

IV.—SYMPOSIUM: IS THERE “KNOWLEDGE BY
ACQUAINTANCE”?

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I. By G. DAWES HICKS.

“THERE seem to me,” writes Mr. Russell, “to be two main cognitive relations with which a theory of knowledge has to deal, namely *presentation* (which is the same as what I call *acquaintance*) and *judgment*. These I regard as radically distinguished by the fact that presentation (or acquaintance) is a two-term relation of a subject to a single (simple or complex) object, while judgment is a multiple relation of a subject to several objects.” He then goes on to emphasise a further distinction. “Among judgments, some are of the form ‘the entity which has the property ϕ has the property ψ ’; and we can sometimes make such judgments in cases where we have no presentation whose object is that particular entity x which has the property ϕ . In such cases I say we have ‘knowledge by description’ of the entity which has the property ϕ ” (*Mind*, N.S., vol. xxii, 1913, p. 76). It is no doubt the distinction between “acquaintance” and “description” upon which Mr. Russell himself is mainly concerned to lay stress. But in this discussion I wish to concentrate attention upon the prior distinction between “acquaintance” and “judgment,” which is, from certain points of view, the more fundamental.

The antithesis between sense and thought has had a long history, and Mr. Russell might claim that he is, to a large extent, following the path of a well-established tradition. He departs, however, from that tradition in two very important respects. In the first place, he does not make the distinction turn upon an assumed difference between receptivity and

spontaneity on the part of the subject ; being acquainted with a datum is, in his view, essentially an "act," whatever the nature of that "act" may be. And in the second place, "acquaintance" is not confined by him to sense-data. We have, he contends, "acquaintance" by introspection with what goes on in our own minds,—thoughts, feelings, desires, etc.; we have "acquaintance" in memory with things that have been data either of sense or of introspection ; and, more important still, we have "acquaintance" with certain universals, such as sensible qualities, space-relations, time-relations, and relations of similarity and difference.

If the antithesis be justified, there can be no question of its radical character. It would constitute an absolute difference between two kinds of knowing ; and, however dependent the second might be on the first, each would be an essentially unique and separate mode of mental activity. With regard to "acquaintance," since it is a two-term relation, the "dualism" of truth and error cannot arise ; "acquaintance" itself cannot be deceptive, "the object of a presentation is what it is, and there is an end of the matter,—to say that 'it appears different from what it is' can only mean that we make false judgments about it." With regard to judgment, since it is a multiple relation, a "dualism" does arise. We may believe what is false as well as what is true, for although the several objects of the judgment cannot be illusory, they may not be related as in judging we conceive them to be.

A.

Perhaps if I take up at once the question of the alleged immunity of "acquaintance" from mistake or falsehood, I shall best be plunged *in medias res*, and raise at least one of the issues that seem to be involved. When it is maintained, with reference to a so-called "sense-datum," that I may know or not know it, but that there is no positive state of mind which can be described as erroneous knowledge of it, so long as I confine myself to

"knowledge by acquaintance," it can scarcely be intended to assert no more than the truism that if I am aware of something I am aware of it. No doubt, if I am aware of a red colour, I am aware of it, and there is an end of the matter. And from many expressions that are employed one would, I think, naturally conclude that such was what was meant. But if this were, indeed, the meaning, it would be hard to see where the contrast with "judgment" is supposed to lie. For it is equally the case that if Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio, he does believe it, and there is also an end of the matter; there is so far in regard to the act of judging or believing no question of truth or error. In both cases there is a relation between what I should call the act of being aware and the content of that act. *This* relation is, however, quite different from the relation which subsists between the mind and what, rightly or wrongly, is described as "something other than the mind." I do not, therefore, imagine that when, for example, it is said that "I cannot possibly see a thing to be a sheep, unless it is one," no more is meant than that when I am (through means of vision) aware of a sheep I am aware of one. I take it that what is meant is that in the relation of seeing simply (that is, apart from any judgment), the object seen, which is independent of the seeing, must be what I am conscious of it as being. If I pronounce an animal which I see at a distance to be a sheep when in fact it is a pig, the mistake, it would be contended, is due to a judgment superinduced upon the dual relation of referent and relatum, the relation of acquaintance, and had I confined myself to the mere seeing, the mistake would not have arisen. And I understand it is further implied that the "awareness" may not be a characteristic of what I have called the act of apprehending, but may be the whole complex which has for its constituents referent, relatum, and relation. So regarded, "givenness" and "awareness" are apparently held to be but two aspects of one and the same fact,—the fact, namely, which consists in the referent having a certain relation to the relatum.

But if the meaning be that just indicated, a contention, which is sometimes advanced, must, I think, be disallowed. It is sometimes contended that what is thus primarily meant by "acquaintance" is a relation with which we are all perfectly familiar, and with regard to which no one wishes to dispute that it is a relation which does sometimes hold between things. The ordinary view, undoubtedly, is that "awareness" is a characteristic of the referent, and whoever shares the ordinary view is surely entitled to insist that the relation (say) of the awareness of a patch of red to the referent is a totally different relation from that of the patch of red to the referent. The result, it seems to me, of taking an "awareness" to be possibly a complex consisting of the constituents I have mentioned is that the referent is assumed to stand to the patch of red in just that immediacy of relation in which, according to the other view, he stands to the awareness of the patch of red. And the first point I would press is that whether there is or is not "acquaintance" of this sort with sense-data, or any other entities, the fact, if fact it be, is not, at any rate, so self-evident as to be beyond the range of controversy. For I suggest that under cover of the one term "acquaintance" there have been confused two very different kinds of relation,—namely, the sort of relation which a subject may have to *an object* and the sort of relation which that subject has to *its awareness of an object*.

Far from being self-evident, I agree with Miss Edgell, that as between subject and object a simple cognitive acquaintance of the kind intended is not a fact really to be found at all (*Mind*, N.S., xxvii, 1918, p. 182). Mr. Russell has left us in no doubt as to what he primarily means by "acquaintance." He has stated his meaning quite explicitly and unambiguously. "I say," he writes, "that I am *acquainted* with an object when I have a direct cognitive relation to that object, *i.e.*, when I am directly aware of the object itself" (*Mysticism and Logic*, p. 209). And he explains that by "cognitive relation" he does not mean the sort of relation which constitutes judgment, but the sort of

relation which constitutes presentation. In other words, he means by "acquaintance" (*a*) a relation between subject and object, and (*b*) a relation specifically characterised as "direct," that is to say, of such a kind as that when in that relation, and in that relation only, to an object, the subject cannot be deceived as to the nature of what is before it. Now, in replying to the question proposed for our discussion in the negative, I am committing myself to denying that a subject ever does have to an *object* the kind of relation which it is here asserted it constantly may have. I am not denying either (*a*) that the subject has this kind of relation to what I have called its awareness of an object, or (*b*), so far as I can see, any relation with which we can all be legitimately said to be familiar, and with regard to which there can be no dispute.

B.

I will return to the line of reflection I have just been following. But, before pursuing it further, it may conduce to clearness if I try to bring out what, in another respect, my negative answer does not imply.

I am thinking, namely, of the distinction between "acquaintance with" and "knowledge about" as it was originally formulated by John Grote. Grote took considerable pains to make manifest that the "immediateness" which, with regard to the former, he had in view was an "immediateness" which is "a supposition only," and which is never, as a matter of fact, to be found in actual experience. Pure "immediateness" of relation to an object on the part of a subject was, as he conceived it, a theoretical terminus towards which, in retracing the steps along which cognition has advanced, we seem to be driven, but which, if it could be reached, would indicate the stage at which cognition itself had ceased to be a fact. "Knowledge begins," he urged, "when reflection begins, and no earlier, for in immediateness it is dormant." "Immediateness is confusion or chaos, which reflection begins to crystallise or organise"

(*Exploratio Philosophica*, ii, p. 201 *sqq.*). It is true that "reflection" is an unfortunate word to employ in this context; but what I take to be intended is that the further back we proceed in the history of cognitive experience, the fewer will be the characteristics of the object that are discriminated, until at length we should arrive at a mere juxtaposition of two entities that would not be a cognitive relation at all. And, in similar manner, William James, referring to Grote's work, lays stress upon a like consideration.* Now, discounting meanwhile the woeful ambiguity of the term "immediate" as used in this reference, I feel no hesitation in recognising the importance of the distinction to which these writers were directing attention. But it is obvious, I think, that they meant by "acquaintance" something very different from what Mr. Russell means by it; and, in emphasising the relative character of the distinction, as they conceived it, they were, it seems to me, proceeding on sound psychological principles.

Let me dwell, for a moment, on the last point. I realise, of course, the awkwardness of saying, as many psychologists have felt themselves constrained to say, that judgment is involved from the outset in cognitive apprehension, that even the simplest cognitive state is in reality a state of judging. For unquestionably the term "judgment," as ordinarily understood, expresses a highly reflective act, which depends for its exercise upon a definite recognition of the distinction between the subjective and the objective, such as no one supposes the primitive mind to be capable of. The difficulty here is, however, purely a verbal difficulty, and to throw it in the way is simply

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i, p. 221. "The same thought of a thing may," James says, "be called knowledge about it in comparison with a simpler thought, or acquaintance with it in comparison with a thought of it that is more articulate and expressive still." And he points out that "the less we analyse a thing, and the fewer of its relations we perceive, the less we know about it, and the more our familiarity with it is of the acquaintance type."

to obscure the issue. What one is concerned to maintain is that the functions of discriminating, comparing and relating, which no one doubts are fundamental in every developed act of judgment, must be involved, though it goes without saying in an extremely rudimentary form, in even the vaguest, crudest awareness of any content whatsoever, and that a bare acceptance of what is presented, merely because it is presented, would not constitute awareness or recognition in any sense that has ever been attached to those words. Such bare acceptance of what is presented is, however, I take it, precisely what Mr. Russell does mean by "acquaintance with" an object—a state of mind in which a colour, for example, can be "perfectly and completely" known, just as it is, apart from any distinction of it from other colours, apart from any comparison of it with its surroundings, apart from any relation in which it may stand to that of which it is usually said to be a property, etc. (Cf., e.g., *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 73.) Assume, then, a faculty of that description, and how are you going to account for the emergence of what, in contradistinction therefrom, you agree to call specifically thought or judgment? One of three possible answers might be given. It might be said either that the capacity of judging is present along with that of "acquaintance" at the very commencement of mental history, or that it is introduced *ex abrupto* at some subsequent stage of that history, or that it is a development from the condition of "acquaintance." To fall back on the second of these alternatives would be tantamount, so far as I can see, to relinquishing any attempt at psychological explanation. For I am unable to admit as even an intelligible theory the notion that ideas of relation spring up *de novo*, whenever data, *already* apprehended with definiteness and precision of outline, come to be distinguished from and compared with one another. It seems to me as certain as anything in psychology can be certain that the data in question only come to be for the subject definite and marked off from one another *through the exercise*

of an activity which is in essence similar to that whose mode of origin we are inquiring about. The first alternative, if it be understood to imply that the faculty of judging, as we are familiar with it, is a primordial equipment of the mental life, is surely too extravagant an expedient to call for refutation. If, on the other hand, it be understood to imply that the elementary operations of differentiating and comparing are present from the start, alongside of the passive attitude of mere "acquaintance," then how these could coexist in a primitive mental life independently of one another would, I think, baffle all attempts to render comprehensible. You would be driven, if I mistake not, to have recourse, in the long run, to the third alternative. But I submit that from the attitude of "acquaintance," in Mr. Russell's sense of the term, to that of believing or judging, in his sense of these terms, there is no road. "Acquaintance" is "knowledge of things," and, as such, is sharply contrasted with "knowledge of truths." The "things," however, with which each individual subject is "acquainted" belong to that individual subject's "private world." Belief or judgment, on the other hand, involves that in some way that private world has been transcended, and that the individual judging is able to contrast the "things" of his private world with "facts" of an altogether different order—facts which "do not (except in exceptional cases) in any way involve the mind of the person who has the belief." (*Ibid.* p. 203.) Mr. Russell speaks of "knowledge by description" as that which "enables us to pass beyond the limits of our private experience." (*Ibid.* p. 92.) In truth, however, any "knowledge about," any judgment, implies that the subject judging has already passed beyond the limits of his private experience. The "fact" with which a belief or judgment must "correspond" in order to be true, or with which it fails to correspond if it be false, is not "fact" of a kind with which "acquaintance," in Mr. Russell's sense of the term, is possible. And my contention is that for a primitive conscious subject, whose knowledge was confined to "acquaintance," as

thus understood, every avenue of transition to a recognition of "fact" beyond the limits of private experience would be closed. From the "immediate data of sensation" a departure must, however, somehow be made, if there is to be an advance to "knowledge about"; and, although we are told that the first departure "was probably made by our savage ancestors in some very remote prehistoric epoch," no hint is vouchsafed as to how this "piece of audacious metaphysical theorising" is conceivable on the basis of simple "acquaintance." (Cf. *Knowledge of the External World*, p. 102.)

