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and ' identifications ' of things perceived. I have argued that the class of cases which possess, to any reasonably satisfactory degree, just the features which Hampshire intends by *his* use of the expression ' non-committal description of something perceived ' is a relatively restricted class. Descriptions in visual terms, which mention such things as colour, shape and outline are not, as he implies, just typical members of this class. They are the only members of it. The necessity of recourse to such descriptions is held to arise from a certain kind of uncertainty, a kind of uncertainty essentially connected with the inability to give firm descriptions other than those. But it appears that the sort of uncertainty which is essentially connected with this inability is narrower in its range than Hampshire suggests; for it seems that rarely, if ever, is uncertainty as to the public or private status of ' what is seen ' conjoined in any but an accidental way with this limitation on the subject's power of firm description.

Towards the end of his paper Hampshire seems to acknowledge this restrictedness of scope; for he writes that we shall ' exceptionally ' need to find a non-committal description of experience. Why at the beginning does he insist so strongly on the ' necessity ' of his contrast? He may there have been thinking of a much broader topic. In the context of a *general* discussion of identification of things perceived, the notion of a description which is the best the inquirer can give but which stops short of the identificatory or classificatory needs of the situation (and might so far be said to be non-committal) is, of course, a notion of vastly wider scope. There are very many cases, and types of case, in which we find it necessary to raise questions about the classification and identification of things perceived; and in raising such questions we may find it necessary to give some description of the thing perceived about which we wish to raise the question. What counts as identification, what merely as description here will depend on the special needs of the situation. We have here, between description and identification, a contrast which is necessarily involved in, and assumes different forms in, many situations. But this is another, and a wider, subject.

THE CAUSAL THEORY OF PERCEPTION

By MR. H. P. GRICE AND MR. ALAN R. WHITE

I—H. P. GRICE

1

THE Causal Theory of Perception (CTP) has for some time received comparatively little attention, mainly, I suspect, because it has been generally assumed that the theory either asserts or involves as a consequence the proposition that material objects are unobservable, and that the unacceptability of this proposition is sufficient to dispose of the theory. I am inclined to regard this attitude to the CTP as unfair or at least unduly unsympathetic and I shall attempt to outline a thesis which might not improperly be considered to be a version of the CTP, and which is, if not true, at least not too obviously false.

What is to count as holding a causal theory of perception? (1) I shall take it as being insufficient merely to believe that the perception of a material object is always to be causally explained by reference to conditions the specification of at least one of which involves a mention of the object perceived; that, for example, the perception is the terminus of a causal sequence involving at an earlier stage some event or process in the history of the perceived object. Such a belief does not seem to be philosophical in character; its object has the appearance of being a very general contingent proposition; though it is worth remarking that if the version of the CTP with which I shall be primarily concerned is correct, it (or something like it) will turn out to be a necessary rather than a contingent truth. (2) It may be held that the elucidation of the notion of perceiving a material object will include some reference to the rôle of the material object perceived in the causal ancestry of the perception or of the sense-impression or sense-datum involved in the perception). This contention is central to what I regard as a standard version of the CTP. (3) It might be held that it is the task of the philosopher of perception not to elucidate or characterize the

ordinary notion of perceiving a material object, but to provide a rational reconstruction of it, to replace it by some concept more appropriate to an ideal or scientific language: it might further be suggested that such a redefinition might be formulated in terms of the effect of the presence of an object upon the observer's sense-organ and nervous system or upon his behaviour or " behaviour-tendencies " or in terms of both of these effects. A view of this kind may perhaps deserve to be called a causal theory of perception; but I shall not be concerned with theories on these lines. (4) I shall distinguish from the adoption of a CTP the attempt to provide for a wider or narrower range of propositions ascribing properties to material objects a certain sort of causal analysis: the kind of analysis which I have in mind is that which, on *one* possible interpretation, Locke could be taken as suggesting for ascriptions of, for example, colour and temperature; he might be understood to be holding that such propositions assert that an object would, in certain standard conditions, cause an observer to have certain sorts of ideas or sense-impressions.

In Professor Price's *Perception*,[1] there appears a preliminary formulation of the CTP which would bring it under the second of the headings distinguished in the previous paragraph. The CTP is specified as maintaining (1) that in the case of all sense-data (not merely visual and tactual) " belonging to " simply means *being caused by*, so that ' *M* is present to my senses ' will be equivalent to ' *M* causes a sense-datum with which I am acquainted '; (2) that perceptual consciousness is fundamentally an inference from effect to cause. Since it is, I think, fair to say[2] that the expression " present to my senses " was introduced by Price as a special term to distinguish one of the possible senses of the verb " perceive ", the first clause of the quotation above may be taken as propounding the thesis that " I am perceiving *M* " (in one sense of that expression) is to be regarded as equivalent to " I am having (or sensing) a sense-datum which is caused by *M*." (The second clause I shall for the time being ignore.) I shall proceed to consider at some length the feature

[1] P. 66.
[2] *Cf. ibid.*, pp. 21–25.

which this version of the CTP shares with other non-causal theories of perception, namely, the claim that perceiving a material object involves having or sensing a sense-datum; for unless this claim can be made out the special features of the CTP become otiose.

2

The primary difficulty facing the contention that perceiving involves having or sensing a sense-datum is that of giving a satisfactory explanation of the meaning of the technical term ' sense-datum '. One familiar method of attempting this task is that of trying to prove, by means of some form of the Argument from Illusion, the existence of objects of a special sort for which the term ' sense-datum ' is offered as a class-name. Another method (that adapted in a famous passage by Moore) is that of giving directions which are designed to enable one to pick out items of the kind to which the term ' sense-datum ' is to be applied. The general character of the objections to each of these procedures is also familiar, and I shall, for present purposes, assume that neither procedure is satisfactory.

Various philosophers have suggested that though attempts to indicate, or demonstrate the existence of, special objects to be called sense-data have all failed, nevertheless the expression ' sense-datum ' can (and should) be introduced as a technical term; its use would be explicitly defined by reference to such supposedly standard locutions as " So-and-so looks Φ (*e.g.*, blue) to me ", " It looks (feels) to me as if there were a Φ so-and-so ", " I seem to see something Φ " and so on. Now as the objection to such proposals which I have in mind is one which might be described as an objection in principle, it is not to my present purpose to consider how in detail such an explicit definition of the notion of a sense-datum might be formulated. I should, however, remark that this programme may be by no means so easy to carry through as the casual way in which it is sometimes proposed might suggest; various expressions are candidates for the key rôle in this enterprise *e.g.*, " looks (" feels " etc.), " seems ", " appears " and the more or less subtle differences between them would have to be investigated; and furthermore even if one has decided on a preferred candidate, not all of its

uses would be suitable; if for example we decide to employ the expressions " looks " etc., are we to accept the legitimacy of the sentence " It looks indigestible to me " as providing us with a sense-datum sentence " I am having an indigestible visual sense-datum "?

