contradiction in terms.' Or if I say 'All integers nobody has ever thought of are either odd or even' I don't thereby contradict

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

myself and say in one breath, 'All the unthought of integers, hereby, now, by this very act of thinking thought of, therefore no longer unthought of, are odd or even'. The fallacy consists in supposing that thinking is a relation between symbols on the one hand and objects on the other, so that corresponding to every combination of symbols there must be something existent in the Universe to which the symbols correspond, and that this is what I am talking about. If that were so, all false propositions, all unfulfilled hypotheticals, would correspond to be correct symbols for the real entities; this means either (a) there are no false or unfulfilled propositions, or [(b)] there are unreal or unfulfilled entities: and all propositions are *true*, either about real or unreal entities. Therefore, all false propositions are true. Absurd.

2. Berkeley is obviously not over-convinced of the validity of this theory of the existence of unperceived objects, and therefore has other expedients whereby to rescue them. When I am not looking at the object, someone else may be. The problem is this: must we really say that bodies, so to speak, flick in and out as we look and cease looking? Every time we fall asleep or close our eyes or even blink: do tables really cease to exist for as long as we fail to attend to them? We certainly do not believe this, and should be hard put to it to give an adequate account of even the most primitive propositions of physics or indeed commonsense if our sole evidence were the actual experience [41] of the observer – the odd browns and blues and squares and hards, the odd chair-like, table-like and book-like data in the broken succession in which with little regular order between them we come across them – to this Berkeley says:

a) That the data of various senses do occur in a certain predictable connection (we dealt with this in the section on the Argument from Illusion).

b) He brings in other minds. I see the tree in the quad, and I presently cease seeing the tree in the quad, but someone else may continue to look at it, and this is what I mean when I say that the tree continues to exist in the quad. This argument comes in Paragraph 90 of the Principles, at the beginning of the Second Dialogue. This bristles with difficulties. It means that after I cease perceiving the tree its only chance of continuing to be is that somebody else will continue to keep it simmering, as it were, until I take it up again, but in what sense is your idea or image or perception of the tree identical with mine? Supposing we both

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

look at the tree: Then are there two trees or one? According to Berkeley surely there is some sense in which I can say that there are two ideas of a tree occurring at this moment, and if 'sensible things are nothing but combinations of sensible qualities', there are *two* lots of such combinations and hence *two* trees, and it does not help *my* tree even if *your* tree goes on or takes up where *my* tree perishes. Moreover is the tree to be the sum of everything seen, thought, imagined etc. in a certain way at one and the same time? I mean this: I look into the quad and say to myself 'I see a tall spreading chestnut tree with green leaves'. You look in the same direction and wearing blue spectacles, as you do, say, 'I see a tall blue chestnut [42] tree'. Someone else in China, thinking about the quad, imagines the entire quad covered by plane trees. Someone in Timbuctoo imagines all the trees razed to the ground and the quad a desert, and so on. Now, is the quad all these conflicting constituents at once?

But far worse is to come. If the situation could be imagined whereby for one split second nobody happened to think or have an image of the tree, it really would cease to exist, and cease to exist in precisely the same *sense* though from a different cause as if someone destroyed it by fire? Only that in the second case there would be ashes, and in the first none? It then becomes very mysterious how the tree is resurrected in its full pristine glory merely literally by the flicking of an eyelash when I open my eyes and gaze at it again. Even worse is to come: what is to happen to the unobserved and unimagined portions of the world, the centre of the earth, the most distant stars, and this may bring it home more closely, the back of my head or my heart and lungs which I do not see, and nobody normally has in most cases ever seen. Do they not exist at all? Do my eyes not exist when I see by means of them, and unless I imagine them at the same time or see an image in a mirror which is in some sense a constituent of them? Unless someone is kind enough to continue to look at the back of my head, and get someone else to take over when he gets bored by the process, my head has no back, my eye has no existence etc. during vastly the greater part of their alleged existence. But this contradicts the premise from which we start, namely: that appearance of the so-called outside object varies as the conditions of my body do. In this case my body exists only intermittently and then depends on other acts of sensing for its existence. If people permanently decided to [43] stop looking at or thinking of me I

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

should perish, as surely as from a bullet or poison. It was a wonder that this easy method of extinguishing one's enemies by the easy and painless method of forgetting them has not been applied more frequently.