C.

I should like next to refer to certain features in the working out of the notion here in question of "acquaintance" that seem to confirm the objections I have been pressing against it:—

(a) Mr. Russell insists, with a good deal of emphasis, upon the importance of differentiating between data that are "epistemologically primitive" and data that are "psychologically primitive." "When I speak of 'data,'" he writes, "I am not thinking of those objects which constitute data to children or monkeys: I am thinking of the objects which seem data to a trained scientific observer" (*Journal of Philosophy*, xvi, 1919, p. 7). That is to say, a "sense-datum" turns out to be an extract obtained by analysis of our highly developed experience. Selecting some object of ordinary perception, we may proceed to single out its various constituents and qualities; and, broadly, each distinct kind of quality would, I suppose, be correlated with a distinct mode of organic stimulation. But confessedly there is no justification for taking the result of such an analysis to be an enumeration of items originally "given" to the mind. If, then, the skilled observer treats them as his "data," he is obviously not entitled to conclude that, even in his experience, knowledge of them has come about through mere "acquaint-

ance," for the very analysis he has been performing in order to get at them in their assumed simplicity is itself evidence to the contrary. The analysis itself is sufficient to indicate that the complex from which they have been extracted was not known by "acquaintance," and one tries in vain to discover why it should be thought that these ingredients of the complex are known in any other way than those which are dismissed as not "data."

(b) Particularly in sight and hearing, "the sense-datum with which I am acquainted is," Mr. Russell allows, "generally, if not always, complex." A visible object, for example, contains parts spatially related to one another, and with spatial relations we can be immediately acquainted (*Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 210-211). And, while there is, it is urged, no ground for refusing to admit the possibility of our being aware of a complex without our being aware of its constituents, it is assumed that in being "acquainted with" a complex we *may* be "acquainted with" its constituents and the spatial relations subsisting between them. The question I would press is this. When I am "acquainted with" one part of a complex as being to the left (say) of another part, what is it that constitutes the difference between such "acquaintance" and the judgment that the part B is to the left of part A? The only answer one appears to be able to get is such as may be obtained from the statement that in the latter there is "the relation of believing or judging which relates a mind to several things other than itself" (*Problems of Philosophy*, p. 179). But, in being "acquainted with" these parts and the relation between them, the mind is already related to several things other than itself, and one fails to see the grounds for calling the relation of the mind to the complex "B—to the left of—A" a dual relation from which the relation of the mind to all of the terms together in the judgment "B is to the left of A" requires to be distinguished as a multiple relation. Where, in such a case, is the line to be drawn between "acquaintance with" and "knowledge about"?

(c) Similar perplexities confront us, it seems to me, in the account that is offered of the alleged knowledge by "acquaintance" of universals other than relations. It is "obvious," we are told, that we are "acquainted with" such universals as white, red, black, sweet, sour, loud, hard, etc.,—that is to say, with the qualities exemplified in sense-data; but that this should appear to anyone obvious is just one of the perplexing things to which I refer. For it is not meant apparently that "acquaintance with" (say) a particular white patch includes "acquaintance with" the universal whiteness, nor yet that the "sensible quality" whiteness, with which there is "acquaintance," hovers over this white patch and every other as a sort of shadowy counterpart. No; we are said first of all to be "acquainted with" a particular white patch, and then, in consequence of seeing many white patches, easily to learn to "abstract" the whiteness which they all have in common. "In learning to do this we are learning to be acquainted with whiteness" (*ibid.*, p. 189). But here the antithesis between "acquaintance" and judgment seems to break down utterly. For how is such abstraction at all possible within the limits of "acquaintance" merely? It can, I take it, come about only by analysis of particular sense-data and by the comparison of the results of such analysis with one another. Now, judgment admittedly consists to a large extent in thus analysing and comparing, and it is pointed out that it is precisely in this process of analysing and comparing that the possibility of committing error evinces itself (cf. *e.g.*, p. 214). I ask, then, whether "knowledge by acquaintance" does, or does not, depend upon discrimination and comparison. If it does not, what are we to make of this account of the way in which we become "acquainted with" universals? If it does, wherein does it essentially differ from "knowledge about"; and, in particular, on what ground can it be held to be exempt from error?

(d) Often, certainly, Mr. Russell seems explicitly to deny that anything of the nature of discrimination or comparison is

implied by "acquaintance." And then naturally, the "thing" or "object" with which we are said to be "acquainted" tends to be represented as destitute of every distinguishing mark or characteristic—as a mere "this" or "that" in contrast with a "what." I imagine that most of Mr. Russell's readers have experienced the difficulty to which I am alluding. When a single sense-datum is spoken of as (say) red, extended and round, are we to understand that we know it as red, extended and round by mere "acquaintance"? One never feels sure of the answer that would be given to this question. Frequently the knowledge of the sense-datum as red and extended and round seems to be ascribed to so-called judgments of perception by means of which the sense-datum is analysed. It would thus appear that for "acquaintance" there could but be left over a blank residue, a "something one knows not what," to which, through the synthetic function of judgment, predicates become attached. But is there, in truth, any such entity to be found in experience as a residue of this description? And even though its presence be admitted, would the admission imply anything more than that here discrimination is reduced to a minimum? Objects that "appear merely as this, that and the other" must, at least, be to some extent distinguished from one another in order even to be denoted by names (cf. *Monist*, vol. xxiv, p. 445). A line of reflection which I seem to discern in much that has recently been written about

acquaintance" takes some such course as the following. If I take (say) an object X in the distance to be a sheep when in fact it is a pig, then what I am really aware of through "acquaintance" can be said (perhaps) to be an animal, about which, in pronouncing it to be a sheep, I judge wrongly; if, again, I take X to be an animal when it is in fact a lifeless object, then what I am really aware of, through "acquaintance," may be said (perhaps) to be a moving thing; and so on; until in the end the sphere of "acquaintance" may conceivably be filtered down to a mere X having some kind of being. Now,

it is manifest that at most of these stages what is called "acquaintance" *must* be dependent upon discriminative apprehension; I can only be immediately aware of an animal or of a moving thing on the basis of some "knowledge about" such entities. If, then, the facility of "acquaintance" varies with every advance made by the mind in its range of discriminative apprehension, is not that in itself sufficient to show that we cannot be here concerned with two totally disparate modes of knowing?

D.

I return now to the path I was following at the beginning. Mr. Russell means, as I said, by "acquaintance" (*a*) a relation of subject and object, and (*b*) a direct relation, understanding by "*direct* relation" a relation of such a kind that when a subject is in that relation, and in that relation alone, to an object, the object cannot appear to be "different from what it is." And, I repeat, that what I am venturing to call in question is whether a subject ever does have that kind of relation to an *object*. I am allowing that it may have that kind of relation to its awareness of an object; but I am urging that awareness of an object is never, in and for the state of mind whose content it is, itself an object. So far as I can discover, our difference here does not turn upon any difference in the meaning we are assigning to the term "object." By "object" I mean, and I gather Mr. Russell also means, that which, in cognition stands over against the subject, and that which there is no ground for assuming to be dependent either for its being or for its nature upon the circumstance of its being cognised. But what I am maintaining is that the relation between an object, as thus understood, and a subject never is a *direct* relation in the sense just indicated,—never is, that is to say, a relation in which the object cannot appear to the subject to be different from what, as a matter of fact, it is.

The nature of the difference between us discloses itself at

once when one turns to the sorts of entities that Mr. Russell specifies as "objects" with which there can, as he holds, be "acquaintance." The first and most obvious example is, he tells us, sense-data, and I can now confine attention to them. By a "sense-datum" we are to understand not such a thing as a table, which is both visible and tangible, can be seen by many people at once, and is more or less permanent, but just that patch of colour which is momentarily seen when we look at the table, or just that particular hardness which is felt when we press it, or just that particular sound which is heard when we rap it (*Knowledge of the External World*, p. 76. Cf., *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 147). In short, sense-data is another name for what are ordinarily called the sensuous "appearances" of a thing, and Mr. Russell himself frequently uses the latter term as the equivalent of the former. These "appearances" or "sense-data" are private to each individual percipient; and, for reasons which do not at present concern us, it is held that probably no two individual percipients ever have exactly similar "sense-data." My contention, then, in brief is that a "sense-datum," as thus understood, is not something that can be rightly said to "stand over against the subject as an external object" nor to exist independently of the cognising subject. It cannot be said to stand over against the subject as an external object, because it is not that upon which the subject's attention is (save in exceptional circumstances) directed; it cannot be said to exist independently of the subject, because from the mere fact that it is "private" to the individual percipient there is every reason for holding the common-sense belief to be well founded that it comes to be only in and through an act of apprehension which is directed not upon it but upon that of which *it* would ordinarily be said to be an appearance. Or, using other phraseology, it seems to me to be an error of analysis to treat a "presentation" not as the notion of presentation itself requires that it should be treated, *i.e.*, as a presentation of something, but as itself something presented, *i.e.*, as an

object, or a part, or a quality, of an object. I urge that the "sense-datum" or "presentation" or "sensible appearance" is essentially a product,—a product that has come about through the concrete situation of a mental act of apprehension being directed upon what Mr. Russell calls a physical object, that object consisting, however, as I conceive, not merely of the elements and qualities which the epithet "physical" is intended to cover, but of much else in addition, and, in particular, of those qualities of which in and through perception there arise sensible appearances.

Not only so. It seems to me inevitable that if, as I have maintained, an act of cognition is invariably an act of discriminating, of distinguishing, of comparing, there should emerge a product of the kind just indicated whenever an object in what I take to be the legitimate sense of that term is being apprehended by a subject. For the facility of discriminating exhibits endless degrees of adequacy, and so far as our experience goes is never, in any case, exhaustive. On this account alone, not to mention other reasons, there must ensue the contrast between the object, as it is in all its concrete fulness of detail, and so much of that detail as has been discriminated by the subject who stands to such object in cognitive relation. There is, therefore, nothing mysterious or inexplicable in the notion of "appearance."

That the contrast is, in fact, a contrast which, under the circumstances mentioned, must necessarily present itself finds, I have elsewhere argued, illustration from certain consequences to which Mr. Russell himself is led in working out his own position. A "sense-datum," although private to each individual percipient, he consistently takes to be a presented object, a "thing" which stands over against, and is independent of, the subject, after the manner in which, as it seems to me, only a "thing" in the ordinary sense of the word can be a presented object. And he is thus driven to admit that "two sense-data may be, and *must* sometimes be, really different,

even though we cannot perceive any difference between them." "There must be among sense-data differences so slight as to be imperceptible: the fact that sense-data are immediately given does not mean that their differences also *must* be immediately given (though they *may* be)." And on the strength of this consideration, he argues that from the nature of sense-data, as we are "acquainted with" them, no valid proof of the doctrine that they are not composed of mutually external units can be obtained (*Knowledge of the External World*, p. 144 f.). But, if two sense-data that are really different are presented to us as not different, or if sense-data that are really composed of mutually external units evince themselves in immediate experience as continuous, I do not see how objection can be taken to the statement that, in such cases, sense-data appear to be different from what they are. And if it be contended that the statement only means that we are making false judgments about them, one can but point out that the contention is virtually conceding the inseparability, so far as the instances in question are concerned, of judging and being "acquainted with," for it will not, I imagine, be maintained that we are here *first* "acquainted with" the sense-data as different or as mutually external units, and *then* judge them to be not different or to be continuous. Still more decidedly, Dr. Moore, in his Presidential Address, allows the possibility of a sense-datum *seeming* to be smaller than it really is, or of it *seeming* to be of another shape from what it really is, or of it *seeming* to be different in colour from what it really is (*Proceedings of Aristotelian Society*, N.S., 1919, vol. xix, p. 23). In this portion of his Address, Dr. Moore was, in fact, describing in his own way very much what I conceive to be the true view. For he was then supposing what he still called the "sense-datum" to be identical with a certain part of the surface of what may, for our present purpose, be called a "real thing." In other words, so far from being "private to an individual percipient," he was then regarding the "sense-datum" as that which may be apprehended by any number of percipients.