A general objection to the suggested procedure might run as follows: When someone makes such a remark as "It looks red to me " a certain implication is carried, an implication which is disjunctive in form. It is implied either that the object referred to is known or believed by the speaker not to *be* red, *or* that it has been denied by someone else to be red, *or* that the speaker is doubtful whether it is red, *or* that someone else has expressed doubt whether it is red, *or* that the situation is such that though no doubt has actually been expressed and no denial has actually been made, some person or other might feel inclined towards denial or doubt if he were to address himself to the question whether the object is actually red. This may not be an absolutely exact or complete characterization of the implication, but it is perhaps good enough to be going on with. Let us refer to the condition which is fulfilled when one or other of the limbs of this disjunction is true the *D*-or-*D* condition (' doubt or denial ' condition). Now we may perhaps agree that there is liable to be something odd or even absurd about employing an " It looks to me " locution when the appropriate *D*-or-*D* condition is fairly obviously not fulfilled; there would be something at least *prima facie* odd about my saying " That looks red to me " (not as a joke) when I am confronted by a British pillar box in normal daylight at a range of a few feet. At this point my objector advances a twofold thesis (*a*) that it is a feature of the use, perhaps of the meaning, of such locutions as " looks to me " that they should carry the implication that the *D*-or-*D* condition is fulfilled, and that if they were uttered by a speaker who did not suppose this condition was fulfilled he would be guilty of a misuse of the locutions in question (unless of course he were intending to deceive his audience into thinking that the condition was fulfilled), (*b*) that in cases where the *D*-or-*D* condition is unfulfilled the utterance employing the " looks to me " locution, so far from being uninterestingly true, is neither true nor false. Thus armed, my objector now assails the latter-day sense-datum theorist.

Our every day life is populated with cases in which the sensible characteristics of the things we encounter are not the subject of any kind of doubt or controversy; consequently there will be countless situations in which the employment of " looks to me " idiom would be out of order and neither true nor false. But the sense-datum theorist wants his sense-datum statements to be such that some one or more of them is true whenever a perceptual statement is true; for he wants to go on to give a *general* analysis of perceptual statements in terms of the notion of sense-data. But this goal must be unattainable if " looks to me " statements (and so sense-datum statements) can be truly made only in the *less* straightforward perceptual situations; and if the goal is unattainable the CTP collapses.

It is of course possible to take a different view of the linguistic phenomena outlined in my previous paragraph. One may contend that if I were to say " it looks red to me " in a situation in which the *D*-or-*D* condition is not fulfilled, what I say is (subject to certain qualifications) true, not " neuter "; while admitting that though true it might be very misleading and that its truth might be very boring and its misleadingness very important, one might still hold that its *suggestio falsi* is perfectly compatible with its literal truth. Furthermore one might argue that though perhaps someone who, without intent to deceive, employed the " it looks to me " locution when he did not suppose the *D*-or-*D* condition to be fulfilled would be guilty in some sense of a misuse of *language*, he could be said not to be guilty of a misuse of the particular locution in question; for, one might say, the implication of the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition attaches to such locutions not as a special feature of the meaning or use of these expressions, but in virtue of a general feature or principle of the use of language. The mistake of supposing the implication to constitute a " part of the meaning " of " looks to me " is somewhat similar to, though more insidious than, the mistake which would be made if one supposed that the so-called implication that one believes it to be raining was " a part of the meaning " of the expression " it is raining ". The short and literally inaccurate reply to such a supposition might be that the so-called implication attaches because the expression is a propositional one, not because it is the particular propositional expression which it happens to be.

Until fairly recently it seemed to me to be very difficult indeed to find any arguments which seemed at all likely to settle the issue between these two positions. One might, for example, suggest that it is open to the champion of sense-data to lay down that the sense-datum sentence "I have a pink sense-datum" should express truth if and only if the facts are as they would have to be for it to be true, *if it were in order*, to say "Something looks pink to me", even though it may not actually be in order to say this (because the *D*-or-*D* condition is unfulfilled). But this attempt to by-pass the objector's position would be met by the reply that it begs the question; for it assumes that there is some way of specifying the facts in isolation from the implication standardly carried by such a specification; and this is precisely what the objector is denying. As a result of frustrations of this kind, I was led to suspect that neither position should be regarded as right or wrong, but that the linguistic phenomena *could* be looked at in either way, though there might be reasons for preferring to adopt one way of viewing them rather than the other; that there might be no proofs or disproofs, but only inducements. On this assumption I was inclined to rule against my objector, partly because his opponent's position was more in line with the kind of thing I was inclined to say about other linguistic phenomena which are in some degree comparable, but mainly because the objector's short way with sense-data is an even shorter way with scepticism about the material world; and I think a sceptic might complain that though his worries may well prove dissoluble he ought at least to be able to state them; if we do not allow him to state them we cannot remove the real source of his discomfort. However, I am now inclined to think that the issue is a decidable one, and that my objector's position is wrong and that of his opponent right. I shall attempt to develop a single argument (though no doubt there are others) to support this claim, and as a preliminary I shall embark on a discursus about certain aspects of the concept or concepts of implication, using some more or less well-worn examples.

3

(*Implication*)

I shall introduce four different examples and use upon them four different ideas as catalysts. All are cases in which in

ordinary parlance, or at least in philosophical parlance, something might be said to be implied as distinct from being stated.

(1) "Smith has left off beating his wife", where what is implied is that Smith has been beating his wife.

(2) "She was poor but she was honest", where what is implied is (very roughly) that there is some contrast between poverty and honesty, or between her poverty and her honesty.

The first example is a stock case of what is sometimes called "presupposition" and it is often held that here the truth of what is implied is a necessary condition of the original statement's being either true or false. This might be disputed, but it is at least arguable that it is so, and its being arguable might be enough to distinguish this type of case from others. I shall however for convenience assume that the common view mentioned is correct. This consideration clearly distinguishes (1) from (2); even if the implied proposition were false, i.e. if there were no reason in the world to contrast poverty with honesty either in general or in her case, the original statement could still be false; it would be false if for example she were rich and dishonest. One might perhaps be less comfortable about assenting to its truth if the implied contrast did not in fact obtain; but the possibility of falsity is enough for the immediate purpose.

My next experiment on these examples is to ask what it is in each case which could properly be said to be the vehicle of implication (to do the implying). There are at least four candidates, not necessarily mutually exclusive. Supposing someone to have uttered one or other of my sample sentences, we may ask whether the vehicle of implication would be (*a*) what the speaker said (or asserted), or (*b*) the speaker ("did he imply that . . . ?") or (*c*) the words the speaker used, or (*d*) his saying that (or again his saying that in that way); or possibly some plurality of these items. As regards (*a*) I think (1) and (2) differ; I think it would be correct to say in the case of (1) that what he speaker said (or asserted) implied that Smith had been beating this wife, and incorrect to say in the case of (2) that what he said (or asserted) implied that there was a contrast between *e.g.*, honesty and poverty. A test on which I would rely is the following: if accepting that the implication holds involves one in

accepting an hypothetical ' if p then q ' where ' p ' represents the original statement and ' q ' represents what is implied, then what the speaker said (or asserted) is a vehicle of implication, otherwise not. To apply this rule to the given examples, if I accepted the implication alleged to hold in the case of (1), I should feel compelled to accept the hypothetical " If Smith has left off beating his wife, then he has been beating her "; whereas if I accepted the alleged implication in the case of (2), I should not feel compelled to accept the hypothetical " If she was poor but honest, then there is some contrast between poverty and honesty, or between her poverty and her honesty." The other candidates can be dealt with more cursorily; I should be inclined to say with regard to both (1) and (2) that the speaker could be said to have implied whatever it is that is implied; that in the case of (2) it seems fairly clear that the speaker's words could be said to imply a contrast, whereas it is much less clear whether in the case of (1) the speaker's words could be said to imply that Smith had been beating his wife; and that in neither case would it be evidently appropriate to speak of his saying that, or of his saying that in that way, as implying what is implied.