Berkeley again must obscurely feel that this explanation will not really do because it is really at this point that he introduces the notion of God to help him. Although other people may cease to think about the tree, God continues to do so permanently and perpetually. But God is so defined by Berkeley as by all Theists that it is in the first place a little difficult to see how he can without being at all similar to finite creatures nevertheless entertain ideas as they do, or why, because he sees patches of colours, smells smells, hear[s] sounds, etc. it should follow that they hear precisely what he hears and we shall get into the same difficulties as we multiply observers. Is God required to sense everything everywhere that is given to any finite creature? There is the penny which I say I see. I see an oval brown patch and expect to touch something hard, cold etc. My friend Jones who is bent over it sees a round brown patch, and expects to touch something cold, hard etc. My jaundiced friend Smith sees a yellow patch. My friend Robinson who is unfortunately in a state of Delirium Tremens says that he sees a small pink rat where I claim to see the penny. A large number of other observers are thinking of different thoughts and seeing very different sights at this moment. What occurs in the mind of God to correspond to all this? This may to the pious Christian be a ludicrous question, since God is not finite or in space or time, He cannot be said to see or hear or smell in the empirical sense etc. But Berkeley unfortunately assigns all these functions to God, and we cannot therefore avoid asking so crude a question [44] if we accept his argument. Does God entertain the round penny and the oval penny and the yellow penny and the brown penny and the pink rat and everything else whatever simultaneously? Or if 'simultaneously' cannot apply to God who is not in time, in what sense does He entertain them at all[?]. Or if He does entertain them, how can they not conflict? Moreover, what is an Atheist to say if we analyse the proposition 'objects exist unperceived' as objects are perceived by other minds. Are there no unperceived objects for Robinson Crusoe before he meets Man Friday? And if we analyse this as continuous being in the mind of God, then suppose Robinson Crusoe is an atheist, does it mean nothing to him, literally nothing, to say that the mango tree continues to be

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

when his back is turned? Or that his own heart is beating when he happens not to listen to its palpitations? Indeed it is all too clear that Berkeley's God is not due to theological bias on his part, but is desperately necessary to prop his system as he expounds it. (It is really a very poetical view of the creation including man in the same creation as God as Hamlet is to Shakespeare. Shakespeare conceives Hamlet, who in some sense exists only in his mind. And then the reader or the audience become acquainted with Hamlet too, and if Shakespeare's mind is eternal, then when the audience goes home or the reader closes his book, Hamlet goes on in the mind of Shakespeare. This is an eccentric view.) Professor Broad in his book, 'Reality, Physics and Perception' puts this with some force by saying that the argument takes the form of saying 'my theory would hold water only if God exists, therefore God exists for otherwise my theory would be false, but that is unthinkable'. This argument is like saying 'What I have just said is nonsense unless someday someone will invent a language in which [45] it will make sense. Therefore some day a language will be invented'. From this we can conclude, as Professor Broad does, that pure phenomenalism i.e. one which analyses statements about material objects in terms of the actual data of actual observers, must be absurd, because we do in fact in our notion of physical object imply more than this. We imply, by giving specific names, that, even on a very loose Humean analysis of identity, the table is at the very least a series of data bound by such relations as succession and similarity and possibly performance of certain functions, and through these possess a certain degree of vividness, coherence and so forth which presupposes not merely actual but also memory data, forgotten data and the data of hypothetical observers who would observe what we *ex hypothesi* cannot observe. If I call something a door, I mean to imply that it has an outside as well as an inside and that from certain angles I can see only one side of it and infer the existence of the other. And if I am told that some other observer can see the other side, then apart from the difficulty about the existence of other percipients and positions of their bodies in space I may ask 'Does he see the same thing as I do? Is not each man confined to the circle of his own ideas?'

But this brings up the difficulties about the word 'same', for the word 'same' is ambiguous. I may mean by the 'same' something like 'absolutely indistinguishable' as when I say 'This is the same mistake as you made yesterday'. Or as I say 'the same constitution