But it is, I venture to urge, vital to any profitable discussion of our problem that we should be clear as to the fundamental divergence between the two views here in question,—a divergence which tends to be obscured by the use of the word "sense-datum" in two totally different senses. For, on the view I am taking, there is, of course, still a factor (if I may so call it) which *is* "private to each individual percipient,"—namely, the "seeming" or the "way of appearing." If, however, the object be a "real thing," or a part of the surface of a "real thing," then obviously that object is neither an "appearance" nor a complex of "appearances." Nay, more. It is, in that case, no less obviously an error to speak of "appearances" as though they were existent entities; indeed, the transition from "things as appearing" to "appearances" is, in strictness, an illegitimate transition, and I suppose one ought to avoid employing the term, except that its employment saves a great deal of circumlocution. I cannot help thinking that many of the difficulties that have been thought to be inherent in the position I am defending arise in fact through confusion in this reference. Let me have recourse to an illustration. If, to take Mr. Broad's instance (*Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. x, p. 590), a cup which is believed to be round be viewed from other points of view than those which lie in a line through the centre of the circle, and at right angles to its plane, it appears elliptical. Now, it is easy enough to convert the statement that the cup, under such circumstances, appears elliptical, into the statement that there are, under such circumstances, "elliptical appearances," understanding thereby that there are actual entities to which the quality "elliptical" is to be ascribed. And, then, it is plausible to argue that "the elliptical shape which is seen from the side is as good an object as the circular shape seen from above." No doubt it is; but only because neither of them is an object. There is not, that is to say, in either case, a "thing" called "a shape" which has the quality of being circular or elliptical; the

“thing” is the cup, and if it actually possesses the quality of being round in shape, then when it looks round *it* looks to be as it is, and when it looks elliptical *it* looks to be different from what it is. To insist that, in the latter case, something is elliptical and to ask *what*, then, that something *is* seems to me to be taking for granted exactly that the existence of which is in dispute. The meaning of the contention against which this objection is pressed is that, in the situation supposed, there is nothing which *is* elliptical but only something which *looks*, or *seems to be*, elliptical. Because we can familiarly talk of the “look” of a cup and distinguish it from the cup, it follows not in the least that corresponding to this distinction there must needs be two existents, one of which has the spatial characteristic of a specific kind of ellipticity.

Again, it has been argued that, when to a conscious subject a round cup seems elliptical, the state of mind involved must be very different from the state of mind involved in making a false judgment. The fact that the cup appears elliptical may never lead me to make the false judgment that it is elliptical; and even though it should do so, and the error were afterwards corrected, the cup would not cease to appear elliptical. I may quite well judge that the cup is round at the very moment when it looks, or appears to me to be, elliptical. I cannot see, however, that this argument proves what it is supposed to prove. All it seems to me to prove is—what, of course, no one doubts—that the act of judging the cup to be round is here a different act from that involved in its seeming to be elliptical. It does not show that the latter is not also in essence an act of judgment, based, indeed, upon grounds quite other than the grounds upon which the former is based. Why should the circumstance that I judge the cup to *be* round be supposed to be incompatible with my also *judging* that it seems to be elliptical? Moreover, it is worth noting, in this connexion, that very often in such circumstances as those just mentioned the one act does very materially influence the other. Generally, if I believe a cup to

be round, I am perfectly oblivious of the fact that when I am seeing it obliquely it looks elliptical; the judgment that it is round so affects my act of visual apprehension that usually it seems to me to be round when otherwise it would seem to me to be elliptical. No psychological fact is more notorious than the way in which our knowledge of what we take to be the real shape of objects affects our awareness of their apparent shape; the apparent shape is often difficult to determine and can only be got at by artificial means.

I come, in the end, once more to the question of truth and error, and will try now to bring to a head the issue that is really before us. I agree that no *object* of sense-apprehension can be true or false, in the sense in which propositions are true or false. But if what I have been contending has any justification, it follows not at all that the *way in which an object appears* may not be true or false, and true or false in the sense in which propositions are so. A proposition is declared to be true when it *corresponds* to a certain associated complex which is a "fact," and to be false when it does not (*Problems of Philosophy*, p. 201). And similarly an "appearance" (if now I may use that word without its carrying the implication I have repudiated) is true when it *corresponds* to a certain associated complex which is the "fact" here denoted as the object and false when it does not. And it seems to me that recognition of the more complicated correspondence is dependent psychologically upon recognition of the simpler correspondence which I take to be involved in the apprehension of objects of sense.

There are other points to which I should have liked to refer, but I content myself with one further observation. Sometimes it appears to be thought that whether what is called "acquaintance" does or does not "involve" discrimination is a subsidiary matter, and that the essential nature of "acquaintance" may be conceived to be the same whichever view we take. I believe this to be a complete mistake. If discrimina-

tion is "involved" at all, it is involved as constituting the core and essence of cognitive activity. It implies that neither an object nor its ways of appearing can ever be "immediately experienced," or "lived through" (*erlebt*) as the awareness of such object, or of its ways of appearing, can be "immediately experienced" or "lived through." I am not assuming that in the history of the mental life cognitive apprehension is primordial. As we descend the scale of mental development, we come to objects more and more confusedly apprehended, but which at each stage afford the material for further discrimination. We seem, thus, brought at length to a stand before the problem of a first beginning. The problem would be indeed an insoluble one were we to conceive of the conscious subject as, at any stage, merely a cognitive being. But in the earliest phases of mental life, it may well be the case that the three stems (if the metaphor be permitted) of cognition, feeling-tone and striving have not as yet branched out, so to speak, from their common root, and that in the shape of what is obscurely felt an original material is furnished for the first crude acts of discrimination. I can see no reason for refusing to admit the possibility of, for example, a dim consciousness of pain prior to the appearance of anything that could rightly be described as cognition. And painful feeling is no doubt "immediately experienced" or "lived through." The essential point, however, is that it is neither an object nor in itself that from which the act of apprehending an object could ever emerge.

II. *By G. E. MOORE.*

I MUST plead guilty to being one of the persons alluded to by Dr. Hicks, who have contended that what Mr. Russell has primarily meant by "acquaintance" is a relation with which we are all perfectly familiar, and with regard to which no one wishes to dispute that it is a relation which does sometimes hold between things. And I still think I was right in this contention. I still think that when, for instance, Mr. Russell has asserted that we are "acquainted" with different sense-data at different times, he has primarily used this language merely to express a fact, which we all know to be a fact, and which no one wishes to dispute. It seems to me that Dr. Hicks's disallowance of this contention simply rests on a confusion between what Mr. Russell has *meant* by acquaintance, and Mr. Russell's theories *about* acquaintance. Dr. Hicks seems to think that because Mr. Russell has described acquaintance as having certain characteristics, Mr. Russell must have meant, when he has asserted that we are acquainted with sense-data, that we have to them a relation which has those characteristics; and that hence, unless it is true that we do have to them a relation having those characteristics, it must be untrue that we are ever acquainted with them. He might just as well argue, I think, that because Mr. Russell has described judgment as a multiple relation having certain characteristics, therefore there is no such thing as judgment, unless we do have to things a multiple relation having the characteristics in question. It seems to me quite plain that what Mr. Russell has primarily meant by "judgment" is what we all mean—a kind of fact, the existence of which no one disputes; and that even if his theory that it is a multiple relation of a certain kind is untrue, that would not at all entitle us to say that there is no such thing as what he means by "judgment." And, similarly, I still think that what he has primarily meant by "acquaintance" is a kind

of fact, the existence of which no one disputes ; and that, even if all the various theories which he has propounded about this fact were untrue, that would not at all entitle us to say that there is no such thing as "acquaintance." I do not, indeed, wish to deny that Mr. Russell may *sometimes* have used "acquaintance" not merely as a name for this indisputable fact, but in such a way that, in asserting that we are acquainted with some objects, he may have been asserting the truth of one or more of his theories about it. How far, and whether at all, he has thus introduced into the actual connotation of the term, one or more of the characteristics which he has believed the indisputable fact to possess, I could not undertake to say. But I still think that his primary use of the term has been simply as a name for an indisputable fact.

It seems to me that how Mr. Russell has primarily used the term is simply as a name for a relation which we do undoubtedly have at times to sense-data, and to different sense-data at different times. I quite certainly am at this moment acquainted with many different sense-data ; and in saying this, I am merely using this language to express a fact of such a kind, that nobody has ever thought of disputing the existence of facts of that kind. A solipsist, if there is one, may perhaps doubt whether *I* am acquainted with sense-data ; but nobody has ever doubted that he himself is acquainted with them. But in trying to explain what sort of an indubitable fact it is, which I express (believing myself to be using "acquainted" in precisely the sense in which Mr. Russell has primarily used it) by saying that I am at this moment acquainted with many different sense-data, we are met by the difficulty that the very people who think they dispute whether there is such a thing as "acquaintance," seem also very often to think that they doubt whether there are such things as "sense-data." Those who think they doubt this seem to me to have been making a confusion of the same kind as that which Dr. Hicks seems to me to make about acquaintance. They have been confusing the things which Mr. Russell has

called sense-data—the existence of which no one disputes or ever has disputed—with certain of his theories *about* these things. He has, in various places, maintained with regard to sense-data (1) that they are not, in a certain important sense, "*in the mind*," and (2) that they are not, any of them, identical with those surfaces of physical objects, to which some of them certainly stand in a relation, which may be indicated by saying that *either* the sense-data in question are identical with the surfaces in question, *or* our perception of the surfaces in question is certainly "mediated by" the sense-data in question. And some people seem to think that if the things which he has called "sense-data" have not got both these characteristics (and perhaps others) which he has supposed them to have, then the things in question are *not* "sense data" in the sense in which he has used the term; and that hence it is really doubtful whether there are any such things as he has meant by "sense-data." It seems to me that this is a complete mistake, even more decidedly so than in the case of "acquaintance."

I doubt if Mr. Russell has ever introduced into the connotation of the term "sense-datum," either the characteristic "thing that is not in the mind," or the characteristic "thing not identical with the surface of any physical object;" and I feel quite sure that he has used it primarily simply as a name for entities, the existence of which no one disputes, and without implying, by calling these entities "sense-data," either the one view with regard to them or the other. If we want to indicate what sort of entities he has meant by "sense-data," in a way which will leave no doubt that there certainly are entities of the sort, I do not know that there is any clearer way of doing so than that which I suggested in my Presidential Address, namely, by saying that they are the sort of entities about which we make such judgments as "This is a coin," "That is a tree," etc., when we are referring to something which we are at the moment perceiving by sight or touch. Everybody can easily discover for himself the entity about which he

is talking, when under such circumstances he judges "That is a tree." And in calling this entity a sense-datum, we by no means imply either that it is not identical with that part of the surface of the tree which he is seeing, nor yet that the opposite philosophical view according to which, so far from being identical with this part of the surface of the tree, it is merely a sensation in his own mind, may not be the true one.

