consider what very large assumptions even this simple judgement makes. In the first place, there are the assumptions which are involved in taking anything to be a solid three-dimensional object of this general type, the most important of them being that the object can be touched as well as seen, that it is perceptible to other people besides myself, and that it continues to exist whether or not anyone actually perceives it. In a case of this kind, it is assumed also that the object has parts which are not visible to me, or at any rate not visible to me on this occasion; it is assumed that it is not hollow and that it has a back as well as a front. Finally there are the assumptions which are involved in its identification as a physical object of a certain specific sort; in this instance as a door, rather than a piece of stage scenery, or a painted part of the wall to which it is attached; and these may relate not only to the appearance of the object, but to its origin, the materials of which it is made and the uses to which it is put.

Now I am not saying that these assumptions are not warranted or even that in this particular instance I do not know that they are satisfied. What I do say is that this knowledge, if I have it, is indeed founded on the data which are visibly presented to me but is not covered by them. Merely by inspecting the content of my present visual field, I cannot, without the help of other premisses, deduce that the object, which I identify as a door, is tangible as well as visible, that it is perceptible to other observers, that it exists when no one is perceiving it, that it has parts which are hidden from my sight, that it is made of wood, that it can be used to bar entry to the house. To make the same point in another way, it is logically consistent with my having the visual experience that I am now having, considered by itself, that all these propositions should be false. But if this is so, there is a clear sense in which in making such a judgement as that I see a door, I am going beyond my present evidence: I am claiming more than is contained in the experience on which the judgement is based. In this sense, my judgement can, I think, quite properly be said to be the outcome of an inductive inference.

I find this conclusion so obvious that it is hard for me to understand why so many philosophers are unwilling to accept it. One
of the main objections to it, as set out, for example, by Professor J. L. Austin, is that it is just not true of sentences about ‘material things’ as such that they must be supported by or based on evidence. I take his reason for this to be that we do not commonly speak of having evidence for a proposition like ‘that is a door’ unless the observations which lead one to accept it in some way fall short of the highest standard. If I could not see the door, but thought that I heard it banging, or someone described it to me, I might be said to have evidence of its existence; I might be said to infer that it existed if in default of direct observation I were merely going by the fact that doors of this kind usually are fitted to houses of this type. But this just shows that the cases which are describable in this sort of way are contrasted with cases of direct observation, when the point is precisely that we do not rely on evidence. There is no question of my having evidence, or of my making an inference, when I am looking at the door from a few yards away in broad daylight, and I have no reason to suppose that the conditions are in any way abnormal.

This may well be correct, as an account of ordinary usage, but it is still a bad argument. The fallacy in it lies in the assumption that if, in a given set of circumstances, it is not good usage to assert some proposition \( p \), it follows that \( p \) is false. For instance, if I think that I know that something is the case, it is not good usage for me to say that I believe that it is the case. The reason why it is not is that if I say only that I believe it I convey the impression that I do not think I know it. But the explanation of this is just that it is not our habit to make a weaker claim when we think that we are in a position to make a stronger one. It certainly does not follow that when one knows something one does not believe it. So, in the present instance, when one talks of having evidence for a proposition \( p \), it will commonly be understood that one is not in a position to pronounce authoritatively on its truth or falshood. If my grounds for asserting \( p \) are such as to put its truth beyond reasonable doubt, I am underplaying my hand, and

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1 In his *Sense and Sensibilia* (1962). This book contains a number of arguments against the kind of position which I am defending, none of which I find cogent. Cf. my article ‘Has Austin Refuted the Sense–Datum Theory?’ in *Synthese*, 17, 1967.
so being misleading, if I say only that I have good evidence for it. But of course it does not in the least follow that when I am in a position to assert $p$ without qualification, I do not have evidence for it. The true conclusion may rather be that my evidence is very strong.

Even so, it may be objected, this still does not entitle me to say that my judgement that I see a door is the conclusion of an inductive inference. There are circumstances in which this could be said. If my eyesight were very bad, or the light were very poor, or the object were of a kind with which I was unfamiliar, or my capacity for recognizing objects had been impaired by a brain injury, I might have to go through a process of reasoning in order to identify what I saw; in very exceptional circumstances I might even have to reason myself out of the suspicion that I was dreaming. But again the point is that these circumstances are abnormal. In a normal case, like the present one, I do not have to engage in any reasoning. I just look up and see that there is a door in front of me.