The third idea with which I wish to assail my two examples is really a twin idea, that of the detachability or cancellability of the implication. (These terms will be explained.) Consider example (1): one cannot find a form of words which could be used to state or assert *just* what the sentence " Smith has left off beating his wife " might be used to assert such that when it is used the implication that Smith has been beating his wife is just absent. *Any* way of asserting what is asserted in (1) involves the implication in question. I shall express this fact by saying that in the case of (1) the implication is not *detachable* from what is asserted (or *simpliciter*, is not detachable). Furthermore, one cannot take a form of words for which both what is asserted and what is implied is the same as for (1), and *then* add a further clause withholding commitment from what would otherwise be implied, with the idea of annulling the implication without annulling the assertion. One cannot intelligibly say " Smith has left off beating his wife but I do not mean to imply that he has been beating her." I shall express this fact by saying that in the case of (1) the implication is not *cancellable* (without

cancelling the assertion). If we turn to (2) we find, I think, that there is quite a strong case for saying that here the implication *is* detachable. There seems quite a good case for maintaining that if, instead of saying " She is poor but she is honest " I were to say " She is poor and she is honest ", I would assert just what I would have asserted if I had used the original sentence; but there would now be no implication of a contrast between *e.g.*, povery and honesty. But the question whether, in the case of (2), the implication is cancellable, is slightly more complex. There is a sense in which we may say that it is non-cancellable; if someone were to say " She is poor but she is honest, though of course I do not mean to imply that there is any contrast between poverty and honesty ", this would seem a puzzling and eccentric thing to have said; but though we should wish to quarrel with the speaker, I do not think we should go so far as to say that his utterance was *unintelligible;* we should suppose that he had adopted a most peculiar way of conveying the the news that she was poor *and* honest.

The fourth and last test that I wish to impose on my examples is to ask whether we would be inclined to regard the fact that the appropriate implication is present as being a matter of the meaning of some particular word or phrase occurring in the sentences in question. I am aware that this may not be always a very clear or easy question to answer; nevertheless I will risk the assertion that we would be fairly happy to say that, as regards (2), the fact that the implication obtains is a matter of the meaning of the word ' but '; whereas so far as (1) is concerned we should have at least some inclination to say that the presence of the implication was a matter of the meaning of some of the words in the sentence, but we should be in some difficulty when it came to specifying precisely which this word, or words are, of which this is true.

I may now deal more briefly with my remaining examples.

(3) I am reporting on a pupil at Collections. All I say is " Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical." We might perhaps agree that there would here be a strong, even overwhelming, implication that Jones is no good at philosophy. It is plain that there is no case at all for regarding the truth of what is implied here as a pre-condition of the truth or falsity of

what I have asserted; a denial of the truth of what is implied would have no bearing at all on whether what I have asserted is true or false. So (3) is much closer to (2) than (1) in this respect. Next, I (the speaker) could certainly be said to have implied that Jones is hopeless (provided that this is what I intended to get across) and my saying that (at any rate my saying *just* that and no more) is also certainly a vehicle of implication. On the other hand my words and what I say (assert) are, I think, not here vehicles of implication. (3) thus differs from both (1) and (2). The implication is cancellable but not detachable; if I add " I do not of course mean to imply that he is no good at philosophy " my whole utterance is intelligible and linguistically impeccable, even though it may be extraordinary tutorial behaviour; and I can no longer be said to have implied that he was no good, even though perhaps that is what my colleagues might conclude to be the case if I had nothing else to say. The implication is not however, detachable; any other way of making, in the same context of utterance, *just* the assertion I have made would involve the same implication. Finally, the fact that the implication holds is not a matter of any particular word or phrase within the sentence which I have uttered; so in this respect (3) is certainly different from (2) and possibly different from (1).

One obvious fact should be mentioned before I pass to the last example. This case of implication is unlike the others in that the utterance of the sentence " Jones has beautiful handwriting etc." does not *standardly* involve the implication here attributed to it; it requires a special context (that it should be uttered at Collections) to *attach* the implication to its utterance.

(4) If someone says " My wife is either in the kitchen or in the bedroom " it would normally be implied that he did not know in *which* of the two rooms she was.

This example might well be held to be very similar to the case under dispute, that if such statements as " This looks red to me " so I must be careful not to prejudge any issues to my objector's disadvantage.

I think, however, that in the case of (4) I can produce a strong argument in favour of holding that the fulfilment of the

implication of the speaker's ignorance is not a precaution of the truth or falsity of the disjunctive statement. Suppose (*a*) that the speaker knows that his wife is in the kitchen, (*b*) that the house has only two rooms (and no passages etc.) Even though (*a*) is the case, the speaker can certainly say truly " My wife is in the house "; he is merely not being as informative as he could be if need arose. But the true proposition that his wife is in the house together with the true proposition that the house consists entirely of a kitchen and a bedroom, entail the proposition that his wife is either in the kitchen or in the bedroom. But if to express the proposition *p* in certain circumstances would be to speak truly, and *p*, together with another true proposition, entails *q*, then surely to express *q* in the *same* circumstances must be to speak truly. So I shall take it that the disjunctive statement in (4) does not fail to be true or false if the implied ignorance is in fact not realized. Secondly, I think it is fairly clear that in this case, as in the case of (3), we could say that the *speaker* had implied that he did not know, and also that *his saying that* (or his saying that rather than something else, *viz.*, in which room she was) implied that he did not know. Thirdly, the implication is in a sense non-detachable, in that if *in a given context* the utterance of the disjunctive sentence would involve the implication that the speaker did not know in which room his his wife was, this implication would also be involved in the utterance of any other form of words which would make the same assertion (*e.g.*, " The alternatives are (1) . . . . (2) . . . . " or " One of the following things is the case: (*a*) . . . . (*b*) . . . . "). In *another* possible sense, however, the implication could perhaps be said to be detachable; for there will be *some* contexts of utterance in which the normal implication will not hold; *e.g.*, the spokesman who announces, " The next conference will be either in Geneva or in New York " perhaps does not imply that he does not know which; for he may well be just not saying which. This points to the fact that the implication is cancellable; a man could say, " My wife is either in the kitchen or in the bedroom " in circumstances in which the implication would normally be present, and then go on, " Mind you, I'm not saying that I don't know which "; this might be unfriendly (and perhaps ungrammatical) but would be perfectly intelligible.

Finally, the fact that the utterance of the disjunctive sentence normally involves the implication of the speaker's ignorance of the truth-values of the disjuncts is, I should like to say, to be explained by reference to a general principle governing the use of language. Exactly what this principle is I am uncertain, but a *first shot* would be the following: "One should not make a weaker statement rather than a stronger one unless there is a good reason for so doing." This is certainly not an adequate formulation but will perhaps be good enough for my present purpose. On the assumption that such a principle as this is of general application, one can draw the conclusion that the utterance of a disjunctive sentence would imply the speaker's ignorance of the truth-values of the disjuncts, given that (*a*) the obvious reason for not making a statement which there is some call on one to make is that one is not in a position to make it, and given (*b*) the logical fact that each disjunct entails the disjunctive, but not *vice versa;* which being so, the disjuncts are stronger than the disjunctive. If the outline just given is on the right lines, then I would wish to say, we have a reason for refusing in the case of (4) to regard the implication of the speaker's ignorance as being part of the meaning of the word 'or'; someone who knows about the logical relation between a disjunction and its disjuncts, and who also knew about the alleged general principle governing discourse, could work out for himself that disjunctive utterances would involve the implication which they do in fact involve. I must insist, however, that my aim in discussing this last point has been merely to indicate the position I would wish to take up, and not to argue seriously in favour of it.