If in this or any other way, we once understand what the things are which Mr. Russell has called "sense-data" we can, I think, go on to give some indication of what he has meant by "acquaintance" by saying that it is *one* of the relations, which, when I make such a judgment as "That is a tree," I undoubtedly have to the sense-datum about which I am making it. *Which* among these relations (for there are undoubtedly several, which, in such a case I always have to the sense-datum in question) I think it is very difficult either to decide or to point out. But in order to make the point that acquaintance with sense-data is something which nobody has ever doubted to exist, it is, I think, sufficient and important to insist that "acquaintance" is merely a name for some one, out of several relations which everybody can easily see, without the possibility of doubt, that he has to the sense-datum in such a case. If we want to specify still further the relation meant, we can, I think, make a first approach by saying that what is meant by saying that he is acquainted with the sense-datum is *either* identical with what would be meant, in such a case, by saying that the sense-datum is "an object to him" or "before his mind," *or* is at least something such that from the fact that he is acquainted with it, it follows that it is an object to him. In other words, "acquaintance" is either identical with "*the* relation of subject or object," *or* with one particular variety of that relation. Any further specification of the relation meant is, I think, extremely difficult. I am not quite sure that sometimes, when Mr. Russell has talked of acquaintance with sense-data, he may not have been using "acquaintance" as a name

for that relation (implying that the sense-datum in question is an object to me) which I so plainly have, for instance, to a given visual sense-datum while I am actually seeing it, and which I equally plainly no longer have when I shut my eyes and remember it, even though only a second or two may have elapsed between the seeing and the remembering. But if he ever has done so, then when he has maintained that it is possible that, in such cases of remembering, I am still acquainted with the sense-datum, he has either been making a sheer mistake, which it is difficult to believe he could have made, or has been using "acquaintance" for another and more general relation, with regard to which it is possible (though not certain) that I have it to the sense-datum equally when I see and when I remember it. Sometimes, too, when he has maintained that we are acquainted with universals, he has, I am inclined to think, meant by "acquaintance" a relation which we certainly do have to sense-data, but which I doubt whether it is possible we should have to universals. I feel very doubtful about all this, but I will try to indicate the sort of view which seems to me to be the true one.

I am inclined to think that the sense in which we are acquainted with universals (though there is one) is essentially different from that in which we are acquainted with sense-data. Let us represent the kind of acquaintance which we have with sense-data by A^1 and that which we have with universals by A^2 . What I mean by saying that A^1 and A^2 are essentially different is that the only sense in which we can truly be said to be acquainted *both* with sense-data and with universals, is if we use "S is acquainted with O" to mean "S has to O *either* A^1 *or* A^2 ." That, Mr. Russell, when he has asserted that we are acquainted with things, has ever actually had in his mind a purely disjunctive relation of this kind, I doubt; though, of course, if we ever do have to a sense-datum the relation A^1 , it follows that it can also be truly said of us that we have to it either A^1 or A^2 . If this be

so, when he has asserted that we are acquainted both with sense-data and with universals, implying, as he has done, that there is some one sense in which we are acquainted with both, I think the probability is that he has sometimes been asserting that we have A^1 to universals, which according to me would be a mistake; though sometimes, when asserting that we are acquainted with universals, he has, I do not doubt, been asserting merely that we have to them that relation, A^2 , which we certainly do have to them. But all these doubts as to *which* of the various relations, implying that the sense-datum in question is an object to us, which we certainly do have to sense-data in cases like those I have mentioned, is the one which Mr. Russell has meant by "acquaintance," do not, of course, affect my point that, in using the word, he has generally used it to stand for *some* relation which nobody has ever doubted that we do have to certain objects. Nor need these doubts, I think, hamper us in discussing his theories about our acquaintance with sense-data; since the question whether these theories are true depends, I think, upon considerations which would yield the same result, whichever of the relations which we do undoubtedly have to sense-data, and which he may have meant by acquaintance with them, be taken as the one he did mean.

I take it then, that the proper answer to our question: Is there Knowledge by Acquaintance? is that undoubtedly there is, and that nobody has ever doubted that we have it; and that what those who have raised the question have really meant to dispute is not the existence of acquaintance, but merely the truth of some of Mr. Russell's theories about it. But which of his theories about it are the ones in dispute?

I should like first of all to mention one, which I do not intend to discuss, because, as far as I can make out, it is not one that is disputed by Dr. Hicks or Dr. Edgell, but which I wish to mention because it offers a case in which I think Mr. Russell has perhaps sometimes used the term acquaint-

ance, not merely for an indisputable fact, but in such a sense that there is no such thing as acquaintance, unless one of his theories is true; and because it will serve to make plain exactly what, and how little in one respect, I mean to assert when I assert that we are indisputably acquainted with sense-data. In his articles in the *Monist* in 1914 Mr. Russell has discussed a view which he has chosen to call "Neutral Monism"; and once or twice in those articles he has used language which seems to me to suggest that, in his view, the Neutral Monists can be said to deny the very existence of what he calls "acquaintance," simply because they deny one particular theory of his as to the nature of acquaintance, which he there tries to defend against them. What I wish to make clear is that Neutral Monists do not for a moment deny the existence of what I am calling acquaintance with sense-data, and what I take Mr. Russell generally to have meant by that term. All that they do is to offer a particular analysis of the kind of fact which I express by saying that I am acquainted with sense-data, without, of course, denying, any more than anybody else does, the existence of facts of the kind they are analysing. In other words, the sense in which I am using acquaintance, and in which I suppose Mr. Russell generally to have used it, is precisely that in which in those articles he has chosen to use the word "experience." The Neutral Monists do not, of course, deny that two different sense-data, *e.g.*, a visual and an auditory one, may both (in this sense) be "experienced" by me at a given time; all that they do is to offer a particular theory as to the nature of the fact which is expressed by saying that two such sense-data are experienced by me. The main points in their theory, if I understand Mr. Russell rightly, are two, namely (1) a contention which can be at least roughly expressed, by saying that the fundamental fact which is expressed by saying that the visual sense-datum V and the auditory one A are both being experienced by me, consists merely in the holding between V and A of a relation, which is

“direct,” in the sense that it does not consist (as language would lead us to think) in the fact that V and A both have the same non-symmetrical relation to a third thing—a subject S—which can be said to be *what* experiences both; and that, though, therefore, both V and A are experienced, and experienced by the same individual, yet there is, strictly speaking, *nothing* which experiences either of them: and (2) a further contention as to the nature of the relation which, in such a case, holds between V and A. What, I take it, Mr. Russell is there mainly concerned to argue against them is that their contention (1) is wrong: that the fundamental symmetrical relation which I know to hold between A and V, when I know that both are being experienced by me, is not a direct relation in the sense in which they say it is, but does really involve that A and V should have the same non-symmetrical relation to some third thing—a subject, S. And what Mr. Russell’s language seems sometimes to suggest is that what he means by “acquaintance” is this supposed non-symmetrical relation, the existence of which the Neutral Monists do deny, and which does, in fact, exist only if their theory is a wrong one. What I have been assuming is that Mr. Russell has not primarily meant by “acquaintance” this supposed non-symmetrical relation, the existence of which is, of course, disputable; but that when he has said that we are acquainted with sense-data, he has generally meant merely to assert the indisputable fact, which the Neutral Monists admit and are trying to analyse. And, whether I am right or wrong in this view as to his usage, I wish to make it quite plain as regards myself, that though I have talked—as it is very difficult to avoid doing—as if acquaintance were a relation between me and the sense-data I am acquainted with, I do not, when I assert that I certainly am acquainted with sense-data, in the least wish to imply that the Neutral Monists are wrong in their analysis of the facts: I only wish to assert an indisputable fact of the kind they are trying to analyse. This particular theory of Mr. Russell’s about acquaintance, which

consisted in denying the contention of the Neutral Monists about it, seems to me to be one of the most interesting and important of the theories he has held about it: and it seems to me quite possible that Mr. Russell was wrong with regard to it, and that the Neutral Monists are right. But I do not intend to discuss it, because, so far as I can make out, both Dr. Hicks and Dr. Edgell are very far from wishing to assert the truth of Neutral Monism, and also, so far as I can see, the question whether it is true or not is quite irrelevant to the truth of those theories of Mr. Russell's which they are concerned to dispute.

What, I take it, they are mainly concerned to dispute is one particular theory of Mr. Russell's, and one only; the theory which Dr. Hicks has tried to express in his paper on "The Basis of Critical Realism" (*Aristotelian Proceedings*, 1916-17, p. 331) by saying that Mr. Russell supposes that there *can* be acquaintance without judgment.

Now this, I think, is not a good way of expressing the theory of Mr. Russell's, which Dr. Hicks, and Dr. Edgell too, I think, really wish to attack. For, so far as I can make out, Dr. Hicks himself admits that we can have acquaintance without *judgment*. In a later passage, in the same paper (*ibid.*, p. 336), all that he ventures to assert is that "the crudest act of sense apprehension is still an act of discriminating and comparing, an act involving, therefore, the characteristic that, *in a highly developed form*, is fundamental in an act of *judgment*." (The italics are mine.) He here clearly implies that we can have acquaintance without judgment; only maintaining that we cannot have it without *discrimination and comparison*, acts, which, according to this later passage, are not, in his view, themselves judgments, although, according to him, they do possess, in a less developed form, the characteristic which is fundamental to judgment. I think, therefore, we must conclude that when, in the earlier passage, he seemed to imply that he did dispute the doctrine that we can have acquaintance without judgment, he must have been using "judgment" in a much

wider sense than that in which he is using it in the later one—a sense so wide that, in it, acts of discrimination and comparison *are* acts of judgment. This extremely wide sense of the word “judgment”—a sense so wide that, if I merely discriminate two sense-data, with which I am acquainted, A and V, this act of discrimination may be said to be a “judgment” of mine *about* A and V, has, I think, been common enough among psychologists; and, if we were to adhere to it, we might, I think, describe the theory of Mr. Russell’s which Dr. Hicks and Dr. Edgell wish to attack, as the theory that we can have acquaintance without judgment. But, I think, it is very misleading to use the word “judgment” in so wide a sense; and we can, I think, express the same theory, in a slightly longer, but less misleading way, by saying it is the theory that we can be acquainted with a sense-datum without *either* judging *or* knowing anything *about* it. It is, I think, natural enough to say that to discriminate two sense-data A and V is to *know* something about them, though not at all natural to say that it is to *judge* something about them.

Now there is no doubt, I think, that Mr. Russell has maintained, with regard to acquaintance, that we *can* be acquainted with a sense-datum without either judging or knowing anything about it. But, if we are to say so, we must, I think, be very careful as to what we mean by *can*. When people say we *can't*, they may only mean that, *in fact*, we never *are*; and Mr. Russell has been careful to explain that he does not for a moment wish to deny this; he does not for a moment wish to assert that we ever are acquainted with anything without at the same time knowing some truth about it (*Problems of Philosophy*, p. 72).

Another thing which may be meant by the assertion that we *cannot* have acquaintance with certain things, without either judgment or knowledge *about*, is that, as a matter of fact, our acquaintance with them is *causally* dependent on judgment or knowledge about: that we never should have attained to

acquaintance with them, had we not previously judged or had knowledge about something else. This seems to me to be all that Dr. Hicks is urging when he maintains that acquaintance with universals "involves" discrimination and comparison. He seems to mean simply that it is *causally* dependent on them. But, so far as I know, Mr. Russell has never denied that acquaintance with *some* things (or even with *all*) may be *causally* dependent on judgment or knowledge about others. So far as this part of Dr. Hicks's argument is concerned, he seems to me to be simply arguing against a view which Mr. Russell has never held.