Once more all this is true but irrelevant. I am not maintaining that it is never possible for us, even in the most favourable conditions, to identify the things that we perceive, without working through the stages of an argument. I am quite willing to admit that it is only in exceptional instances that we are conscious of making any inference. All that I mean when I speak of our everyday judgements of perception as being inferential is that they are based on observations which do not entail them. That they are based on observations cannot seriously be questioned; that these observations do not entail them is what I have been trying to show. I could multiply examples, but the one that I have given should be enough to make my meaning clear.

But now, if judgements of perception are, in this special sense, the conclusions of inductive inferences, it ought to be possible to formulate the premisses. It ought to be possible to describe the data on which they are based, not necessarily in a way that is free from all interpretation, but at least in a way that is non-committal with respect to the question whether one is perceiving a physical object and a fortiori to the further question what kind
of physical object it is. The statements that we are looking for are statements which fit the data, in the sense that they do not attempt to go beyond them. If they are false it must be through their misdescribing the content of the experiences which they monitor, and not through their carrying any implications which further experiences fail to honour.

It is statements of this kind that I propose to call experiential statements. There are several conditions that they must fulfil if they are to do the work that we require of them. To begin with, the fact that they are limited to the description of what is sensibly presented must be understood to carry the consequence that they do not prejudge the question whether or not the assumptions which we have seen to be involved in our ordinary judgements of perception are satisfied. Let us, for convenience of exposition, call an experiential statement an E-statement and a statement to the effect that some physical object is perceived a P-statement. Then what is required of E-statements is that they support P-statements without entailing them. Collectively they must be such that our construction of the physical world can be exhibited as an interpretation of the data which they describe; individually they must be consistent with either the truth or falsehood of the particular P-statements which are based upon them. They must, finally, be framed in such a way that they can count as being descriptive of the actual contents of our perceptual experiences.

At this point, there are various ways in which one might proceed. The course which I propose to follow is to start, like Berkeley, with sensible qualities, but not to treat them as particulars. That is to say, I shall not differentiate, initially, between different occurrences of the same quality. For this purpose I shall follow the example of C. I. Lewis and Nelson Goodman in making a technical use of James's term 'Quale'. I shall, however, give it a rather different extension from that which it is given, at least by Professor Goodman, in his excellent book *The Structure of Appearance*. One reason for this is that our aims are different. Professor Goodman is not committed to James's thesis that the primary system, for the theory of knowledge, must be a system with a phenomenal rather than a physical basis. In his view, no
case has been made out for saying that either type of system is primary; he does not think that the question of epistemological primacy has yet been formulated clearly enough to permit of there being any definite answer to it. The result is that while the elements of his system belong to sense-modalities, he is not saddled with the admittedly vague requirement of preserving fidelity to the actual character of our sense-experience; he is able to escape it because he is not committed at the outset to holding that the physical system is an interpretation of the phenomenal. His concern is to construct a language which could be used by people who were looking at the word phenomenologically, and only then consider whether and to what extent a physical language could be developed out of it. In the constitution of his phenomenal language he is guided by logical considerations. He insists that every term which figures in the system be explicitly defined on the basis of its primitive terms, and in the case of visual phenomena, on which he mainly concentrates, the elements which the primitive terms denote are colours, places and times, where places are places in the visual field and a time- quale is a moment of phenomenal time which has no other as a part.

The conditions which I have imposed upon my E-statements make things harder for me in some ways, but in one way they make them easier. Since my qualia have, as it were, to present themselves as being candidates for physical objects, I have to conceive of the phenomenal field in which they occur as being already fairly highly organized. This means that I am able to take as primitive a great deal of what Goodman, if he arrived at it, would have been obliged to construct. It may well be, of course, that my primitives are wholly constructible out of his materials. In that case I shall anyhow be protected from the charge of making assumptions to which I am not entitled, and be only at worst susceptible to the charge of laziness.