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

governs England and the Isle of Wight'. Or do I mean by the 'Same' something forming part of the succession of experiences given to one and *same* individual? Is this circular? I am not sure: if I ask you 'Do you see the tree I see?' the question is ambiguous. No doubt there are in some sense familiar to us *two* experiences of seeing. No doubt they are similar. We describe what we see in similar language. If we so define our use of 'one' and 'similar' as to say that one observer, one percept, two [46] observers, two percepts, then of course nobody ever sees or feels what anybody else feels. But if I define 'one' in terms of more than one person, then it does not make sense to say 'I see what you see'. Someone may object that there is some sense in which I cannot feel your toothache. Your toothache is yours, private to you. I can feel a toothache similar to yours, but then there are two toothaches. But now if it makes sense to say we see one and the same chair, there is in theory no sense why we could not be said to feel the same toothache, if the physical conditions of your toothache turned out to be the same as mine. This may sound very eccentric and physiologically so it is. Normally I trace the causes of my toothache to my body and yours to your body. But if some mysterious and empirically describable but, so far as we can tell, unlikely causal connection between your body and mine began to occur, or if you were amused I laughed (and you did too – or not), so that every time 'you' stood in a cold wind 'I' sneezed, it might be possible that I could feel a cold, and realising that it was the behaviour of your body rather than mine that had brought it on, say 'What a fearful nuisance, I have got Jones' cold in J's body, some distance from this one', or 'I have caught Jones's sense of humour' as I say, 'By mistake I have taken away Jones's umbrella'. Jones's relation to what I call his umbrella now in my hand is not then logically so very different from his relation to the pain or amusement now suffered by me; only it presupposes very abnormal physiological circumstances. Evidence of this is perhaps provided by the phenomena of hypnotism and telepathy.

If this is so, a physical object is analysable in some way into a succession of experiences not all of which are actually 'mine', and therefore are actually other people's; but some of them may be hallucinatory i.e. unreliable and incompatible with the notion of an unfailingly veracious God; Hence we must look for some other explanation of continuity, and Berkeley finally [47] provides it by talking about hypothetical data. The tree is what I *should* see *if* I

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

were looking. The most vivid illustration of that he gives in asking what is meant by speaking of the motion of the earth (in Paragraph 60 or thereabouts of the Principles): the earth is said to move yet nobody sees it do so. But if, says Berkeley, we were in a suitable place we would see it move 'among the choir of planets'. In other words, one of the things that I mean by saying that things exist unobserved is not what one does see, but what *any* observer might see *if* he were appropriately placed. Now this at once makes things much easier of course. The table is no longer what I see + what you see + what I imagine + what God sees, but what I would see *if* I were looking, and, when I am not looking, still what I would see if I were. The fact that I am not looking does not destroy it. Here explain Ayer's Argument. [Ambiguity of identity: 'how do I know lowering my eyelids does not destroy [a] table as fire does?' (a) Fire destroys. True but its denial intelligible. If same true of eyelids, not only intelligible but probable. But in case of fire not.] This is the theory accepted by modern phenomenalism, but [it] is nevertheless far from easy. What does it mean to say that I have an unseen heart, or that the particles of which my skin is composed are too small to be observable? It means that if anyone chose to cut me open, they would see such and such a shape, feel such and such data etc, i.e. my heart. If I used a powerful enough microscope, I would see such and such cellular data. The world thus consists of so many actual experiences flanked by 'what would be the case if any observer were observing so and so from a point so and so at a time so and so.' This is presumably what Mill meant by saying the physical objects were the permanent possibility of experience. The tree in the quad is both what I see when I look and what I don't see, but would see if I had looked, when in fact I didn't. This is certainly the most important view Berkeley advances of the meaning of the concept of a *physical* object. It gets rid of the primitive theory of images of the unseen empty house which I see in my mind's eye. It materially eases the [48] situation with regard to scientific theories which deal not merely with what has happened and is happening but also with what would have happened, might be happening, will be happening and would be happening *if* various other situations which might have existed or may be existing or might still come into being, did so. But it has formidable difficulties of its own:

- (1) The argument of Professor Stout and Mr Hardie.
- (2) The argument of Professor Moore.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

(3) The argument of Mr Joseph.

1. Professor Stout urges three arguments against the view that propositions about material objects can be translated into propositions about sensation and introspection data, without residue.

a. That we mean by physical object something solid and that by solidity we do not mean tactile or any other data. Matter is not the permanent possibility of sensations so much as the permanent impossibility of sensation. Every physical object has an inside as much as an outside. Cutting it open only reveals more surfaces or outsides; what is inside is *ex hypothesi* what is not given to sensation and never can be. Nevertheless we have a kind of *a priori* concept of what it is to be like that. What he is in effect saying is that what we mean by an onion is not an infinite collection of infinitely thin skins which can be peeled off in an infinite series of operations. To say that the onion is simply a globular-looking, hardish entity which causes one to weep when smelt and so forth, is merely to describe the *symptoms* of the onion or its appearances. A thing could have all these properties and yet not be a 'real onion.' We mean [49] some thing when we say that a thing is thick and solid, and not what we mean by saying more self-consciously 'I feel a pressure on my finger different from that which I feel when I press upon the surface of a bowl of water'. A spherical object, according to Mill or Berkeley, is according to this view but a shell of an object, a kind of a 'balloon-like entity' with the superficial characteristics of a sphere, but '*hollow* within', and in no fundamental way different from a system or succession of after images or hallucinatory images which are real enough in the sense that they were not invented by us, and so can be accurately described as an item in experience, but not a physical object precisely because they are mere images – a hollow shell. Now this view deserves more sympathetic consideration than is normally given it, because it does really say something which Locke and common sense have tried to say, but in the face of the onslaught of the clever philosophers found themselves unable either to defend or to abandon.