The only sense in which Mr. Russell *has* maintained that we can be acquainted with a sense-datum, without either judging or knowing anything *about* either it or anything else, is, I think, as he has once put it (*Problems of Philosophy*, p. 72) that acquaintance is *logically independent* of knowledge of truths; or, to put it in another way, that a subject *could* be acquainted with something without simultaneously knowing or judging anything *about* anything; or to put it in still a third way, that it is *conceivable* that a subject should be acquainted with something, without such knowledge or judgment. This, I take it, Dr. Hicks and Dr. Edgell must mean to dispute, if they are disputing anything held by Mr. Russell at all, when they say that acquaintance is impossible without either judgment or knowledge about it. And, on the assumption that they do mean to dispute it, I will say what I can on the question whether Mr. Russell was right or not. It seems to me that acquaintance only *can* be *logically* dependent on judgment or knowledge *about*, if what I know, when I know that I am acquainted with a particular sense-datum is simply and solely that I am knowing something about it. And it seems to me *possible* that this is really the case, and that therefore Mr. Russell was wrong in maintaining the logical independence of acquaintance from knowledge about. One argument, which it is obvious to urge in favour of Mr. Russell's

view, namely, that knowledge about a sense-datum, in the sense required (*i.e.*, knowledge about a sense-datum, which is not merely known to the knower by description), seems obviously to *pre-suppose* acquaintance with it, is, I think, easily answered. We can, I think, easily suppose that knowledge that so and so is true of A, in the sense in which, to have such knowledge, I must be acquainted with A, is really an ultimate notion; and that why it seems to pre-suppose acquaintance with A, is because, from the fact that I know *this* particular thing about A, *e.g.*, that A is other than V, it follows that I know *something* about A. The only strong argument in favour of Mr. Russell's view seems to me to be that, in particular cases, my knowledge that I am acquainted with this and that sense-datum does not seem, on immediate inspection, to be what, on the other view, it must be, namely, a mere deduction from the fact that I know this or that about it: it does not look for instance, as if my knowledge that I am acquainted with this sense-datum, A, were a mere deduction from my knowledge that I am discriminating it from that other, V, or from any other such piece of knowledge. But this argument does not seem to me at all conclusive. If, on the other hand, we turn to ask what arguments there are *against* Mr. Russell's view, I cannot help thinking that a certain weight is to be attached to the fact that if "I am acquainted with A" did merely mean "I am knowing something about A," this would offer an easy explanation of the apparent fact that, in order to know anything about A in the sense in question, I *must* be acquainted with A. The "must" would, on this view, merely express the obvious fact that from "I know *this* about A" it follows that I know *something* about A. On Mr. Russell's view it is, I think, difficult to explain in what sense and why (as he maintains) knowledge and judgment about, both pre-suppose acquaintance. But this argument also does not appear to me conclusive.

As for Dr. Hicks, I have failed to discover in what he says

any argument which seems to me to tend to show, even remotely, that Mr. Russell was wrong on this particular point. But Dr. Edgell has in *Mind* (April, 1918) offered an argument, with regard to which, so far as I understand it, I will try to explain why I do not think it convincing. I understand her to urge that, if Mr. Russell were right in maintaining "acquaintance" to be logically independent of knowledge *about*, it would be unintelligible how, starting merely with acquaintance, we should ever have attained to knowledge *about*, and that mere acquaintance with sense-data, however many we might be acquainted with, would never *explain* how we came to know anything about them. Now, with regard to this argument, I would say, first, that, so far as I know, Mr. Russell has never maintained that, either in the history of the race or of the individual, we do start with mere acquaintance with sense-data, and no knowledge about them. So far as I know, it is perfectly open to him to maintain that, from the beginning, we always in fact have knowledge about as well as acquaintance. But even against a person who should maintain that in the history of the race or individual, or both, we do start with mere acquaintance with sense-data, and no knowledge *about* them, I cannot see that the argument is convincing. It may be true that no amount of acquaintance with sense-data would explain, *by itself*, how we could ever attain to knowledge about, or, for instance, to acquaintance with universals. But surely it is legitimate to hold that for a complete explanation of many mental phenomena it is necessary to refer not only to previous mental phenomena, but also to events in the body. I should myself say that, for instance, to explain recognition, with which Dr. Edgell was particularly concerned, it is certainly necessary to refer not only to what has previously happened in the mind of the individual who recognises, but also to the organisation of his brain: nothing that has previously happened in his mind, will, *by itself*, explain a single act of recognition. And similarly, even if acts of acquaintance with sense-data, by themselves, can never explain

how we should come to have knowledge *about* sense-data or acquaintance with universals, I do not see why they, *together* with a certain cerebral organisation, should not explain it. Thus even if we did start with acquaintance alone, it seems to me perfectly intelligible that, provided our brains were organised in a suitable manner, we should have subsequently come to have also knowledge *about*.

There is one other point which seems to me to be raised in Dr. Hicks's paper, though in a very obscure and confusing manner, about which I should like to say as clearly as I can what seem to me to be the facts. Mr. Russell has, I think, implied that no object with which we are acquainted can ever be true or false, in the sense in which propositions are true or false, and in which every proposition must be either true or false and cannot be both. And this contention, of course, implies that we never are acquainted with propositions. Now, waiving, for the moment, the question whether he was or was not right in holding that we never are acquainted with propositions, it is, I think, undoubtedly true that no object, *other* than a proposition, can possibly be true or false in the sense in which a proposition is so. And from this latter fact there follows at once, I think, the main part of what Mr. Russell has meant by saying that acquaintance cannot be deceptive—a statement to which Dr. Hicks seems to object so strongly. Sense-data, for instance, are not propositions; and hence it follows at once that my acquaintance with a sense-datum cannot be said to be false in the sense in which ideas or judgments of mine can be said to be so; since to say of an idea or judgment of mine that it was false is simply equivalent to saying that it was a conceiving or affirming of a proposition, and that the proposition in question is a false one. This, I think, is the primary sense in which acquaintance with objects other than propositions cannot possibly be false. What is meant is not that an act which is an act of acquaintance with a sense-datum, may not also be false; for the same act which is an act of acquaintance

with a sense-datum may also, so far as I can see, be a judgment about it and a false one. What is meant is only that the characteristic which we attribute to an act, when we say that it is an act of acquaintance with a sense-datum, is one in respect of which it cannot be true or false; since to say that it was true or false in respect of this characteristic, would be to say either that a sense-datum is itself a proposition or that objects, other than propositions, can be true or false in the same sense in which propositions are so.

I take it, then, that the only part of Mr. Russell's doctrine on this head which is open to attack, is his contention that we never are acquainted with propositions. And his reasons for holding this were, of course, exactly the same as his reasons for holding that judgment is a multiple relation. They were, I take it, put briefly, that there simply are no complexes, no "single objects," which are propositions; or, to put it in another way, that when a man believes or conceives the hypothesis, *e.g.*, that there is a future life, it is a mistake to suppose that the phrase "that there is a future life" stands for any single object to which he has a relation; there simply are, in other words, no objects such as Meinong has supposed "objectives" to be. This doctrine, I take it, Dr. Hicks disputes, but I cannot see that he has brought any arguments against it. And it would take far too long for me to try to discuss it here. It was discussed at great length by Professor Stout in the *Proceedings* for 1914-15. I will only say, that though it does not seem to me certain that Mr. Russell was right in this contention, I am strongly inclined to think that he was, and should be prepared, on a proper occasion, to defend that view.

III. *By* BEATRICE EDGELL.

THE first part of Dr. Moore's paper is a testimonial to Mr. Russell's good intentions. No matter what Mr. Russell may have said he means by acquaintance, and he has said a good deal, he has, according to Dr. Moore primarily meant to express a fact which we all know to be a fact and which no one wishes to dispute. If this is so, do not let us waste time by disputing it; but in the meantime, what fact? Dr. Moore says, one of the several relations which everybody can easily see, without the possibility of doubt, that he has to the sense-datum in making such a judgment as "That is a tree." He goes on to express it as *the* relation of subject to object or one particular variety of that relation.

Passing from the fact of acquaintance to the question is there knowledge by acquaintance? Dr. Moore answers that undoubtedly there is and that no one has ever doubted that we have it. He asserts that those who raise the question are merely disputing one of Mr. Russell's theories about acquaintance. That may be, but the theory in question is the so-called fact that there is such a cognitive relation as acquaintance. "I say I am acquainted with an object when I have a direct cognitive relation to that object, *i.e.*, when I am directly aware of the object itself. . . . I think the relation of subject and object which I call acquaintance is simply the converse of the relation of object and subject which constitutes presentation" (B. Russell, *Proc. Aris. Soc.*, 1910-11, p. 108).

What I have disputed is that there is knowledge which is not essentially "knowledge about." Dr. Moore is careful to distinguish between maintaining that we can be acquainted with a sense-datum without at the same time knowing about it and maintaining that as a matter of fact we ever are so acquainted; he says that Mr. Russell has never asserted the latter. When

he himself asserts that no one has ever doubted that we have knowledge by acquaintance is he referring to the logical possibility or to the knowledge which, as a matter of fact is accompanied by (?) knowledge about? Even if, as Dr. Moore points out, Mr. Russell has only claimed the logical independence of "knowledge by acquaintance," he has, as Dr. Moore himself recognises, claimed further that all "knowledge about" is logically dependent on "knowledge by acquaintance." We have then this position. Whenever, in fact, there is A there is also B. A is logically independent of B but B is logically dependent on A. My contention is that all knowledge is B, "knowledge about." I believe A, "knowledge by acquaintance," to be a myth invented by epistemology.

In the article alluded to by Dr. Moore I claimed that knowledge as described by the theory of knowledge must be psychologically possible, and that "knowledge by acquaintance" was psychologically impossible, for the reason that from it there could be no advance. "As I understand Mr. Russell's acquaintance there would be momentary flashes of something—I hesitate to call it cognition—but each flash would be discrete, insulated. How awareness of likeness and difference could arise therefrom is to me a mystery. The object presented is simple or unrelated" (*Mind*, vol. xxvii, p. 182). When Mr. Russell says, "All our knowledge, both knowledge of things and knowledge of truths rests upon acquaintance as its foundation," he may not have meant that our knowledge of things and our knowledge of truths develop out of acquaintance, he may have meant something quite different; but as a matter of fact he does try to show how our acquaintance with the universals, termed sensible qualities, develops out of acquaintance with the particular this and that. I quoted the instance of acquaintance with the white patch, referred to by Professor Hicks, and said: "My trouble is to see how we could ever learn anything, however retentive we might be, from a repetition of acquaintance with a sense-datum as described by Mr. Russell"

(p. 181). Dr. Moore regards this as a problem for physiology. It seems to him perfectly intelligible that, provided our brains were organised in a suitable manner, "knowledge by acquaintance" would lead to "knowledge about." I have a great respect for the integrative action of the nervous system, but I cannot conceive of this achievement. On the contrary, reference to the structure and function of the nervous system seems to rule out of court any conception of cognition as originating in discrete, insulated items of knowledge. But the *onus probandi* lies on Dr. Moore.

I will now try to indicate why I regard "knowledge by acquaintance" as a myth invented by epistemology. It is significant that Dr. Moore passes directly from the fact of acquaintance, which he specifies as the relation of subject to object or some variety of that relation, to the statement that there is undoubtedly knowledge by acquaintance.

It is commonplace to say that whereas the psychologists of the age of James Mill set out on their psychological analysis from the standpoint of physics and chemistry, the present day writers set out from the standpoint of biology. Mental processes are treated as living processes, all the biological conceptions of growth, development, organism are taken over as suitable view-points from which to contemplate the facts of mental life. Historically the transition from the one standpoint to the other is interesting. The different editions of Bain's treatises show the influence of the change on the method of exposition. In Spencer the old and the new conceptions are found side by side. At the present time the treatment of instinctive activities and emotions seems to show the complete triumph of the biological standpoint. It will be claimed that the same change has determined also the exposition of the psychology of cognition. No doubt it has, but its success here is not so complete. Cognition has been treated from the biological standpoint, but it has also been treated from the standpoint of epistemological analysis. Between psychology

and epistemology there should be the closest alliance ; and it might have been expected that an epistemology which itself came under the influence of evolution would have greatly advanced psychology.* But to a very large extent interest in epistemology overshadowed all interest in psychology. Now that idealism is challenged there is an effort to reconstruct the psychology of cognition in such a way as to harmonise it with the doctrines of realism. But a call for revision has come also from a quite different quarter, viz., medical science. Some new working hypotheses have been urgently needed to explain the ideas which possess sick men's souls, their fancies, their dreams, their loss of memory. These phenomena must be shown to be the outcome of living processes at work within the man, facts whose origin and development can be traced in his history ; they can no longer be attributed to the agency of fortuitous circumstances. A psychology which linked up the theory of instinctive impulse and emotion with the theory of subconsciousness has appealed to many as a "live" psychology, and offered a working basis for psycho-therapeutics. It is obvious that if the biological standpoint in psychology is the right one, the psychology of cognition must be brought into relation with the psychology of conation and feeling. The life of mind must be the life of an organism which develops as a whole.