My qualia, then, are visual or other sensory patterns. I conceive of their range as being very wide. Anything counts as a quale that a person is able to pick out as a recurrent or potentially recurrent feature of his sense-experiences, from a two-dimensional colour expanse to a complex three-dimensional gestalt. Suppose, for
example, that my cat is curled up in a chair beside me. Then if
I look towards him, the quale which is presented to me may be
that of a light brown expanse, a light brown expanse against a
green background, an animal pattern, a feline pattern, a Siamese-
cat pattern, a cat-in-a-chair pattern, and so forth. I borrow these
expressions from ordinary speech to avoid the labour of devising
a special vocabulary. There would, I believe, be no insuperable
difficulty in constructing such a vocabulary, or even in teaching
it as a primitive language. After all, a child does not need already
to have the concept of a physical object in order to identify
patterns. Still, for our present purpose, there is clearly a practical
advantage in trading on expressions the meaning of which is
already known. It must, however, be borne in mind that these
borrowed expressions do not carry all their usual implications.
Though it may often be the case that a cat-pattern indicates the
presence of a cat, this is not a deductive inference. The expression
‘cat-pattern’ is not defined as a pattern which is typical of the
appearance of a cat, since its use does not imply that there are any
cats. In the same way the expression ‘bird-note’, in this vocabulary,
does not carry the implication that there are birds. The reference
is solely to the quality of the sound, irrespective of its provenance.
In short, these are purely ostensive terms like colour-words, used
phenomenally: a term like ‘cat-pattern’ differs from a colour-word
only in denoting a quale of a more complicated type.

Expressions which denote simple qualia may also serve to
denote the attributes of more complex ones. For the visual
modality, which is the most important, these attributes will be
colours, sizes and shapes. They provide a means of distinguishing
between qualia which answer to the same general description.
For instance, there are many different ways in which a quale
which falls within the range of a cat-pattern can be further
specified. I do not, however, assume that this is necessarily true of
all such complex qualia. I think it possible that someone should
signal the presence of some visual pattern without being disposed
to signal the presence of its attributes. That is to say, he would
register the pattern, without registering its particular shape or
size, or perhaps even colour. I am in some doubt whether this
could happen but I think it best to allow for the possibility. If I am wrong, no harm is done; so long as we are concerned about fidelity to the appearances, the important thing is that no type of fact should be excluded. It does not matter if provision is made for possibilities which are not actually realized.

Like James, I assume that the qualia are given to us as spatially and temporally related. I follow him also in assuming that sense-fields have some temporal duration. Temporal relations may obtain between qualia of the same or different sense-modalities, on condition that they occur within the same spcious present. Spatial relations occur only within visual or tactual sense-fields.

It is by their spatial and temporal relations that qualia are particularized. At the primitive level, this particularization is not complete, since we have no right to exclude the possibility that the total contents of two different spcious presents are qualitatively identical. It is completed only in the course of the construction of the physical system. There is no circularity in this, since it is not necessary for the construction to proceed that its elements should be fully individuated. It is enough that if any ambiguity should arise we can always resolve it by extending the context in which the rival groups of qualia are located.

An experiencial statement is formed by coupling a designation of a quale, or of a group of qualia, with some sign of instantiation: an exclamation-mark would be as good a sign as any other for this purpose. The rule which governs the use of these statements is that they can refer only to present qualia, and only to qualia which are presented to the speaker. No provision is made for their use in any other way. So if a dialogue were conducted at this level, each speaker would assent to or dissent from the other's statement according as he found or failed to find the designated qualia occurring within his own contemporary experience.

3. The Question of Privacy

This does not entail that qualia are private entities. They are not confined to my experience or to that of any other given observer. On the contrary, since they are universals there is no theoretical
limit to the incidence of their instantation. It is, indeed, a necessary and sufficient condition of the truth of an E-statement that the quale to which it refers should be presented to some person at the relevant time, but this condition is not contained in the E-statements themselves: it is not expressible at their level. The game, if we may so call it, is just that the player greets a pattern when it appears with the appropriate sign, and this greeting carries no further implication whatever, not even that the pattern is perceived by him, let alone that it is or is not perceived by others.

The reason why nothing of this sort can be implied is that persons do not enter into this universe of discourse. Consequently, the question of privacy or publicity does not arise for qualia, since this antithesis makes sense only at a level where one not only has the means of referring to different persons but is also able to distinguish between their ‘inner’ experiences and the ‘outer’ world which they perceive in common. I shall try to show later on how this distinction can be made. It must, however, be admitted that our E-statements do possess the feature which is the main source of Wittgenstein’s objection to what he considers to be a private language. There is no criterion by which the player of the language-game can determine that he is abiding by its rules, except his own recognition of the qualia which he picks out. There is no way in which the accuracy of his recognition can be independently checked.