Anti-Stout.

i. Are all real objects so very hard and solid? What about rivers, mists, sprays, clouds, and rainbows. Is sight different from the other senses for this purpose? If not, is it not difference of 'symptoms'? And is difference of 'object' and 'image' or sense

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

datum, not merely a matter of 'feel' – real shape, but not different in principle. – It is [] and it is [].

ii. If critic[ism?] persists, does he mean what Berkeley means by 'nothing'? Dialogues, page L 137: 'If you find people saying that there is a country where we pass scatheless through fire, they turn out to mean water by "fire". Attributeless indescribable entities perhaps equal nothing'. Hume said 'Berkeley's arguments admit of no answer and produce no conviction'. Explain the invisible elephant fallacy.

[a.] Analogy from other non-translateables: Say dreams and reality: As how high above my dream mountain is the real ceiling? Or how my dream horns [compare] to a real horn? Is the sound in my mind louder than one in reality? So is how my S.I. = [] 'object'

b. More formidable argument: that hypothetical entities cannot cause actual effects. Hardie says that if I have a magnet in my pocket but I cannot see it and look at the compass needle [50] in the palm of my hand and see that it turns towards my pocket, and then say that 'obviously the magnet is attracting this [] wherever, if I had looked I should have seen an iron-coloured elongated datum, and if I had touched I should have felt something cold and hard etc., and the compass needle appears to point in a certain direction'. I describe this as a magnet deflect[ing] a needle. But I did not look and did not touch and nothing is known about the apodosis of the conditional clause. Indeed, I imply strongly that when the protasis is false, the conditional sentence is in mid air, description of no actual entity. How then can its referent be a cause? Take the proposition, 'If Hannibal had marched on Rome he would have taken it'. Now that does not describe anything that happened. Would it not be eccentric to say that the cause of something, say Rome's fear of Hannibal, was that if Hannibal had marched he would have taken it[?] The causes of actual events must surely be themselves actual. An event cannot be caused by something which would have been the case if something else were the case which perhaps wasn't. That is the paradox. This is an important objection and needs scrupulous attention.

It arises from the confusion of propositions about physical objects with propositions about our sensations. Though both Stout and Hardie can be answered, they can be answered only on certain unproven assumptions which we must now proceed to make. (That it is unproven must be shown later.) The assumption is that whatever we are to say about causal propositions, existential

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

or predicative propositions about physical objects can be analysed into propositions about certain sorts of experiences – such as someone might have whatever the world consists of – involving only spatiotemporal and directly sensed and remembered relations like similarity, contiguity, regular recurrence – what Price calls ‘family relation []’. If we grant this, then we say a [51] physical object is a collection or set of actual and hypothetical experiences. If I am allowed to say ‘This table exists’ can be analysed into ‘If an observer were to look in a certain direction he should see such and such colours etc.’ ‘This is a log’ ‘When I did look I did see such and such. And if I had applied a match I would have seen such and such smoke data’. If I can say this, I can say that ‘The log exists’ means that there is a situation such that when it exists these true hypothetical propositions describe it. If it doesn’t exist, then some or all of them are false. Now when I say ‘The log *is* such and such actual hypothetical data’ I mean no more than that categorical propositions about the log can be translated without residue into hypothetical propositions of this sort. It is a statement about the equivalence of two ways of using words, and not a statement about the physical or chemical constitution of the log. The proposition ‘The log is really a collection of visual etc. experiences’ is quite different in kind from the statement ‘the table is four legs and a top’. I can take away the legs, but I cannot literally take away the sense-data. If the table is burnt to ashes, that will entail that its legs are burnt to ashes, but it would be absurd to say ‘My sensible experiences were burnt to ashes yesterday’. The table does not consist of sensible experiences, but propositions about the table do, if you like, consist of propositions about my or someone’s experiences. Now if I say ‘The invisible magnet caused the deflection of the visible compass-needle’ I mean by saying ‘There is an invisible magnet’ that there is a difference between [52] a situation in which if I look in my pocket I will feel a magnet and one in which if I feel in my pocket I will not feel a magnet. Now I say ‘When the first situation is present and this is not hypothetical but actual, then the compass needle datum points to where my pocket appears to be. If the compass needle doesn’t incline in that direction, then I think that if I were to feel in my pocket I should not in all probability experience the sensation of feeling a magnet.’ Now whether the proposition: ‘There is a magnet in my pocket’ is exhaustively analysed by saying that if I look there then I shall find it, and this is the proper description of an actual situation, or