When Dr. Ward's article on psychology appeared in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1885, it marked the parting of the ways between the old and the new psychology. I hope it will not seem either presumptuous or

* "I would treat the forms of judgment and inference as science treats the forms of animals and plants, not in the spirit of enumerative classification, but in the spirit of morphological analysis. . . . The form of thought is a living function, and the phases and movements of this function are varieties and elements of the form. Therefore, the 'Morphology of Knowledge' must be construed as not excluding the Physiology of Thought. The science of intellectual form includes this science of intellectual life."—Bosanquet, *Logic*, Introd.

irrelevant if I try to bring out my incredulity with regard to "knowledge by acquaintance" by examining Dr. Ward's *Psychological Principles*, 1919.

Dr. Ward analyses individual experience into the duality of subject and object. The relation of subject to object is the relation of presentation. On the one hand, there is the subject who has the single capacity, feeling, and the single activity, attention; on the other hand, there are presented objects or presentations, which in their simplest forms are sensations or movements. As a summary of his analysis, Dr. Ward gives us a table wherein we have:—a subject non-voluntarily attending to changes in the sensory continuum; presentation of sensory objects; being in consequence either pleased or pained and by voluntary attention producing changes in the motor continuum; presentation of motor objects. All the faculties of the older psychologists are resolvable into differences in the object attended to, the subject has "the one power of variously distributing that attention upon which the effective intensity of a presentation in part depends" (p. 57). "We do not attribute such diversities among objects to subjective activity. . . . All objects—no matter what—must be 'there' for, or be given to, the subject; they cannot be 'posited' by it—in other words, they must be 'presented'" (p. 66).

Presentation is here treated as if it were the relation of object to subject when the object is cognized by the subject, *i.e.*, as if it were a cognitive relation. It needs but a simple, though fundamental, change in Dr. Ward's analysis to make it forthwith an ideal basis for realism. Treat the analysis, not as an analysis of concrete individual experience, but as a formula for the relation of mind to reality, and the implied independence of the presented object of the subject will lead directly to realism. Then psychology must be written in terms of feeling and conation, having the outlines which Professor Alexander has sketched for us, while a psychology of presentations becomes a contradiction in terms.

The point to notice here, however, is that Dr. Ward's presentation relation seems then to be identical with what Dr. Moore terms acquaintance, and seems to justify the doctrine that there is "knowledge by acquaintance." Now this treatment of presentation as a cognitive relation seems to me to be in direct conflict with Dr. Ward's main teaching on the psychology of cognition. By so treating it he sets the stage of mental life for cognition; feeling is made consequential on cognition, and cognition dependent on feeling. "On the side of the subject, this presentational relation implies what, for want of a better word, may be called attention. . . . Attention so used, will cover part of what is meant by consciousness—so much of it, that is, as answers to being mentally active, active enough at least to 'receive impressions'" (p. 49). Any activity other than receptivity will be dependent, in the first place, on such receptivity; non-voluntary attention (by which Dr. Ward means attention which excludes interest) is thus more fundamental than interest (p. 262, note 2). I say this treatment is in conflict with Dr. Ward's main teaching on cognition, because, when he comes to take up the psychology of cognition in detail, it is evident that the mere fact of presentation does not constitute cognition.

To be known the presented x must be differentiated from the presentation continuum. "Of the very beginning of this continuum we can say nothing. . . . The view here taken is that at its first appearance in psychical life a new sensation or so-called elementary presentation is really a partial modification of some pre-existing and persisting presentational whole, which thereby becomes more complex than it was before" (pp. 76-79). For the development of the presentation continuum it is essential that the continuum as differentiated should persist and that later modifications should restrict and modify earlier. This teaching in itself might be sufficient to show that, for Dr. Ward, at any rate, there never can be an acquaintance with a bare "this," but that the "this" in

respect of its "whatness" stands out from the background of experience—a background be it noted which is absent in the theory of knowledge by acquaintance.

When Dr. Ward traces out how this differentiation which is essential for cognition comes about, we recognise the advance he makes on his predecessors. Feeling and conation come to the front. Conation is more prominent in *Psychological Principles* than in the article in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia*; but in the article also its rôle was clear. It is the principle of "subjective selection" which explains the diversity in the actions which follow the same presentation. "The twilight that sends the hens to roost sets the fox to prowl" (p. 50). It is to their dependence on feeling that movements owe their most distinctive character—the possession of psychical antecedents. "The feeling again is what it is because the subject has already a determinate nature" (p. 54). But the principle of subjective selection explains not only the diversity in action, but the consequent differentiation in the presentation continuum. "The uninteresting is not known but ignored" (p. 21). "All . . . syntheses or integrations depend primarily on what we have called 'movements of attention,' which movements in turn depend very largely upon the pleasure and pain that presentations occasion" (p. 140).

We are told that attention which is non-voluntary, and so far passive, is objectively *diverted*. (The italics are mine.) We learn that non-voluntary movements of attention have little to do with psychical life. "The mere surprise or 'shock' that non-voluntarily determines a momentary notice, unless accompanied or immediately followed by either pain or pleasure, leads to nothing. . . . So the objective differentiation proceeds on subjectively determined lines. This is for psychology the first and fundamental fact: to lose sight of it is to miss the essential meaning of experience" (p. 415).

Now the subject of such experience cannot be represented as a passive recipient of the "given." He is a "seeker" who

finds what his nature makes him seek, who discovers his presentation continuum just as truly as, according to Dr. Ward, he builds his memory continuum. So far as there is failure in the answer supplied in a practical situation there may be said to be error in sense perception. At the perceptual level of development "truths work." "We catch many Tartars, and so learn wariness in a rough school" (p. 187).

With his view of the fundamental duality of experience it is possible for Dr. Ward to hold both that presentations are "given," are "there for" the subject, and that they are selected by the subject. "We do not take—at least do not take up—what is uninteresting, nor do we find unless we seek, nor seek unless we desire. The cognitive aspect of experience in a word, is far more one of experiment, as its very etymology suggests, than one of mere disinterested observation" (*Naturalism and Agnosticism*, vol. ii, p. 133).

But it is difficult to understand how Dr. Ward can maintain that, "not intellect but will, not cognition but conation, not sensitivity but activity, is a clue to the true understanding of the character and development of experience" (*Psychological Principles*, p. 20); how he can define psychology as 'the science of individual experience—understanding by experience, not merely, not primarily, cognition but also, and above all, conative activity or behaviour,' and yet at the same time treat the fundamental relation of subject and object in experience as a cognitive relation, and furthermore retain a scheme of analysis whereby conation is made dependent on cognition. If presentation is to be the name for the relation of subject and object which is the condition of experience, then it can neither be a relation of cognition nor of feeling nor of conation, but that which renders each of these possible.*

* The difficulties which arise from the dependence of conation on cognition and feeling come, I think, into special prominence in Dr. Ward's treatment of the character of feeling as determined by the effective or ineffective exercise of attention, and again in his treat-

It is surely their predominant interest in the theory of knowledge which makes writers interpret the relation of subject to object as a relation of knower to object known. I suggest that this is why Dr. Moore passes from the fact of acquaintance to "knowledge by acquaintance," as if the one were tantamount to the other. Now if what Dr. Moore means by acquaintance were really the same relation as that which Dr. Ward terms presentation, I should not dispute the fact of acquaintance, however much I might deprecate the name given to the fact. I should, however, still dispute that the relation in question was a cognitive relation, and maintain that so to conceive it was to invalidate the meaning of experience and to invent a form of cognition that implied mental atrophy.

But in spite of any similarity in description I do not think that Dr. Moore does mean by acquaintance the relation which Dr. Ward calls presentation. The relation of subject and object which Dr. Moore seems to have in view is not that which is expressive of the duality of experience, but that which is expressive of the duality between mental life on the one hand and the so-called "real" world on the other. This difference in fundamental analysis lies at the root of the difference in answer given to the question, "Is there knowledge by acquaintance?" The very fact denoted by acquaintance is in dispute.

I am very glad to have the support of Professor Hicks in the denial of "knowledge by acquaintance" and in the counter-assertion of knowledge as essentially "knowledge about." I agree with all that he has said as to the part played by discrimination and comparison in cognition. But I find myself unable to reconcile the denial and counter-

ment of instinct and of value. There is no clear indication that conation stands for a specific constituent of experience. The fact that it is attention consequent on feeling does not differentiate it as a pulse in experience from the attention which is said to determine feeling.

assertion with the acceptance of a relation between the subject and an "object," when by object he means what Mr. Russell means. He describes it as something which stands over against the subject and exists independently of the cognizing subject. In a preceding passage, Professor Hicks describes it as "that which in cognition stands over against the subject, and which there is no ground for assuming to be dependent either for its being or for its nature upon the circumstance of its being cognized." I do not think the two descriptions have the same significance, and I take it that the latter expresses Professor Hicks's meaning more accurately. I gather that the relation is the relation referred to as subsisting between "the mind and what, rightly or wrongly, is described as something other than the mind." How Professor Hicks can assert that all cognition involves differentiation, and yet agree that an object in Mr. Russell's sense is presented to the subject, I do not understand. He claims that there is a direct relation between the subject and what he terms "its awareness of an object," that this awareness is a product which only comes into being through the concrete situation of a mental act being directed on the "real" object. The product is not itself the object; it is appearance as contrasted with "reality." Professor Hicks uses this analysis to explain error in sense perception. Inasmuch as the product of the act directed on the "real" object may fail to correspond to the fulness of reality, there is room for error. The product "awareness of x " is regarded as private to the percipient, and is coloured by the individuality of the percipient.

Now it seems to me that by his account of the discriminative activity of attention in cognition, Professor Hicks has invalidated any possible theory of a cognitive relation between the subject and this "real" object which is said to be presented to the subject. His article on attention in the *British Journal of Psychology* is a valuable contribution to psychology, and what is there shown to be discriminated by attention, is not any

“real” object in Mr. Russell’s sense of the term, but the “content of the act of apprehending.” “A content possessing a higher degree than others of painful or pleasurable feeling-tone would become naturally differentiated from the rest” (vol. vi, pt. 1, p. 14). In reply to an argument that we cannot be pleased or displeased with what is not in consciousness, he says: “The argument misses the whole point of the consideration, which of course is that a content may be in consciousness before it is attended too, and unless that is admitted, it is difficult to see how any psychological explanation of the circumstances we are concerned with is possible at all” (p. 15).*

Now how can attention be said to be directed on the object in Mr. Russell’s sense of the term object, when what is differentiated is not this object at all, but the content in consciousness, the content of the act, or as Professor Hicks also styles it, the private sensible appearance? The “real” object seems to me to be left in the air, and the fact of presentation, the relation between the subject and an object in Mr. Russell’s sense, to be no fact at all. The connexion in contemporary philosophy between realism and the doctrine of “knowledge by acquaintance” is no accidental one.