The result is that what constitutes the same quale is something which the speaker simply decrees. Let us suppose that an anthropologist comes across a tribe in which this primitive language is spoken. The supposition is highly improbable but not contradictory. Let us also suppose that the anthropologist catches on to the principles of the language. Then, on the assumption that these people’s sense-experiences are not significantly different from his own, he will be able to make conjectures about their use of these ‘phenomenal’ expressions and may very well find that his conjectures are confirmed. His position will not, in fact, be very different from that of an anthropologist who is investigating a ‘physical’ language of an unfamiliar type. However, when one of his conjectures comes to grief, he will not always be able to decide
between the hypotheses that his interpretation has been at fault, that the speaker’s perceptions diverged on this occasion from his own, that the speaker has made a verbal mistake or that from the point of view of the anthropologist he has modified his usage. Neither will this difficulty be wholly due to the fact that the anthropologist is looking at the performance from the outside. Even for the speakers of the language there is no distinction at this level between linguistic innovations and linguistic mistakes.

It does not follow, however, that such a language would have no rules at all. The speakers would have their habits of classification and these would constitute the rules. It is only that as yet there is no such thing as a speaker’s infraction of a rule. We can, however, find an analogue even for this at the very next stage when the speaker is credited with memories and expectations and he has begun to associate qualia in a more elaborate way than we have yet provided for. There will still be cases when it will not be possible to say whether the deviation lies in the speaker’s usage or his experience, but at least there will be occasions on which he can be judged to have made a mistake. They will be those in which he rescinds an identity decree.

Moreover, even at the most primitive level, the position of the speaker, in this respect, differs only in degree and not in kind from our own. For, as I have pointed out elsewhere,¹ we too are bound to rely in the end on what I call primary recognition. Being in possession of the concept of persistent objects, including that of other observers, we are able in many cases to point to specimens which can provide us with standards for the application of our words, and we can also check our usage by that of other people. But the specimens themselves have to be recognized: if they are labelled the labels have to be recognized in their turn. If we consult other people, the signs which they make, their words or gestures, have to be identified if we are to learn anything from them. One decision corroborates another, and although we enjoy the advantage of having a very wide area in which to look for corroboration, it still comes down to a matter of decision. For all the complexity and publicity of our language,

its operation entirely depends on our continually just taking something to be an instance of an identifiable quale. Here too what the speaker does when he admits to having made a verbal error is rescind a decree.

If this argument is valid, it shows us the way to meet a further objection to the possibility of our experiential language. One of the conditions which we have imposed upon E-statements is that they be neutral with respect to P-statements, in the sense that the assertion of an E-statement leaves it an open question whether any P-statement is true or false. But here it may be objected that while this may hold good with respect to the particular P-statements to which particular E-statements give rise, it does not hold with regard to P-statements in general. For it is only through their relation to P-statements that E-statements derive their meaning. We can strip away the assumptions that ordinarily go with judgements of perception, but it is with these judgements that we have to start. Otherwise nothing that we could say in our phenomenological language would be intelligible.

Now it is quite true that our explanation of the use of E-statements does depend upon the understanding of P-statements: but that is not what is in question. In talking about an experiential language we are free to draw on any resources that we possess. The question is whether the reference to ordinary judgements of perception occurs implicitly within the E-language, and this is quite a different matter. The ground for saying that it does is that qualia are supposed to be ostensible and that nothing is ostensible unless it is public. If we are able to talk intelligibly about our private thoughts and feelings, it is only because they are logically connected with objects or processes which are publicly observable. Now, admittedly, qualia have not been introduced as private entities, but this does not avoid the difficulty. For it is a feature of the language-game into which they enter that each player is allowed to have an authoritative voice with respect to the existence and character of the qualia with which he is presented. In other words, it makes no difference to the conduct of the game whether there are many players or only one, and if there are many players, whether they apprehend the same qualia or not.
But this is inconsistent with the assumption that qualia are ostensibly definable. For it is essential to ostensive definitions that the same object be shown by one person to another.

This objection is, I think, just a variant of the one which we considered before it: for if we ask why it is thought that our ability to talk intelligibly about private experiences depends upon their being logically connected with public events, or why it is thought that only what is publicly observable can be ostensibly defined, we shall come upon the argument that it is necessary for all uses of language to conform to some public standard of correctness: and then my previous rejoinder holds. I want, however, to look a little further into this question of ostensive definition. How clear cut is the distinction between public objects which can be shown to others, and private states which cannot?