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

whether something more, something to describe our sense of 'thinghood' [is] needed to complete it, is a much acuter and more fundamental question. But if we allow ourselves to assume that a phenomenalist analysis of 'This is a material object' is [] for causal propositions correct, then the causal proposition to which Stout and Hardie take exception will not cause special difficulties. They object that the existence of actual sense-data is said to be caused by hypothetical data. But this is not so. The existence of actual physical objects is caused by actual physical objects, and since physical object statements may be translated into partially hypothetical sense-datum statements, that is the proper language into which to translate them. You must not cross the languages. 'The magnet deflects the needle' – physical object statement. If, every time a needle looks deflected we institute groping-in pocket sensations, and these are succeeded by magnet-touching sensations, then the phenomena are called causally interconnected sense-datum statements. There is no difficulty here, but the real difficulty is in whether we can analyse physical object statements in this way at all.

[¹⁰Stout's view of causality is different from that of most people, and curiously like Berkeley's. But he attributes to physical objects precisely what Berkeley denies them, namely causal efficacy (here develop push-pull view of causality and parallel case Locke's and commonsense boggling about reducing physical objects – so solid – to clouds, i.e. difference between say, a table and say, rain or wind.)]

Some difficulties about single Phenomenalism.

1. Statements about the past.
2. General propositions.
3. Logical relation between physical object proposition and sense-datum proposition and difficulty (a) of enumerating and specifying the latter. (b) giving name to relationship. Is it entailment? Or []? Or 'absurd to say what [] absurd to present?'
4. Antedeluvian creatures (p. 44 of manuscript).
5. Moore's objections to Mill.
 - (a) Material thing in the apodosis.
 - (b) Material thing in the protasis i.e. observers.
 - (c) Does family relation exist?

¹⁰ This paragraph is marked '*Omit*'.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

(d) Queer sense of ostensibly simple terms like 'round' and 'red'. (This objection very trivial).

Moore says in 'Contemporary British Philosophers', Volume 2, "There is no reason for thinking propositions about [54] things entail or are causally connected with propositions about mental data', e.g. "Dinosaurs existed a million years ago" does not entail, and is not causally connected with, anything about mental data. It does not entail that anyone has ever had a thought in the world. In other words, 'Dinosaurs existed' – 'If you had looked you would have seen dinosaurish data', but if you had not looked, then nothing follows, and yet it is the *apodosis* of the conditional in whose analysis we are interested. It is like saying 'X is pink' entails 'If you say "X is pink" you'll be saying what is true, and if you are silent X is still pink, whatever you may think or not think'. There is certainly something in this objection, since what it shows is that the simple translation of categorical into hypothetical statements somehow fails to work: if I say that X is Y, even though it be a physical object I cannot exhaust the meaning of what I say by saying that if certain conditions which may or may not obtain certain consequences which otherwise might not follow will follow. Yet this is what Berkeley's analysis reduces us to. This is a difficulty not for Berkeley alone, but for all phenomenologists. When I see a table, I do not indeed see its back, and what I am told is the proposition that it has a back is simply the proposition that if I were to look from another place I should see what I now call back as its front. Yet the form of expression seems to make the existence of the back of the table dependent on or identical with my hypothetical data. But I wish to be able to say that [55] the back of the table exists and exists now when *ex hypothesi* I cannot be observing it since I am looking at the front and that this does not *mean* though it may entail that if I were looking from some other position I should have been seeing it. Very likely I should, but even if I did *not* this would not, as we normally use words, mean that the back *does not exist*. To see this consider the following argument: supposing I say 'It is very cold outside this building'. This is interpreted to mean: 'If I or any observer were outside, they would be colder than they are now when they are inside'. Now it seems clear that I cannot be both outside and inside the building at the same time. Therefore I can experience only one set of experiences at a time. I can not know what it would be like to have

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

been outside at the moment when in fact I am inside. If there were only one observer in the world therefore (and don't let us assume that there are more at this stage) he could never assert 'I know that it is cold outside and warm inside' because the experience of verifying each of these experiences are not both possible. Although he is [] a giant, something will remain unknown – whatever is alternative to whatever he is doing. But if you can never know, then what you *could never* experience could never be. 'To be' is to be experienced, or to be capable of being experienced. Robinson Crusoe could not simultaneously experience the warmth of his hut and the cold outside it; therefore when he was in the hut the temperature outside it, whatever that phrase might mean, could not be said to be cold in the sense in which the hut was warm. Alternatively, if you say that 'it is cold outside', = 'if Robinson had stooped outside he would have shivered', then the actual experience which he was having, namely experiencing the indoor warmth, would [56] not have been occurring. Therefore certain perfectly significant statements such as 'It is cold outside now although I am warm' turn out to be meaningless. This means there is something wrong with the analysis. This is sense of Moore jibe about train wheels.