My main purpose in this sub-section has been to introduce four ideas of which I intend to make some use; and to provide some conception of the ways in which they apply or fail to apply to various types of implication. I do not claim to have presented a systematic theory of implication; that would be a very large undertaking and one for another occasion.

4

(*The objection reconsidered*)

Let us now revert to the main topic of this section of my paper. Let us call a statement of the type expressible by such a

sentence as "it looks red to me" an *L*-statement. What are we to say of the relation between an *L*-statement and the corresponding *D*-or-*D* condition, in terms of the ideas introduced in the previous sub-section? Or, rather, since this might be controversial, what would my objector think it correct to say on this subject. As I have represented his position, he is explicitly committed to holding that the fulfilment of the appropriate *D*-or-*D* condition is a necessary pre-condition of a *L*-statement's being either true or false. He is also more or less explicitly committed to holding that the implication that the *D*-or-*D* condition is fulfilled is a matter of the meaning of the word "looks" (or of the phrase "looks to me"); that, for example, someone who failed to realise that there existed this implication would *thereby* show that he did not fully understand the meaning of the expression or phrase in question. It is conceivable that this last-mentioned thesis is independent of the rest of his position, that he could if necessary abandon it without destroying the remainder of his position. I shall not, therefore, in what follows address myself directly to this point, though I have hopes that it may turn out to be *solutum ambulando*. Next, he would, I think, wish to say that the implication of the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition is neither detachable nor cancellable; but even if he should not wish to say this, he certainly *must* say it if his objection is to be of any importance. For if the implication is detachable or cancellable, all that the sense-datum theorist needs to do is to find some form of words from which the implication is detached or in which it is cancelled, and use this expression to define the notion of a sense-datum. It is not enough that *some* ways of introducing sense-data should be vulnerable to his objection; it is essential that *all* should be vulnerable. Finally, it is not obvious that he is committed either to asserting or to denying any of the possibilities as regards what may be spoken of as being the vehicle of implication, so I shall not at moment pursue this matter, though I shall suggest later that he can only maintain his position by giving what in fact is certainly a wrong answer to this question.

It is now time for the attack to begin. It seems to me that the contention that the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition is a necessary condition of the truth or falsity of an *L*-statement

cannot be upheld (at any rate in its natural interpretation). For an *L*-statement can certainly be false, even if the *D*-or-*D* condition is unfulfilled. Suppose that I am comforted in normal daylight, by a perfectly normal pillar-box; suppose further that I am in the presence of a normal, unsceptical companion; both he and I know perfectly well that the pillar-box is red. However, unknown to him, I suffer chronically from Smith's Disease, attacks of which are not obvious to another party; these attacks involve, among other things perhaps, the peculiarity that at the time red things look some quite different colour to me. I know that I have this disease, and I am having (and know that I am having) an attack at the moment. In these circumstances I say, " That pillar-box looks red to me ". I would suggest that here the *D*-or-*D* condition is not fulfilled; my companion would receive my remark with just that mixture of puzzlement and scorn which would please my objector; and yet when he learnt about my attack of Smith's Disease, he would certainly think that what I had said had been false.

At this point it might perhaps be suggested that though I have succeeded in producing an example of an *L*-statement which would be false, I have not succeeded in producing an example of an *L*-statement which is false when the *D*-or-*D* condition is unfulfilled; for in fact the *D*-or-*D* condition is fulfilled. For the speaker in my little story, it might be said, *has* some reason to doubt whether the pillar-box before him is red, and this is enough to ensure the fulfilment of the condition, *even though* the speaker also has information (*e.g.*, that this is the pillar-box he has seen every day for years, and that it hasn't been repainted and so on) which enables him entirely to discount this *prima facie* reason for doubt. But this will not do at all. For what is this *prima facie* reason for doubting whether the pillar-box really is red? If you like, it is that it looks blue to him. But this is an unnecessarily specific description of his reason; its looking blue to him only counts against its being really red because its looking blue is a way of failing to look red; there need be nothing specially important about its looking blue as distinct from looking any other colour, except red. So this rescue-attempt seems to involve supposing that one way of fulfilling the precondition of an *L*-statement's having a truth value at all,

consists in its having the truth-value *F*, or at least in some state of affairs which entails that it has the truth-value *F*. But surely, a statement should be false cannot be one way of fulfilling a pre-condition of that statement's having a truth-value; the mere fulfilment of a pre-condition of a statement's having a truth-value ought to leave it open (to be decided on other grounds) *which* truth-value it has.

Let us assume that this rear-guard action has been disposed of. Then it is tempting to argue as follows: Since the objector can no longer maintain that fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition is a pre-requisite of an *L*-statement's having a truth-value, he will have to admit that fulfilment is *at most* a *partial truth*-condition albeit of a special kind (*i.e.*, is *one* of the things which have to be the case if the statement is to be true). It cannot be the *only* truth-condition, so there must be another truth-condition; indeed we can say what this is in the light of the preceding argument; it consists in the non-fulfilment of the statement's falsity-condition or falsity-conditions (which have just been shown to be independent of the *D*-or-*D* condition); to put it less opaquely, it consists in there being nothing to make the *L*-statement false. But now, it may be thought, all is plain sailing for the sense-datum theorist; he can simply lay down that a sense-datum sentence is to express a truth if and only if the second truth-condition of the corresponding *L*-statement is fulfilled, regardless of whether its first truth condition (the *D*-or-*D* condition) is fulfilled. It will be seen that the idea behind this argument is that, once the objector has been made to withdraw the contention that the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition is a condition of an *L*-statement's having a truth-value, he can be forced to withdraw also the contention that the implication that the *D*-or-*D* condition is fulfilled is non-detachable; and this destroys his position.

So far so good, perhaps, but unfortunately not yet good enough. For the objector has a powerful-looking reply at his disposal. He may say: " Once again you are covertly begging the question. You are assuming, quite without justification, that because one can, in some sense, distinguish the second truth-condition from the first, it is therefore the case that the implication of the fulfilment of the first (*D*-or-*D*) condition is detachable;

that is, that there must be a way of specifying the second condition which does not carry the implication that the first condition is fulfilled. But your argument has certainly not proved this conclusion. Consider a simple parallel: it is perfectly obvious that objects which are not vermilion in colour may or may not be red; so being red is not a necessary falsity-condition of being vermilion. It is also true that being red is only a partial truth-condition of being vermilion if what this means is that to establish that something is red is not enough to establish that it is vermilion. But it does not follow (and indeed it is false) that there is any way of formulating a supplementary truth-condition for an object's being vermilion which would be free from the implication that the object in question is red. This *non sequitur* is very much the same as the one of which you are guilty; the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition may perfectly well be only a *truth*-condition of an *L*-statement, and only *one* of a pair of truth conditions at that, without its being the case that the implication of its fulfilment is detachable." He may also add the following point: " Though the contention that the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition is a pre-condition of the truth or falsity of the corresponding *L*-statement cannot be upheld under the interpretation which you have given to it, it can be upheld if it is given another not unnatural interpretation. I cannot, in view of your counter-example, maintain that for an *L*-statement to be true, or again for it to be false, the *D*-or-*D* condition must be fulfilled. But I can maintain that the *D*-or-*D* condition's fulfilment is a condition of truth or falsity of an *L*-statement in the following sense, namely that if the *D*-or-*D* condition *is* fulfilled, then *T* and *F* are the two possibilities between which, on other grounds, the decision lies (*i.e.*, *N* is excluded): whereas if the *D*-or-*D* condition is *not* fulfilled, then one has to decide not between these possibilities, but between the possibilities *N* and *F* (*i.e.*, *T* is excluded.) "