Again, it will be simplest to start with a commonplace example. Consider what happens when one teaches a child the meaning of a word like the English word ‘table’. One shows him a table, or a picture of a table, pronounces the word, and hopes that he will somehow come to understand that the type of word of which this is a token is to be used to stand for the type of object of which we are showing him a picture, or a specimen. But what exactly is involved in our showing him the specimen? Our bringing him into a situation where we expect that he will see the same object as that to which we are referring, and directing his attention to it. But what then counts for us as his seeing the right object, the one that we also see and wish him to attend to? His reacting in a way that we consider appropriate. And how do we establish that he has learned his lesson? Again, by observing that he reacts in the proper way and in particular that he comes out with the word on what we consider to be the right occasions, that is, mainly the occasions on which we should say that there was a table there and that he was looking at it, or in contact with it.

But now in what way does any of this differ from the case in which we teach a child the meaning of a word like ‘pain’? Here too we bring him into, or, more humanely, find him in the appropriate situation, observe his reactions and accordingly make
an assumption about what he is feeling, just as in the case of the
table we make an assumption about what he is seeing, and are
satisfied that he has learned his lesson if he subsequently comes out
with, or assents to, the word when we judge that he is in pain, or
when we judge that he is observing some other creature who
seems to us to be exhibiting signs of pain. This case is, indeed, a
little more complicated. The context is more elaborate and the
child has somehow to catch on to the fact that the word refers
to the feeling rather than to the thing which causes it, a distinction
which very young children are said to find it quite difficult to
make. Nevertheless the two sorts of cases are fundamentally
alike.

But, it may be said, we can point to the table and cannot point
to the pain, or at least not in the same straightforward way. What
does this come to? That you accompany your utterance of the
word ‘table’ with a gesture, the purpose of which is to direct the
child’s attention to the object to which you wish him to take the
word to refer. Well, you could also make a gesture as part of the
process of teaching him what the word ‘pain’ meant. But it
would not have the same effect, because it would direct his
attention not to the pain but to its cause, or to the part of his
body in which he felt it, or to his tears. Well, it might or it might
not. How can one be sure? A great deal would depend on what
other words the child already understood. In any event, there
cannot be more to this than a slight difference in the technique
of teaching.

The moral which I wish to draw is that if there is a problem
about the attribution of experiences to others, it arises just as
much with respect to the observation of public objects as with
respect to inner processes. If I have any reason to doubt whether
the feeling which another man has when he says that he is in pain
is at all analogous to the feeling that I have when I am in pain, or
whether he has any feeling at all, I have just as much reason to
doubt whether what he sees when he says that he sees a table is at
all analogous to what I see when I see a table, or indeed whether
he sees anything at all. I am not saying that there are serious
reasons for doubt in either case, nor yet that there are not, but
only that they are on a level. It is therefore a mistake to think either that one removes the threat of solipsism by insisting that inner processes should have outer criteria, or that one increases it by bringing experiential statements into the analysis of judgements of perception. Perhaps the introduction of experiential statements makes sceptical doubts concerning our common world a little easier to formulate, but it will always be possible to formulate them so long as one is able to raise the question whether there are any counterparts to one's own experiences. To remove this possibility, we should have to outlaw any reference to any form of consciousness, resolve thoughts into utterances, feelings into behaviour, beliefs into actions and perception into the acquisition of beliefs. There would then be no question of our seeing the world differently because there would be no question of our seeing the world at all.

If we are not going to these lengths, there is no reason, on the score of publicity, why we should not start with qualia, rather than with the physical objects of common-sense. It is not as if this committed us to denying the assumptions which are contained in our ordinary judgements of perception; by not making them at the outset we give ourselves the opportunity to show how they are warranted. Otherwise, the main difference is that the standing of an E-statement is not so precarious as that of a P-statement. In particular, it is not exposed in the same way to the verdict of other people. This does not mean, however, that I am debarred from holding any beliefs about the character of the qualia which are presented to other people, or that these beliefs do not play a vital part in the fixation of my beliefs about physical objects. I am handicapped only in the sense that the best warrant that I can have for my belief that the qualia which are presented to some other person, on a given occasion, are similar to those which are presented to me is that it fits in with my overall interpretation of his words and actions. But that I should find his words and actions appropriate, in the sense that I can rely on my interpretation of them for predicting my own experiences, is all that matters to me. I take this to be the point that philosophers like Schlick are concerned to make when they
say that only structure is communicable, and not content. Moreover, as I have just tried to show, exactly the same applies in the case of the P-statements which are made by another person. I have only this indirect way of testing my belief that the things which we both say that we perceive look at all the same to him as they do to me, and again this does not matter to me so long as I am able, in terms of my own experience, to rely on my interpretation of what he says.