(b) Moore's other objection, that in analysing propositions about physical objects as hypothetical propositions about sensations I keep re-introducing my own body, is not so formidable. His statement of it goes as follows: "Though in general when I know such a fact as "This is a hand" I certainly do know some hypothetical facts of the form: "If these conditions had been fulfilled I should have been possessing a sense-datum of this kind, which would have been a sense-datum of the same surface of which this is a sense datum". It seems doubtful whether any conditions with regard to which I know this, are not themselves conditions of the form "If this and that thing had to be in those positions and conditions"?' This objection seems to me invalid. If some method of translating propositions about material objects into those of sense-data can on other grounds be found, propositions about my body need not offer special difficulties (Develop this).

(c) Moore's third objection is, in language which I do not intend to reproduce, the doubt whether there is any such relation between sensations which enables me to say that they belong to me and the same physical object. Moore casts a doubt on this, but does not

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

develop it. But there is no ground for believing this doubt to be serious. When faced with the practical [57] question whether what we observe is one or two trees in the quad, we do in fact know then what kinds of series of tests we need to go through in order to become reasonably certain that there is only one tree, or that there are two as the case may be. The tests may be refined to any given point, but they remain the same in character as the crude tests which we normally employ.

(d) Finally, Moore objects that the sense in which a material object is 'round or square' would necessarily be utterly different from that in which we refer to what we sense is round and square, and this seems to him untrue. But he is mistaken. This sense *is* different. A penny is called by us 'round' only if [we] think it is true to say that it often looks oval. If the sensations of it are always round, we should not call the penny round, we should deny the penny to be round, but would suppose ourselves to be having hallucinations connected with aberrations of perspective. And we call Earth ovoid or egg shaped though [] looks egg shaped at all, but on the contrary, flat, hilly etc.: it means that *something* would look egg shaped – the appearance of the earth if we circumnavigated it from suitable distance and with telescope etc. And we have reason for thinking that for the proposition 'Earth is ovoid' – (looking ovoid from spaceship being only one of the entailed propositions of 'X is ovoid') more true and interesting propositions follow than from proposition 'Earth is flat': but that is *all*: all that's meant by call[ing] this hypothesis true: Earth looks ovoid certainly false: and if ovoid = looks ovoid, Earth is ovoid is false: and in poetry and novels and history is so.[58]

Moore's Refutation of Idealism.

Famous doctrine responsible for British realism resting on the bald assertion that we detect a distinction between the object and the consciousness of it, that the relation of the object to the consciousness is different from that which blue has to glass in the case of blue beads, or blue has to hair in the case of blue beards. Moore goes so far as to say that a *sensation* of blue is a *knowing* that there is something blue: that the element of consciousness can be isolated from the element blue although it is very diaphanous, and that it is difficult but not impossible to discover it in introspection. It is really what the particle 'of' stands for. A sensation *of* blue is different from a blue sensation, whatever that might be. If I sense

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

something blue, that is quite different from saying that I sense 'bluely'. In some cases no doubt the object can not be distinguished from the so-called act, e.g. 'I heave a sigh.' 'I dreamt a dream.' 'I dance a waltz.' These are said to be quite different from: 'I touched the cup'; 'I saw the moon', since it is clear that if I had not heaved there could logically have been no sigh, and if I had not danced there could have been no waltz, and if I had not jumped there would have been no jump. But although I did not touch there might still have been a cup, and even if I had not looked there would still be a moon. This is valid on the assumption that hypothetical propositions are excluded. Although this argument does throw useful light on the different senses in which such propositions as 'I felt a pain' and 'I felt the door' are used, [59] it rests on a false psychological premise about the diaphanous medium.

Leads to view that 'knowing' is undistorting: but 'knowing distorts' is meaningless: ergo 'knowing does not distort' is meaningless. [60]

Matter as cause

Berkeley's examination of objectivity.