This onslaught can I think be met, though at the cost of some modification to the line of argument against which it was directed. I think that the following reply can be made: " There is a crucial difference between the two cases which you treat as parallel. Let us endeavour to formulate a supplementary truth condition for the form of statement ' *x* is vermilion '; we might

suggest the condition that *x* has the feature which differentiates vermilion things from other red things. But to suppose that *x* satisfies this condition, but does not satisfy the first truth-condition, namely, that *x* should be red, would be to commit a logical absurdity; *x* cannot logically differ from red things which are not vermilion in *just* the way in which vermilion things differ from red things which are not vermilion, without being red. Consequently one cannot assert, in this case, that the second truth-condition is fulfilled without its being implied that the first is fulfilled, nor can one go on to cancel this implication. But in the case of an *L*-statement there is no kind of *logical* implication between the second truth-condition and the first. For one thing, if there were such a logical connexion, there would also have to be such a logical connexion between the *L*-statement itself and the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition; and if this were so, the implication that the *D*-or-*D* condition is fulfilled would have to be carried by *what was said or asserted* by the utterance of an *L*-statement. But that this is not so can be seen from the unacceptability of such an hypothetical as ' If this pillar-box looks red to me, then I or someone else is, or might be, inclined to deny that it is red or to doubt whether it is red.' For another thing, it is surely clear that if I were now to say ' Nothing is the case which would make it false for me to say that the palm of this hand looks pink to me, though I do not mean to imply that I or anyone else is or might be inclined to deny that, or doubt whether, it is pink ' this would be a perfectly intelligible remark even though it might be thought both wordy and boring. Indeed I am prepared actually to say it. Consequently, although you may be right in claiming that it has not been shown that the implication of the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition is *detachable* (and indeed it may well be non-detachable), you must be wrong in thinking that this implication is not *cancellable*. Admittedly there is at least one case in which an implication which is not logical in character is at least in a sense, non-cancellable; we found one in considering example (2) ' She was poor but she was honest.' But if we look a little more closely we can see that the reason why the implication here is, in a sense, not cancellable is just that it *is* detachable (by the use of ' and '). More fully the reason why it would be peculiar to say

'She was poor but she was honest, though I do not mean to imply that there is any contrast' is that any one who said this would have *first* gone out of his way to find a form of words which introduced the implication, and *then* would have gone to some trouble to take it out again. Why didn't he just leave it out? The upshot is, that if you say that the implication of the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition is (*a*) not logical in character and (*b*) not detachable, then you must allow that it is cancellable. And this is all that the sense-datum theorist needs." If there is an answer to this argument, I do not at present know what it is.

I will conclude by making three auxiliary points.

(1) If I am right in thinking that my objector has gone astray, then I think I can suggest a possible explanation of his coming to make his mistake. His original resistance to attempts to distinguish between the facts stated by an *L*-statement and the fulfilment of the *D*-or-*D* condition arose I think from a feeling that if the *D*-or-*D* condition were unfulfilled there would be no facts to state; and this feeling is I suspect the result of noticing the baffling character that the utterance of an *L*-statement would have in certain circumstances. But precisely *what* circumstances? I think the sort of imaginary example the objector has in mind may be the following: I and a companion are standing in front of a pillar-box in normal daylight. Each of us has every reason to suppose that the other is perfectly normal. In these circumstances he says out of the blue "This pillar-box looks red to me" and (it is assumed) I am not allowed to take this as a joke. So I am baffled. I do not know what to make of his utterance. But surely the reason why I am baffled is that I cannot see what communication-function he intends his utterance to fulfil; it has the form of an utterance designed to impart information, but what information could he possibly imagine would be imparted to me which I do not already possess. So of course this utterance is baffling. But what the objector may not have noticed is that if in these circumstances my companion had said not "This pillar box looks red to me" but "This pillar box is red", his utterance would have been equally baffling, if not *more* baffling. My point can be stated more generally. The

objector wants to attribute to *L*-statements certain special features (*e.g.*, that of being neither *T* nor *F* in certain circumstances) which distinguish them from at least some other statements. If so, he cannot derive support for his thesis from the fact that the utterance of an *L*-statement would be baffling in certain circumstances, when those circumstances are such that (*mutatis mutandis*) they would make *any statement whatever* baffling. He ought to take as his examples not *L*-statements made about objects which both speaker and audience can see perfectly clearly, but *L*-statements made about objects which the speaker can see but the audience cannot. But when the examples are thus changed, his case seems much less plausible.

(2) If I am asked to indicate what it would be *right* to say about *L*-statements and the implications involved in these utterances, I shall answer: very much the same sort of thing as I have earlier in this page suggested as regards disjunctive statements. I don't want to duplicate my earlier remarks, so I will deal with this very briefly. (i) The fulfilment of the relevant *D*-or-*D* condition is not a condition either of the truth *or* of the falsity of an *L*-statement, though if this condition is not fulfilled the utterance of the *L*-statement may well be extremely misleading (in its implication). (ii) Like my examples (3) and (4) above, we may speak either of the speaker or of his saying what he did say as vehicles of the implication; the second of these possibilities is important in that, if I am right about it, it leads to point (iii). (iii) The implication is not detachable in my official sense. For if the implication can be regarded as being carried by his saying that (rather than something else), *e.g.*, his mentioning *this* fact or putative fact rather than some other fact or putative fact, then it seems clear that any other way of stating the same fact or putative fact would involve the same implication as the original way of stating the fact in question. (iv) Comparably with examples (3) and (4), the implication is detachable in the further possible non-official sense which I referred to earlier in connexion with (4); there will be *some* conditions of utterance in which the implication is no longer carried, *e.g.*, if I am talking to my oculist about how things look to me. (v) The implication is cancellable (I need say no more about this). (vi) As in the case of example (4), the reason why the implication is *standardly*

carried is to be found in the operation of some such general principle as that giving preference to the making of a stronger rather than a weaker statement in the absence of a reason for not so doing. The implication therefore is not of a part of the meaning of the expression " looks to me ". There is however here an important difference between the case of *L*-statements and that of disjunctives. A disjunctive is weaker than either of its disjuncts in a straightforward logical sense, namely, it is entailed by, but does not entail, each of its disjuncts. The statement " It looks red to me " is not, however, weaker than the statement " It is red " in just this sense; neither statement entails the other. I think that one has, nevertheless a strong inclination to regard the first of these statements as weaker than the second; but I shall not here attempt to determine in what sense of " weaker " this may be true.