In what Professor Hicks has described as the product of the act of knowing directed by the subject on the object, he has, it seems to me, included the whole of experience, so far as experience is cognitive. “Awareness of *x*” is made to appear as a component revealed by analysis of cognition, but it is in truth the very cognition that is being analysed. It is a moment of experience implying both the subject and the object of Dr. Ward’s presentational relation. It implies the discriminating and the discriminated. As Professor Hicks himself

* I should like to point out the close connexion between the present contention that all cognition involves differentiation and the question raised in a previous symposium, “Can there be anything obscure or implicit in a mental state?”—*Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1912-13.

says: "We distinguish the content from the act of apprehending, but what in our mature experience gives stability and definiteness to the content as thus distinguished is the presence of a number of thoughts or concepts which connect the content in question with the objective order of real fact. So too we distinguish the act of apprehending from the content apprehended, and what gives stability and definiteness to the distinction is a number of thoughts or concepts which connect the act of apprehending with the train of experiences constituting what we call the self" (p. 10). The subject which he has depicted on the one side of this "awareness of x " and the "real" object which he has depicted on the other, are the shadows cast by the thoughts and concepts he refers to. They are idols of the cave.

While Mr. Russell may be said to have eliminated the subject and object of cognitive experience by substituting for them the subject and object of epistemology, Professor Hicks may be said to have duplicated the subject and object of cognitive experience by adding the subject and object of epistemology.

IV. *By* C. D. BROAD.

THE proposed subject of our Symposium contains a "fallacy of many questions," and our first business must be to disentangle them. Unless there be acquaintance there can hardly be knowledge by acquaintance. But there might be acquaintance and no knowledge by acquaintance; and again, even if both exist, acquaintance might not be itself knowledge. Lastly, even if both exist and both be knowledge, it would not follow that the knowledge which *is* acquaintance is the same as knowledge *by* acquaintance. There is Dickens and there are books by Dickens; but Dickens himself is not a book, and, if he were, he is certainly not a book by Dickens. Thus there arise the following questions:—(A) Is there such a thing as acquaintance? (B) If so, is acquaintance itself knowledge? (C) What is knowledge *by* acquaintance, and does it exist? This question clearly splits into two:—(1) If acquaintance be not knowledge is there a kind of knowledge specially related to it (and, if so, how?), such that it may be called knowledge *by* acquaintance? And (2) If acquaintance be knowledge is it the same as knowledge by acquaintance, or is the latter another kind of knowledge related in some peculiar way to the knowledge which *is* acquaintance? Our answer to (B) will dispense us from troubling about one of the two questions under (C).

(A.)

Is there Acquaintance? To answer this question we must either give a definition or a description of acquaintance, or we must try to point out unambiguous examples of this state of mind. I shall begin by clearing the ground of some things which, I think, neither are nor are implied by acquaintance:—

(i) I certainly do not mean by it "the sort of relation which a subject has to its awareness of an object." Professor

Dawes Hicks seems to think that many people have meant by it this relation, and that they have confused this with "the sort of relation which a subject may have to an object." I very much doubt whether anyone has been in the deplorably confused state which this mistake would involve. Such a person would have to identify the two statements "I am acquainted with x " and " x is a state of my mind."

Now of course I do not wish to deny that I *may* be acquainted with my states of mind, *e.g.*, through introspection. But, if so, I am acquainted with them because and in so far as I introspect, not because they are my states. Again, many people hold that sensation is, or involves, acquaintance with sense-data. And some people, *e.g.*, Professor Stout, seem to hold that sense-data are states of mind of the nature of feelings. If both these opinions were true I should be acquainted with what is in fact a state of my mind whenever I had a sensation. But this would not be *because* the sense-datum is a state of my mind, but because it is the object of a sensation. Moreover, everyone who talks of acquaintance regards it as a *cognitive* state; whilst the relation between me and my states of mind is perfectly neutral as between cognition, conation, and feeling.

(ii) Mr. Russell has described acquaintance as "a direct cognitive relation" between a mind and an object. The question as to whether and in what sense it is cognitive belongs to a later section; but it will be in place here to point out some of the ambiguities of *direct* and to explain in what sense I do not hold that acquaintance need be direct. The contrast between direct and indirect may refer either (a) to the nature of a relation or (b) to distinctions between various kinds of judgment. The latter senses do not concern us at present, since they refer to *knowledge* by acquaintance primarily, and only to acquaintance itself if this prove to be knowledge.

A relation may be said to be direct if the proposition xRy

be such that there is no entity z such that xRy can be analysed with xSz and zTy , where S and T are other relations. Directness in this sense is no part of what is meant by acquaintance, as I understand it. Suppose, *e.g.*, that the statement: I am acquainted with x should prove to be analysable into the propositions: This awareness has x for its object and This awareness is one of my states of mind. Then the relation between me and x would not be direct in the present sense, but this would not prevent it being acquaintance.

There is one other sense of directness which concerns us at present. Propositions are said to be *about* their terms, and when I believe them I believe something about the terms. When my mind has this relation to a term it is said that, so far, it is not *directly* related to the term in question. In this sense directness means absence of aboutness. I am inclined to think that acquaintance is direct in this sense. This does not of course imply directness in the first sense. It does imply that acquaintance is not knowledge, if all knowledge be *about*; but it does not imply, even on this hypothesis, that there is no acquaintance or that there is no knowledge *by* acquaintance.

(iii) I shall now try to offer examples of what I mean by acquaintance. I feel no doubt of its reality; but there are two difficulties in giving satisfactory examples. The first is that when I am acquainted with anything I generally stand in other cognitive relations to it as well. *E.g.*, if I suddenly open my eyes, or suddenly see a landscape illuminated on a perfectly dark night by a flash of lightning, or suddenly in the quietness of the night hear a clap of thunder, my cognitive relation to these sights and sounds seems to me to be primarily one of almost pure acquaintance. But I almost at once begin to note distinctions in the total field and to pass judgments about physical objects, such as: This is a tree, That is a horse, etc. I take these sudden and yet vivid experiences as examples (a) because the experience is too short for many acts of

judgment and discrimination to take place, and (b) because it is not vague or scarcely distinguishable into act and object like drowsy states and bodily feelings.

The second difficulty is the following. When I am asked by someone to give him an example of acquaintance I naturally give him some particular act of mine. Now he can only know this act of mine (as all my other acts) by description. And part of my description to him of the act will be a description of its object. *E.g.*, I say: When I look at a cup from the side I am acquainted with an elliptically-shaped object. He at once answers: To separate this out of your total field of view involves an act of discrimination, and to know that it is elliptical involves acts of judgment and comparison. Hence, what you have offered as a typical act of acquaintance is really an example of acts of discrimination, comparison, and judgment. This objection contains two fallacies: (a) I may be acquainted, among other objects, with what is in fact an object of elliptical shape and in fact differs from other objects in my total field of view; and yet I may never have performed an act of discrimination or passed the judgment: this is elliptical. But when I want to make other people understand what it is that I was acquainted with I have to describe it in general terms; and, in order to do this, I do have to discriminate, analyse, and pass judgments about, the objects of my acquaintance. Thus, certain processes which *are* necessary in order that I may describe what I was acquainted with to other people are *thought to be* necessary in order that I may be acquainted with anything myself. (b) Of course the other fallacy is the failure to recognise that, even if my acquaintance with *x* has been preceded by acts of discrimination, etc., this has no tendency to prove that I do not in the end become acquainted with *x*. You might as well argue that there are no such beings as men because no man could exist unless some woman existed to be his mother.

(iv) Possibly it might be said: Perhaps acquaintance does

exist at the very beginning of such experiences as you have quoted; but the moment discrimination and judgment begin (and you admit that they begin almost at once) acquaintance ceases. Now, if this simply means that *mere* acquaintance ceases, it is a dull analytic proposition. If it means that, as I pick out and recognise details in a total field of view, a relation (*viz.*, acquaintance), which was present before I began to discriminate ceases to be present in any form, it is synthetic but highly doubtful. Suppose we shift our attention about our field of view and distinguish one part from another, and the parts from the whole. There are three points to notice: (*a*) a change takes place in our experience, (*b*) we regard ourselves as discovering and not creating distinctions, and (*c*) we regard these distinctions as being present in that of which we were already aware. If we turn our head and thus alter our total field of view, the first two conditions are fulfilled and the third is not. There are various, more or less plausible interpretations which we may put on these admitted changes; but none of them, I think, implies that acts of acquaintance cease to be a part at least of our total state of mind. We may, *e.g.*, hold that we continue to be acquainted with precisely the same total sense-datum, but that we *also* become acquainted with various parts of it. Or we may hold that the sense-datum really changes, and that, after discrimination we are acquainted with a somewhat different object from that with which we were acquainted before we began to discriminate. We can then explain in various ways our belief that we discover and do not create the distinctions. *E.g.*, to say that the distinctions were all along contained in the original sense-datum may be a loose way of saying that the old and the new sense-datum are both appearances of the same physical object, and that the new sense-datum gives us fuller and clearer information about those features in the physical object concerning which the old sense-datum gave scantier and vague information. Or again, we might drop all reference to a supposed physical object, and

say that our meaning simply is that, on comparing the present sense-datum with the past one as we remember it, we find certain specific kinds of resemblance and difference between the two.

There is no need to enter in detail into these alternatives. The two points to notice are: (*a*) that they all give a perfectly clear meaning to the statement that we become aware of distinctions that were present all along in the original object of our awareness, whilst it is not at all clear what meaning a theory which tries to work with *nothing but* discrimination will give to the latter part of this statement. And (*b*) that on all of these we are all along acquainted with *some* sense-datum, though not necessarily with the same sense-datum all through the process. Indeed, the following seem to me to be plain facts: (*a*) That when I suddenly look at a landscape or hear a gun fired I enter into a special kind of relation with a visual field or a noise; that this relation probably begins to subsist before I begin to judge or discriminate; and that, at any rate, it is present in full force at a time when my acts of discrimination and judgment have hardly begun to enter the field. (*b*) That when I have discriminated and recognised various parts of the whole landscape, *one* at least of the relations which I have to these parts is of precisely the same kind as that which I originally had to the whole. And this relation is what I understand by acquaintance with sense-data. That other relations have been included under the name of acquaintance I do not doubt, *e.g.*, so-called acquaintance with universals. I think this is almost certainly a different relation, and that it gets the same name because of the common characteristic of not being about its object.

(*v*) To my statement, that by acquaintance I mean the sort of relation that I have to sense-data, Professor Dawes Hicks would reply that I cannot have such a relation because there are no sense-data for me to be related to. One reason which he gives appears to be that he takes it to be part of the *meaning*

of a sense-datum to be private and mind-dependent. Now this is certainly no part of what I mean by the word, and it is obviously no part of what Mr Russell means by it. If it is believed, it is believed as a synthetic proposition and must be supported by arguments. Hence any objections to sense-data on the ground that they are *necessarily* private and mind-dependent are simply irrelevant. But this is not the whole of Professor Dawes Hicks's contention.

I say that I am aware of an elliptical shape when I look sideways at a round tea-cup, and that this is an instance of acquaintance. He answers that it is not an instance of anything, because there *is* no elliptical shape for me to be aware of. Now, however good Professor Dawes Hicks's arguments might be, I am afraid I should continue to prefer the evidence of my own sight. But they do not even raise a difficulty in my mind. One argument is that "there is not . . . a 'thing' called 'a shape'; the 'thing' is the cup." Now, in the first place, I never supposed I was aware of an ellipse *et præterea nihil*. Substitute "elliptical coloured patch" and the first objection vanishes. Secondly, I agree that it is usual to confine the name "thing" to physical objects. As I do not wish to assert (or deny) that the elliptical coloured patches are (or are parts of) physical objects, I agree not to call them "things"; in fact, that is why I call them "sense-data." That they exist and that they are elliptical will certainly not be disproved by showing that they are not *mere* ellipses (which I never dreamt), and are not things (which I never called them).

Of course, Professor Dawes Hicks's positive contention is that a meaning can be attached to the statement: This cup looks elliptical though it is circular, although there is nothing before my mind which is in fact elliptical. Now a perfectly clear meaning and motive can be assigned to such judgments if I am in fact aware of an elliptical object when I look at a cup from the side. I cannot see that Professor Dawes Hicks's theory has yet assigned either. I suppose he must take the

predicate "looking elliptical" as ultimate and unanalysable. And of course I quite agree that the two *judgments*: This *looks* elliptical, and This *is* circular, are perfectly compatible. What I do not see is what he supposes the second judgment to mean, and why—if there be no elliptical object before the mind when I judge—I say that the cup looks *elliptical* rather than square or of any other shape.