Berkeley correctly sees that the notion of material object entails:

1. That it is in causal relations with other objects.
2. That it is in some sense objective rather than subjective.

3. That there is some sense in which when we speak of objects we use symbols with 'outer-reference' rather than 'inner reference'. He then argues (paragraphs 25, 27, 28) that matter cannot be a cause because it is inactive. This serves to emphasise his view of causes as active pushings and pullings (contrast volitional view of causality with regularity view). Berkeley's view that matter cannot cause is then analytically deduced from his distinction between active and passive.

Objective versus subjective means what I can control as opposed to what is forced upon me. I cannot order sense ideas like those of imagination. They are strong, lively, have order, coherence, steadiness, and follow the rules which can be acquired by experience. But if rules, then will is at work, i.e. God. This is half illuminating, half obscure. The difference between sensations which I cannot myself regulate and laws which I do not invent but discover and those which I can conjure up and for which I can invent rules, like chess, is absolutely radical and is the basic

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

concept whereby we distinguish subjective and objective, what we can help and what we cannot. On the other hand, the deduction of a will at work from the existence of laws implies a teleological view of laws deriving from earlier metaphysics and which Spinoza and Hume successfully destroyed. Berkeley declares that the laws of Nature show forth no observable necessary connection, anticipating Hume, hence a will at work. This amounts to 'all events must have causes, all causes are active, only minds are active, therefore all events caused by minds'. But all events are not caused by my mind, therefore by God's mind. This could lead to Pantheism, or Theism equally.

Perception = the action of mind and not matter. (See Dialogues p. 406-407 and Manuscript P. 21). Another argument used by Berkeley to prove that matter cannot cause ideas is the proposition produced in the Second Dialogue that only Entity which has ideas can give them to us. Matter is passive and cannot think, i.e. have ideas. Hence only a spiritual entity can communicate ideas to us. This rests on Cartesian and Scholastic nonsense about eminent causes. Causality is giving something to something. I cannot give what I have not got, and so the spark must contain the explosion. Fallacy view to identification of causing partly with giving partly with ground and consequence relation when ground contains consequence. (Explain this a little).

Argument proceeds: Ideas cannot be my mind alone (why not: because unalterable by me). This brings us back to notion that ideas are consciously willed, if not by me by somebody. Nothing happens de facto: everything springs from a motive. Confusion 'how' and 'why'. Hylas wants to know if God suffers pains and blue patches which He gives to us. The answer is: No. Pain is part of [62] corporeal nature: God is not corporeal. Still, either God is so different from us that He 'perceives nothing from sense as we do': in which case what happens to the unseen tree? And if He does perceive as we do, how exactly does this help us? My looking at yonder tree does not seem to make a difference to your seeing it, why should God's?

Having proved that matter is not needed to act for our perception of physical objects, as he thinks, which now turn out to be sets of sensations injected into us by the orderly will of God Berkeley runs through all the other things which matter might possibly be thought to mean.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

(a) Some people desperately think it to be mere existence. Bare existence. Para 17. This can be proved by demonstrating that existence is not a predicate. A thing could not merely exist and have no attributes.

(b) It cannot be necessarily connected with sensations and have no other attributes.

(c) Since it is unknown it cannot explain uniformity (Para. 20. Read aloud). If it exists unknowable. But this will not do if he thinks it is meaningless. If it is meaningless it cannot be condemned as useless. Just like a thief arguing that the bank note he is accused to having stolen is:

- i. Non existent = a hallucination of the owner. Never was there.
- ii. Is really forged, useless, cannot buy anything.

If the notion of matter is unintelligible it cannot also be [63] dismissed as useless.

(d) But if all matter is really ideas, can we be said to eat ideas and clothe us in ideas[?] May we no longer say 'Fire burns' only 'a mind causes an idea fire to be followed by the idea ashes'[?] Or may we not say 'the sun sets' but 'the idea of', etc.? Here Berkeley gives a very early and very original analysis of logical constructions, saying that it may sound queer to speak of eating ideas or of the sun setting inside our heads, but that if adequately translated this is no longer eccentric. He repeats that ideas are not thoughts, but actual data. The *idea* of fire is not hot if by the idea is meant thought.

(e) How can we say that things 10 miles off are in our minds? He argues that distance at any rate [is] not visual but tactile.

(f) If distance is an idea, mind is extended, which is absurd. But this is the fat oxen argument.

(g) What are we to make of Newton's Physics?

Answer: Newton does not mean matter, only the regular motion. Newtonian physics could be deduced from dream-data. 'All we need is uniformity in the production of natural effects'. I am not for changing things into ideas but rather for changing ideas into things'. (p. 462 of Dialogues). (h) What about the general consensus of opinion in favour of matter[?]

i. Majorities can be wrong.

ii. Question 'If not I who is *responsible* for my data?' is to him a perfectly correct question. Matter is a meaningless answer.