(3) The issue with which I have been mainly concerned may be thought rather a fine point, but it is certainly not an isolated one. There are several philosophical theses or dicta which would I think need to be examined in order to see whether or not they are sufficiently parallel to the thesis which I have been discussing to be amenable to treatment of the same general kind. Examples which occur to me are the following: (1) You cannot see a *knife* as a knife, though you may see what is not a knife as a knife. (2) When Moore said he *knew* that the objects before him were human hands, he was guilty of misusing the word "know". (3) For an occurrence to be properly said to have a cause, it must be something abnormal or unusual. (4) For an action to be properly described as one for which the agent is responsible, it must be the sort of action for which people are condemned. (5) What is actual is not also possible. (6) What is known by me to be the case is not also believed by me to be the case. I have no doubt that there will be other candidates besides the six which I have mentioned. I must emphasize that I am not saying that all these examples *are* importantly similar to the thesis which I have been criticizing, only that, for all I know, they *may* be. To put the matter more generally, the position adopted by my objector seems to me to involve a type of manoeuvre which is characteristic of more than one contemporary mode of philosophizing. I am not condemning

this kind of manoeuvre; I am merely suggesting that to embark on it without due caution is to risk collision with the facts. Before we rush ahead to exploit the linguistic nuances which we have detected, we should make sure that we are reasonably clear what sort of nuances they are.

5

I hope that I may have succeeded in disposing of what I have found to be a frequently propounded objection to the idea of explaining the notion of a sense-datum in terms of some member or members of the suggested family of locutions. Further detailed work would be needed to find the most suitable member of the family, and to select the appropriate range of uses of the favoured member when it is found; and, as I have indicated, neither of these tasks may be easy. I shall, for present purposes, assume that some range of uses of locutions of the form " It looks (feels, etc.) to *X* as if " has the best chance of being found suitable. I shall furthermore assume that the safest procedure for the Causal Theorist will be to restrict the actual occurrences of the term " sense-datum " to such classificatory labels as " sense-datum statement " or " sense-datum sentence "; to license the introduction of a " sense-datum terminology " to be used for the re-expression of sentences incorporating the preferred locutions seems to me both unnecessary and dangerous. I shall myself, on behalf of the CTP, often for brevity's sake talk of sense-data or sense-impressions; but I shall hope that a more rigorous, if more cumbrous, mode of expression will always be readily available. I hope that it will now be allowed that, interpreted on the lines which I have suggested, the thesis that perceiving involves having a sense-datum (involves its being the case that some sense-datum statement or other about the percipient is true) has at least a fair chance of proving acceptable.

I turn now to the special features of the CTP. The first clause of the formulation quoted above[3] from Price's *Perception* may be interpreted as representing it to be a necessary and sufficient condition of its being the case that *X* perceives *M* that *X*'s sense-impression should be causally dependent on some

[3] P. 122 *supra*.

state of affairs involving *M*. Let us first enquire whether the suggested condition is necessary. Suppose that it looks to *X* as if there is a clock on the shelf; what more is required for it to be true to say that *X* sees a clock on the shelf? There must, one might say, actually be a clock on the shelf which is in *X*'s field of view, before *X*'s eyes. But this does not seem to be enough. For it is logically conceivable that there should be some method by which an expert could make it look to *X* as if there were a clock on the shelf on occasions when the shelf was empty: there might be some apparatus by which *X*'s cortex could be suitably stimulated, or some technique analogous to post-hypnotic suggestion. If such treatment were applied to *X* on an occasion when there actually was a clock on the shelf, and if *X*'s impressions were found to continue unchanged when the clock was removed or its position altered, then I think we should be inclined to say that *X* did not see the clock which was before his eyes, just because we should regard the clock as playing no part in the origination of his impression. Or, to leave the realm of fantasy, it might be that it looked to me as if there were a certain sort of pillar in a certain direction at a certain distance, and there might actually be such a pillar in that place; but if, unknown to me, there were a mirror interposed between myself and the pillar, which reflected a numerically different though similar pillar, it would certainly be incorrect to say that I saw the first pillar, and correct to say that I saw the second; and it is extremely tempting to explain this linguistic fact by saying that the first pillar was, and the second was not, causally irrelevant to the way things looked to me.

There seems then a good case for allowing that the suggested condition is necessary; but as it stands it can hardly be sufficient. For in any particular perceptual situation there will be objects other than that which would ordinarily be regarded as being perceived, of which some state or mode of functioning is causally relevant to the occurence of a particular sense-impression: this might be true of such objects as the percipient's eyes or the sun. So some restriction will have to be added to the analysis of perceiving which is under consideration. Price[4] suggested that use should be made of a distinction between "standing" and

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

"differential" conditions: as the state of the sun and of the percipient's eyes, for example, are standing conditions in that (roughly speaking) if they were suitably altered, all the visual impressions of the percipient would be in some respect different from what they would otherwise have been; whereas the state of the perceived object is a differential condition in that a change in it would affect only some of the percipient's visual impressions, perhaps only the particular impression the causal origin of which is in question. The suggestion then is that the CTP should hold that an object is perceived if and only if some condition involving it is a differential condition of some sense-impression of the percipient. I doubt, however, whether the imposition of this restriction is adequate. Suppose that on a dark night I see, at one and the same time, a number of objects each of which is illuminated by a different torch; if one torch is tampered with, the effect on my visual impressions will be restricted, not general; the objects illuminated by the other torches will continue to look the same to me. Yet we do not want to be compelled to say that each torch is perceived in such a situation; concealed torches may illuminate. But this is the position into which the proposed revision of the CTP would force us.

I am inclined to think that a more promising direction for the CTP to take is to formulate the required restriction in terms of the way in which a perceived object contributes towards the occurrence of the sense-impression. A conceivable course would be to introduce into the specification of the restriction some part of the specialist's account, for example to make a reference to the transmission of light-waves to the retina; but the objection to this procedure is obvious; if we are attempting to characterize the ordinary notion of perceiving, we should not explicitly introduce material of which someone who is perfectly capable of employing the ordinary notion might be ignorant. I suggest that the best procedure for the Causal Theorist is to indicate the mode of causal connexion by examples; to say that, for an object to be perceived by *X*, it is sufficient that it should be causally involved in the generation of some sense-impression by *X* in the kind of way in which, for example, when I look at my hand in a good light, my hand is causally responsible for its looking at me as if there were a hand before me, or in which . . .

(and so on), *whatever that kind of way may be;* and to be enlightened on that question one must have recourse to the specialist. I see nothing absurd in the idea that a non-specialist concept should contain, so to speak, a blank space to be filled in by the specialist; that this is so, for example, in the case of the concept of seeing is perhaps indicated by the consideration that if we were in doubt about the correctness of speaking of a certain creature with peculiar sense-organs as *seeing* objects, we might well wish to hear from a specialist a comparative account of the human eye and the relevant sense-organs of the creature in question. We do not, of course, ordinarily need the specialist's contribution; for we may be in a position to say that the same kind of mechanism is involved in a plurality of cases without being in a position to say what that mechanism is.[5]

At this point an objection must be mentioned with which I shall deal only briefly, since it involves a manoeuvre of the same general kind as that which I discussed at length earlier in this paper. The CTP as I have so expounded it, it may be said, requires that it should be linguistically correct to speak of the causes of sense-impressions which are involved in perfectly normal perceptual situations. But this is a mistake; it is quite unnatural to talk about the cause, say, of its looking to X as if there were a cat before him unless the situation is or is thought to be in some way abnormal or delusive; this being so, when a cause can, without speaking unnaturally, be assigned to an impression, it will always be something other than the presence of the perceived object. There is no natural use for such a sentence as " The presence of a cat caused it to look to X as if there were a cat before him "; yet it is absolutely essential to the CTP that there should be.