The only positive attempt that I find to answer these questions adds to my perplexity. We are told that "the sense-datum . . . is essentially a product . . . of a mental act . . . being directed on a physical object." But if there are no sense-data I do not understand how they can be products of anything. Yet Professor Dawes Hicks adds that such products must inevitably arise if cognition be an act of discriminating, comparing, etc. I take his meaning to be either that the *judgment*: This looks elliptical, or the (in his view, false) *belief* that I am acquainted with an elliptical object, arises in this way. But I simply cannot understand how the difference between looking elliptical and being round can consist in the contrast between a discriminated part (which by hypothesis is not elliptical) and a more detailed but as yet undiscriminated whole. Such a view seems to me to be for two reasons almost exactly opposite to the facts. (a) An elliptical appearance is *more* and not *less* differentiated than a circular shape, because the latter is perfectly uniform, while the former has a variable radius of curvature. (b) It might be plausible to hold that we reach our belief that the physical object is round by comparing and contrasting the shapes of its appearances from various positions; but the view that we reach our belief that it looks elliptical by discriminating within an object which is in fact round I do not understand at all.

(B.)

Is Acquaintance Knowledge?—This seems to me mainly a verbal question. Acquaintance, so far as I can see, differs from judgment. And the most usual and important meaning of

knowledge is true judgment. If I am right, acquaintance is not knowledge in this sense. It may be called knowledge in so far as it immediately gives rise to the grounds for judgments which do constitute knowledge. But here we are speaking figuratively; this only makes acquaintance knowledge in the sense in which we can say that "the blood is the life."

Here we might leave the matter but for the very ingenious theory suggested, but not asserted, by Dr. Moore in his paper. This theory I understand to be that particular bits of knowledge by acquaintance about x are logically prior to acquaintance with x . I am acquainted with x means There is some property ϕ such that I know the proposition ϕx by acquaintance. The experience of "knowing ϕx by acquaintance" is not further analysable; it does not involve any cognitive relation with x that is not *logically* implied by the proposition: I know ϕx by acquaintance. This does, of course, *logically* imply that I know *something* about x by acquaintance; and this is *defined* by Dr. Moore for the present theory as the *meaning* of the proposition: I am acquainted with x . This theory, if true, would give a perfectly clear answer to our questions (B) and (C, 2). For it tells us that acquaintance is knowledge, that it differs from knowledge by acquaintance, and what is the precise relation between the two kinds of knowledge.

I am not in a position to refute the theory, but I am not inclined to accept it for the following reasons: (a) It does not seem to me on careful inspection that the relation which I have to a flash of lightning when I first see it is simply that I know certain propositions about it in a peculiar and not further analysable way. (b) On this theory there is a certain class of judgments marked out from all others by an ultimate peculiarity which constitutes them bits of knowledge by acquaintance. They do not involve any further cognitive relation to their terms on the part of the judging mind. Now we actually divide this group without any difficulty into sub-groups according to the subjects of the judgments: viz., bits of know-

ledge by acquaintance about A, bits of knowledge by acquaintance about B, . . . and so on. I do not see how we do this unless we have some special cognitive relation to A, B, . . . etc., as well as to propositions as wholes which are in fact about these subjects. I do not say that this difficulty is insuperable, but I think it is a difficulty. (c) It is commonly taken as an axiom that "we must know what we are talking about." If this be interpreted to mean "we must be acquainted with what we are judging about," it seems to me highly plausible. And it seems to me to be a synthetic proposition. On Dr. Moore's theory it would be true, but would reduce to the tame analytic assertion: If I judge anything definite about x , I must judge something or other about x . The axiom appears to assert more than this, and therefore to demand acquaintance in a sense other than that allowed by Dr. Moore's suggested theory.

I am therefore inclined to hold (a) that acquaintance is at any rate not the same as knowledge by acquaintance. This is true even on Dr. Moore's suggested theory. And (b) that acquaintance itself is probably not knowledge at all, if by knowledge you mean true judgment. It can be called cognitive because of its very intimate connexion with knowledge by acquaintance; but if you call it knowledge, you are speaking in metaphors or using knowledge in an unusual sense.

(C.)

Knowledge by Acquaintance.—For those who accept Dr. Moore's suggested theory the inquiry is now finished. For us it remains to attack the question (C 1): What is Knowledge by Acquaintance, and how is it related to acquaintance?

When Mr. Russell told us that acquaintance was "a direct cognitive relation," he did not recognise the extreme ambiguity of directness, and I am inclined to think that he did not very clearly envisage the possibility of acquaintance being different from knowledge by acquaintance, and not being itself knowledge at all. The result is that some of his statements about

acquaintance apply to acquaintance itself, and some to knowledge by acquaintance. We have already discussed the sense in which acquaintance itself is and those in which it is not direct. We shall now find it profitable to pursue the ambiguities of directness within the region of judgment.

(i) On the face of it some knowledge about some objects is reached by inference and some is not. The former may be called indirect and the latter direct knowledge. Now, if there be knowledge by acquaintance it is non-inferential, and therefore direct in the present sense. This, of course, does not imply that it is direct in any sense that we have already met. Knowledge which is direct, in the sense of being non-inferential, is not direct, in the sense of not being about its objects, nor in the sense of being an unanalysable relation between a mind and an object. Some philosophers apparently hold that *all* knowledge is inferential; at any rate, some idealists who write about logic have expressed that opinion. If they be right, there will be no knowledge by acquaintance; but it will not follow that there is no acquaintance, nor that acquaintance is not direct in the sense in which we have allowed it to be so.

(ii) There is, I am afraid, a tendency to confuse knowledge about with knowledge by description. The latter is then opposed to knowledge by acquaintance. Hence, it is thought that knowledge by acquaintance is not knowledge about, and therefore not knowledge at all. This is a sheer confusion. All judgments whatever are about their terms in the sense of about which has at present been used. The peculiarity of descriptive judgments is that they are (*a*) about their own terms in the ordinary sense, and also (*b*) about a term which is not one of their own, at least if they are true. The two senses of about are not the same.

If Mr. Russell's theory of description be true, the judgment Scott is the author of *Waverley* is about the man Scott only in this derivative and Pickwickian sense, whilst it is about the word *Scott* in the ordinary sense in which all judgments what-

ever are about their terms. Let us say that it is *anent* the man Scott and *about* the word *Scott*. Then the truth is that knowledge by acquaintance is only about terms and not anent them, whilst knowledge by description is about some terms and anent others. One meaning of directness is aboutness in contrast to anentness; and, in this sense, knowledge by acquaintance is direct as contrasted with knowledge by description. This sense of directness obviously does not imply directness in any other sense which we have yet met.

(iii) Professor Dawes Hicks in parts of his paper seems to take directness in yet another sense. He takes it to mean that knowledge by acquaintance is infallible. This is a fifth meaning of directness which, so far as I can see, neither implies nor is implied by any of the other four. I think that by discussing the subject under this heading we shall get an insight into what is meant by knowledge by acquaintance. In the first place it is not made clear whether the supposed infallibility is meant to refer to acquaintance or to knowledge by acquaintance. We can now answer this question. Acquaintance itself is not judgment, and only judgments can be true or false. Infallible means necessarily true. It is therefore absurd to call acquaintance itself infallible; it cannot be false, but it equally cannot be true: it simply falls outside the region of this disjunction. What must be meant then is that judgments founded on acquaintance are necessarily true.

Now, I take it to be quite clear that judgments may be "founded on" acquaintance in various ways, and that some of such judgments are clearly fallible. The question: In what way must a judgment be founded on acquaintance to count as knowledge by acquaintance, and are such judgments infallible? remains for discussion. Let us take Professor Dawes Hicks's example as a beginning. He holds that the man who believes in knowledge by acquaintance must assert: "I cannot possibly see a thing to be a sheep unless it is a sheep." If this were so there would be nothing left to be said for knowledge by

acquaintance. But let us see what such a judgment really amounts to. You cannot strictly “see a thing to be a sheep” or to be anything else. The man in question has been acquainted by sight with a visual sense-datum of a certain shape and colour. On the basis of this he has judged that there is a physical object before him, and has classified this physical object as a sheep. Obviously there are plenty of opportunities of going wrong in this complicated process; but I cannot think that anyone would regard the final judgment as knowledge by acquaintance. Of course, such judgments are constantly made and are founded upon our acquaintance with sense-data; but I should not count any judgment which asserted the existence of a physical object and ascribed qualities to it as knowledge by acquaintance.

In judgment by acquaintance it seems to me that we assert that a sense-datum with which we are acquainted either (*a*) has such and such qualities as a whole, or (*b*) has such and such parts with which we are acquainted, or (*c*) that such and such parts of it with which we are acquainted stand in such and such relation to each other. An example of the first is when I judge that a visual sense-datum of which I am aware when I look at a cup from the side is elliptical. An example of the second is when in a total field of view I distinguish a red patch and a green patch. An example of the third is when I judge that this red patch is wholly surrounded by a green border.

The first point to notice is that a sense-datum with which I am acquainted may perfectly well have parts with which I am not acquainted. If therefore I say that a given sense-datum has no parts except those which I have noticed and mentioned I may quite well be wrong. Similarly there may well be differences of quality which I cannot detect. If I say: This sense-datum with which I am acquainted is coloured all over with an uniform shade of red, this statement may be false. To put it generally a sense-datum may be more differentiated than I observe it to be, and therefore whenever I say, on the basis of

my observation, that it has *only* such and such a degree of differentiation I run a risk of error. But no judgment of this kind is, I think, to be counted as a judgment of *pure* acquaintance, for the following reason. All such judgments contain an element of negation, based on observation. But *no* negative judgment can be based on observation in precisely the same sense as that in which *some* affirmative judgments are based upon observation. Compare, *e.g.*, the two judgments: (*a*) This patch which I see is red, and (*b*) This patch which I see is not green. Both are based on my observation of the patch. But they cannot be based on it in the same way, for it seems pretty certain that I cannot observe non-greenness in the same sense in which I can observe redness. I suspect that judgments of the second kind are founded indirectly on acquaintance by means of judgments of the first kind which are founded directly on it. Thus I judge that this patch is not green because (*a*) I observe that it is red, and (*b*) I know that redness and greenness are spatiotemporally incompatible. A genuinely negative element may be concealed under an affirmative form of words. Thus: This is uniformly red really means: There are no differences of shade in different parts of this. I think it is of the essence of judgments of pure acquaintance not to contain such negative elements, and the fact that such elements are often concealed by language causes some judgments to appear to be judgments of pure acquaintance when they are really not so.

I do not, however, see any reason to suppose that even judgments of pure acquaintance are theoretically infallible. We must distinguish two notions which are often confused:—infallibility and incorrigibility. Judgments of pure acquaintance are perhaps incorrigible; but this does not prove that they are infallible. All judgments involve universals among their terms, whether they be about sense-data with which we are acquainted or about anything else. And it seems always possible to be mistaken in thinking that such and such a term

is an instance of such and such a quality or that such and such a complex is characterised by such and such a relation. Moreover, when we communicate our judgments to others, there is always the practical possibility of error through others not thinking of the universals of which we want them to think when we use a certain verb or adjective. We can only say that in certain judgments of pure acquaintance the risk of error seems to be at its lowest.

My judgments of pure acquaintance are almost certainly incorrigible by other people, because it is extremely doubtful whether others can be acquainted with the same sense-data as I. Even if it were true that they can, and I do not see how it could be known to be true in any particular instance. And it is doubtful whether such judgments are strictly corrigible even by myself. For I could only correct one such judgment by more careful subsequent observation and reflexion, and, as we have seen, it is doubtful whether I am, strictly speaking, acquainted with the same sense-datum or even with a precisely similar one on the second occasion. Thus it is doubtful whether (if our judgments be about sense-data with which I am acquainted) they refer to the same subject, and therefore doubtful if the second can strictly be a correction of the first.