(i) Why should God need all this intermediate mechanism? Why not [64] direct hypnotism by God?

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

Answer: Because ideas are Divine language. Curious view of natural symbolism. Where the symbols refer to themselves or each other. Arguments for design; the beauty of the world etc. – If God exists and speaks this *would* be his language: but does not *prove* this. Ideas are Creator's language which in miracles He occasionally uses exotically or paradoxically. Fire tells us we will be burnt but does not burn us. One event is a dependable symptom for or testimony for another. But this confuses symptoms and causes. A cause is sometimes identical with a symptom where we cannot alter things, e.g. Astronomy. But where we can, it is very different. The needle of the thermostat tells me how hot it is, but I cannot alter the heat by tampering with the needle. Bell-ringing is not the cause of men's leaving work, nor the day the cause of the night, although they are symptoms. Anyhow, if sensible ideas are language, what does it say? Why should there not be an infinity of languages, the object of each of which is a symbol of the one below.

(j) Is matter the score of God's music? A pretty but silly idea. God the musician, the ideas are the occasion.

(k) Maybe matter exists, but we are all blind to it as the blind are blind to colours. But if so, it is either unknowable, in which case we mean nothing by it, or else it is given to a sense which we do not possess and does not need a substratum any more than the ordinary senses do.

(1) What about miracles? Christ and the wine in Cana? Did [65] Christ merely make people think they drank wine? No, says Berkeley, if public testimony agrees the liquid looks, smells like wine, and has the effect of wine, then by God it is wine. Hence the miracle. Interesting point about public testimony as involved in objectivity.

(m) God may not reliably keep uniformity going. How could we be sure, etc. Why should matter be more reliable? But he allows that the language of the Maker may vary. 'A man may be well read in the language of nature without understanding the grammar of it'. If this is literal, then there literally are sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, etc.

(n) The reality of unperceived Time and Space. Assertion of absolute time and empty space is meaningless. Space is relation between bodies in terms of each other, or of forces. This is consistent with phenomenalism. If objects may be analysed sensations, space will relate sensations.

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

(o) What about mathematical entities? – [] Answer: The study not of reality but of symbols. Conventional arrangements and not objective relations. Extraordinary view of Geometry: 'There is no such thing as one ten-thousandth part of an inch'; but because an inch represents a line of anything length, you can use it to divide it into any number you like. But if so, the symbol has the property of what it symbolises, and is infinitely divisible after all. Mathematics either about the use of symbols or empirical.

(p) Finally we come to selves or spirits. Cannot be ideas [66] since they think, will, perceive that we know them because we know ourselves, in some sense different from that in which we know passive ideas. We understand ideas in the minds of others by analogy with our own. Introspection is a form of sensation which does not yield to self. Hume right. But the letter 'I' does not stand for an idea. Self-awareness is not ordinary cognition. Something in this:

i. We obviously cannot eliminate selves from even Phenomenalist analysis.

ii. I am not like a table: hence the real table which does not behave like a table is ultimately silly; whereas behaviourist analysis of selves no less silly in the contrary direction.

iii. Something meant by privacy of data.

iv. Bishop Butler wrong in saying 'my body as external to "me" as any other external thing', since if so, do I cease to exist in dreamless sleep? Is a madman literally a different person from his previous self? Supposing I wake up and look like a cockroach, am I still I? Or am I not I as a cockroach, but still I as a madman? We know others by analogy (Paragraph 145) and infer the wills of others from the behaviour of the data. We do not see other men or God, but infer both (148).

'Spiritual substance,' says Philonous in the Third Dialogue, is meaningful since I know what I do when I think, will, etc. Selves define in terms of activity. Interesting connection with later French Ideological school and '*Volo ergo sum*'.

[67]

Notions as opposed to idea of self.

For distinction of individual selves see Manuscript, p. 41, on Identity. Thus we get a general picture of identical selves, each with its own discontinuous sensations, flickerings of colours, odd prickly and soft sensations, succession of ticklings, itches, odours, fluty sounds, rainbows and iridescences, each induced by the

BERKELEY'S THEORY OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD

archetypes inspected by God. Tactual data are inferred from visual, and vice versa, although he implies that the tactile are more primary than the visual. Visual presented, tactual inferred. Perception emerges as inference.

Notions are of spirits, mental operations and relations.

Are relations *imposed*? Like 'all', 'if', and 'any', in acc. to what principle?

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