In reply to this objection I will make three points. (1) If we are to deal sympathetically with the CTP we must not restrict the Causal Theorist to the verb ' cause '; we must allow him to make use of other members of the family of causal verbs or

[5] It might be thought that we need a further restriction, limiting the permissible degree of divergence between the way things appear to X and the way they actually are. But objects can be said to be seen even when they are looked at through rough thick glass or distorting spectacles, in spite of the fact that they may then be unrecognizable.

verb-phrases if he wishes. This family includes such expressions as " accounts for ", " explains ", " is part of the explanation of ", " is partly responsible for ", and it seems quite possible that some alternative formulation of the theory would escape this objection. (2) If I regard myself as being in a position to say " There is a cat ", or " I see a cat ", I naturally refrain from making the weaker statement " It looks to me as if there were a cat before me ", and so, *a fortiori*, I refrain from talking about the cause of its looking to me thus. But, if I was right earlier in this paper, to have made the weaker statement would have been to have said something linguistically correct and true, even if misleading; is there then any reason against supposing that it could have been linguistically correct and true, even if pointless or misleading, to have ascribed to a particular cause the state of affairs reported in the weaker statement? (3) X is standing in a street up which an elephant is approaching; he thinks his eyes must be deceiving him. Knowing this, I could quite naturally say to X, " The fact that it looks to you as if there is an elephant approaching is accounted for by the fact that an elephant is approaching, not by your having become deranged." To say the same thing to one's neighbour at the circus would surely be to say something which is true, though it might be regarded as provocative.

I have extracted from the first clause of the initial formulation of the CTP an outline of a causal analysis of perceiving which is, I hope, at least not obviously unacceptable. I have of course considered the suggested analysis only in relation to seeing; a more careful discussion would have to pay attention to non-visual perception; and even within the field of visual perception the suggested analysis might well be unsuitable for some uses of the word ' see ', which would require a stronger condition than that proposed by the theory.

6

Is the CTP, as so far expounded, open to the charge that it represents material objects as being in principle unobservable, and in consequence leads to scepticism about the material world? I have some difficulty in understanding the precise nature of the

accusation, in that it is by no means obvious what, in this context, is meant by " unobservable ".

(1) It would be not unnatural to take " unobservable " to mean " incapable of being perceived ". Now it may be the case that one could, without being guilty of inconsistency, combine the acceptance of the causal analysis of perceiving with the view that material objects cannot in principle be perceived, if one were prepared to maintain that it is in principle impossible for material objects to cause sense-impressions but that this impossibility has escaped the notice of common sense. This position, even if internally consistent, would seem to be open to grave objection. But even if the proposition that material objects cannot be perceived is consistent with the causal analysis of perceiving, it certainly does not appear to be a consequence of the latter; and the exposition of the CTP has so far been confined to the propounding of a causal analysis of perceiving.

(2) The critic might be equating " unobservable " with " not directly observable "; and to say that material objects are not directly observable might in turn be interpreted as saying that statements about material objects lack that immunity from factual mistake which is (or is supposed to be) possessed by at least some sense-datum statements. But if " unobservable " is thus interpreted, it seems to be *true* that material objects are unobservable, and the recognition of this truth could hardly be regarded as a matter for reproach.

(3) " Observation " may be contrasted with " inference " as a source of knowledge and so the critic's claim may be that the CTP asserts or implies that the existence of particular material objects can only be a matter of inference. But in the first place, it is not established that the acceptance of the causal analysis of perceiving commits one to the view that the existence of particular material objects is necessarily a matter of inference (though this view is explicitly asserted by the second clause of Price's initial formulation of the CTP); and secondly, many of the critics have been phenomenalists, who would themselves be prepared to allow that the existence of particular material objects is, in some sense, a matter of inference. And if the complaint is that the CTP does not represent the inference as being of the right kind, then it looks as if the critic might in effect be complaining that the

Causal Theorist is not a Phenomenalist. Apart from the fact that the criticism under discussion could now be made only by someone who not only accepted Phenomenalism but also regarded it as the only means of deliverance from scepticism, it is by no means clear that to accept a causal analysis of perceiving is to debar oneself from accepting Phenomenalism; there seems to be no patent absurdity in the idea that one could, as a first stage, offer a causal analysis of ' X perceives M ', and then re-express the result in phenomenalist terms. If the CTP is to be (as it is often regarded as being) a rival to Phenomenalism, the opposition may well have to spring from the second clause of the initial formulation of the theory.

There is a further possibility of interpretation, related to the previous one. If someone has seen a speck on the horizon which is in fact a battleship, we should in some contexts be willing to say that he has seen a battleship; but we should not, I think, be willing to say that he has observed a battleship unless he has recognized what he has seen as a battleship. The criticism levelled at the CTP may then be that it asserts or entails the impossibility in principle of *knowing*, or even of being reasonably assured, that one is perceiving a particular material object, even if one is in fact perceiving it. At this point we must direct our attention to the second clause of the initial formulation of the CTP, which asserted that " perceptual consciousness is fundamentally an inference from effect to cause ". I shall assume (I hope not unreasonably) that the essence of the view here being advanced is that anyone who claims to perceive a particular material object M may legitimately be asked to justify his claim; and that the only way to meet this demand, in the most fundamental type of case, is to produce an acceptable argument to the effect that the existence of M is required, or is probably required, in order that the claimant's current sense-impressions should be adequately accounted for. A detailed exposition of the CTP may supplement this clause by supplying general principles which, by assuring us of correspondences between causes and effects, are supposed to make possible the production of satisfactory arguments of the required kind.

It is clear that, if the Causal Theorist proceeds on the lines which I have just indicated, he cannot possibly be accused of

having *asserted* that material objects are unobservable in the sense under consideration; for he has gone to some trouble in an attempt to show how we may be reasonably assured of the existence of particular material objects. But it may be argued that (in which is perhaps a somewhat special sense of " consequence ") it is an unwanted consequence of the CTP that material objects are unobservable: for if we accept the contentions of the CTP (1) that perceiving is to be analysed in causal terms, (2) that knowledge about perceived objects depends on causal inference, and (3) that the required causal inferences will be unsound unless suitable general principles of correspondence can be provided, then we shall have to admit that knowledge about perceived objects is unobtainable: for the general principles offered, apart from being dubious both in respect of truth and in respect of status, fail to yield the conclusions for which they are designed; and more successful substitutes are not available. If this is how the criticism of the CTP is to be understood, then I shall not challenge it, though I must confess to being in some doubt whether this is what actual critics have really meant. My comment on the criticism is now that it is unsympathetic in a way that is philosophically important.

There seem to me to be two possible ways of looking at the CTP. One is to suppose an initial situation in which it is recognized that, while appearance is ultimately the only guide to reality, what appears to be the case cannot be assumed to correspond with what is the case. The problem is conceived to be that of exhibiting a legitimate method of arguing from appearance to reality. The CTP is then regarded as a complex construction designed to solve this problem; and if one part of the structure collapses, the remainder ceases to be of much interest. The second way of looking at the CTP is to think of the causal analysis of perceiving as something to be judged primarily on its intrinsic merits and not merely as a part of a solution to a prior epistemological problem, and to recognize that some version of it is quite likely to be correct; the remainder of the CTP is then regarded as consisting (1) of steps which appear to be forced upon one if one accepts the causal analysis of perceiving, and which lead to a sceptical difficulty, and (2) a not very successful attempt to meet this difficulty. This way of looking at the CTP

recognizes the possibility that we are confronted with a case in which the natural dialectic elicits distressing consequences (or rather apparent consequences) from true propositions. To adopt the first attitude to the exclusion of the second is both to put on one side what may well be an acceptable bit of philosophical analysis and to neglect what might be an opportunity for deriving philosophical profit from the exposure of operations of the natural dialectic. This, I suggest, is what the critics have tended to do; though, no doubt, they might plead historical justification, in that the first way of looking at the CTP may have been that of actual Causal Theorists.

It remains for me to show that the CTP can be looked upon in the second way by exhibiting a line of argument, sceptical in character, which incorporates appropriately the elements of the CTP. I offer the following example. In the fundamental type of case, a *bona fide* claim to perceive a particular material object M is based on sense-datum statements; it is only in virtue of the occurrence of certain sense-impressions that the claimant would regard himself as entitled to assert the existence of M. Since the causal analysis of perceiving is to be accepted, the claim to perceive M involves the claim that the presence of M causally explains the occurrence of the appropriate sense-impressions. The combination of these considerations yields the conclusion that the claimant accepts the existence of M *on the grounds that* it is required for the causal explanation of certain sense-impressions; that is, the existence of M is a matter of causal inference from the occurrence of the sense-impressions. Now a model case of causal inference would be an inference from smoke to fire; the acceptability of such an inference involves the possibility of establishing a correlation between occurrences of smoke and occurrences of fire, and this is only possible because there is a way of establishing the occurrence of a fire otherwise than by a causal inference. But there is supposed to be no way of establishing the existence of particular material objects except by a causal inference from sense-impressions; so such inferences cannot be rationally justified. The specification of principles of correspondence is of course an attempt to avert this consequence by rejecting the smoke-fire model. [If this model is rejected, recourse may be had to an assimilation of material objects to

such entities as electrons, the acceptability of which is regarded as being (roughly) a matter of their utility for the purposes of explanation and prediction; but this assimilation is repugnant for the reason that material objects, after having been first contrasted, as a paradigm case of uninvented entities, with the theoretical constructs or *entia rationis* of the scientist, are then treated as being themselves *entia rationis*.]

One possible reaction to this argument is, of course, " So much the worse for the causal analysis of perceiving "; but, as an alternative, the argument itself may be challenged, and I shall conclude by mentioning, without attempting to evaluate, some ways in which this might be done. (1) It may be argued that it is quite incorrect to describe many of my perceptual beliefs (*e.g.*, that there is now a table in front of me) as " inferences " of any kind, if this is to be taken to imply that it would be incumbent upon me, on demand, to justify by an argument (perhaps after acquiring further data) the contention that what appears to me to be the case actually is the case. When, in normal circumstances, it looks to me as if there were a table before me, I am entitled to say flatly that there is a table before me, and to reject any demand that I should justify my claim until specific grounds for doubting it have been indicated. It is essential to the sceptic to assume that any perceptual claim may, without preliminaries, be put on trial and that innocence, not guilt, has to be proved; but this assumption is mistaken. (2) The allegedly ' fundamental ' case (which is supposed to underlie other kinds of case), in which a perceptual claim is to be establishable purely on the basis of some set of sense-datum statements, is a myth; any justification of a particular perceptual claim will rely on the truth of one or more further propositions about the material world (for example, about the percipient's body). To insist that the ' fundamental ' case be selected for consideration is, in effect, to assume at the start that it is conceptually legitimate for me to treat as open to question all my beliefs about the material world at once; and the sceptic is not entitled to start with this assumption. (3) It might be questioned whether, given that I accept the existence of *M* on the evidence of certain sense-impressions, and given also that I think that *M* is causally responsible for those sense-impressions it follows that I accept the existence of *M on the grounds that*

its existence is required in order to account for the sense-impressions. (4) The use made of the smoke-fire model in the sceptical argument might be criticized on two different grounds. *First*, if the first point in this paragraph is well made, there are cases in which the existence of a perceived object is not the conclusion of a causal inference, namely those in which it cannot correctly be described as a matter of inference at all. *Secondly*, the model should never have been introduced; for whereas the proposition that fires tend to cause smoke is supposedly purely contingent, this is not in general true of propositions to the effect that the presence of a material object possessing property *P* tends to (or will in standard circumstances) make it look to particular persons as if there were an object possessing *P*. It is then an objectionable feature of the sceptical argument that it first treats non-contingent connexions as if they were contingent, and then complains that such connexions cannot be established in the manner appropriate to contingent connexions. The non-contingent character of the proposition that the presence of a red (or round) object tends to make it look to particular people as if there were something red (or round) before them does not, of course, in itself preclude the particular fact that it looks to me as if there were something red before me from being explained by the presence of a particular red object; it is a non-contingent matter that corrosive substances tend to destroy surfaces to which they are applied; but it is quite legitimate to account for a particular case of surface-damage by saying that it was caused by some corrosive substance. In each case the effect might have come about in some other way.

7

I conclude that it is not out of the question that the following version of the CTP should be acceptable: (1) It is true that *X* perceives *M* if, and only if, some present-tense sense-datum statement is true of *X* which reports a state of affairs for which *M*, in a way to be indicated by example, is causally responsible, and (2) a claim on the part of *X* to perceive *M*, if it needs to be justified at all, is justified by showing that the existence of *M* is required if the circumstances reported by certain true

sense-datum statements, some of which may be about persons other than X, are to be causally accounted for. Whether this twofold thesis deserves to be called a Theory of Perception I shall not presume to judge; I have already suggested that the first clause neither obviously entails nor obviously conflicts with Phenomenalism; I suspect that the same may be true of the second clause. I am conscious that my version, however close to the letter, is very far from the spirit of the original theory; but to defend the spirit as well as the letter would be beyond my powers.

II—Alan R. White

The " version of the causal theory of perception " which Mr. Grice puts before us is that " (1) It is true that X perceives M if, and only if, some present-tense sense-datum statement is true of X which reports a state of affairs for which M, in a way to be indicated by example, is causally responsible, and (2) a claim on the part of X to perceive M, if it needs to be justified at all, is justified by showing that the existence of M is required if the circumstances reported by certain true sense-datum statements, some of which may be about persons other than X, are to be causally accounted for." (A very similar view occurs in Chisholm, *Perceiving* (1957) ch. 10.) What are we to say of this?

I

First of all, a distinction should be drawn between (i) a version of the causal theory of perception from which it follows that what is to be " causally accounted for " by the existence of the material object is a " state of affairs " or " circumstances " (reported by certain " sense-datum statements ") involved by the perception of the material object and (ii) a version of the causal theory of perception which holds that it is the perception of the material object which is to be " causally accounted for " by the existence of the material object. It is the first version which Locke wished to defend and Berkeley and Professor H. H. Price to attack; but it is the second version which some recent writers (*e.g.*, R. J. Hirst, *The Problems of Perception*, chapter 10, *passim*) seem to defend and it is this version which Professor Ryle has several times attacked (*e.g.*, *Dilemmas*, chapter 7). More commonly, however, philosophers and philosophically minded scientists (compare Broad, *Perception, Physics and Reality*, chapter 4; Hirst *op. cit.* pp. 133, 148–9, chapter 10 *passim;* Brain, *Mind, Perception and Science*, chs. 4–6) have used phrases which suggest that either they failed to distinguish between the two versions or they assimilated them on the assumption that a necessary part of the causal, or any other, theory of perception is the " claim that perceiving a material object involves having or sensing a sense-datum ".