But if we do not know that we are presented with the same qualia, surely each of us is imprisoned in his own world. Well, each of us is imprisoned in his own world, in the harmless sense that I have my experiences and other people have theirs, and any knowledge of the world which any one of us acquires is bound to be based upon his own experiences. But this does not prevent us from operating with criteria of identity which ensure that we perceive the same physical objects; it is just that we have separately to determine that these criteria are satisfied. Neither does it offer any bar to our conceiving of these physical objects as 'constructed' out of qualia. What is required here, as we shall presently see, is that the relations which are found between qualia should be projected and supplemented in such a way as to expand into the framework of a physical system. The question who 'owns' the qualia does not enter into it. If we are pressed to say who carries out the construction, our answer must be that it can be carried out by anyone who has access to the necessary materials.

The trap into which many empiricists have fallen is that of attempting to construct a common world out of 'my' private sense-data: not only do they find themselves in the contradictory position of having to treat the personal pronoun as standing both for a constant and a variable, but the brand of privacy which is placed upon the data at the outset is never removed. It is equally impossible to construct a common world by putting together the private data of different subjects; for here one does fall foul of the objection that no one could be in a position to perform the synthesis. We have also seen that James comes to grief in trying to arrive at a common world by giving experiences a common ownership. All these troubles arise from the initial mistake of
raising the question of privacy or publicity at the primitive level. Not only is it not necessary to introduce qualia as private entities, but the very question of their ownership, or, to speak more strictly, the ownership of their instances, makes no sense except at a level of theory where persons, and therefore physical objects, have already been introduced.

Once we have arrived at such a theory, the problem takes on quite a different aspect. We can then look back on our starting point, and as it were pull the ladder up after us. That is to say, we can determine the status of qualia in the light of the theory, in much the same way as having arrived at physics through common-sense, we can reinterpret the world of common-sense in terms of physics. At this stage we can determine the privacy or publicity of qualia in accordance with the rules of identity which are adopted at the higher level. In giving qualia a place within the theory which they served to introduce, we are free to decree whether or not we are going to say that the same instance of a quale can be presented to different people. And at this stage no trouble would arise from our choosing to regard the instances of qualia as private, since the theory already puts us in a common world in which, as we shall see, allowance can be made for private sectors. The point is that questions of privacy or publicity, objectivity or subjectivity, arise only within the theory, and can therefore be directed to our primitive data only when these have been taken up into the theory; but once the data have been taken up into the theory, they have only a subordinate status. There is no inconsistency there, because there is no logical reason why we should identify the elements on which our conception of the world is founded with the elements of which we conceive the world to be composed. I hope that what I shall subsequently have to say about our adoption of criteria of reality will help to make this clear.

One further objection remains to be met before we can be satisfied that our primitive data are fit to play the part that we are assigning to them. I have not said that P-statements entail E-statements because I do not know how to set limits to the range of E-statements on which a given P-statement may be founded:
things do not always have their characteristic looks and I see no way of legislating a priori for every possible oddity or form of disguise. On the other hand, I am maintaining that in every case in which any P-statement is true, it must be based upon some true E-statement. No physical object can be perceived unless a quale of some sort or other is presented. But now the only criterion that I have given for the truth of an E-statement is that the corresponding quale be recognized; and from this it seems to follow that whenever one believes a P-statement to be true, one also believes some E-statement to be true. But surely, it may be objected, this is just contrary to the facts. People constantly believe that they perceive things but when, if ever, do they recognize qualia? Except for a very few philosophers, who even believes that they are recognizable?

One might try to escape from this difficulty by saying that the basis for the perceptual judgement is to be found in the character of the experience which gives rise to it, whether or not this character is recognized. But the trouble with this suggestion is that it leaves us without any means of determining what the character of the experience is. We should have no other resource than to identify qualia by reference to the perceptual judgements which are based upon them. But this would mean that the condition that E-statements be logically independent of P-statements could not be maintained.

In fact, it would not be fatal to our undertaking if this condition were not maintained. To characterize a quale as being of a kind which is commonly taken to be an aspect of a physical object of such and such a sort, is consistent with its failing to convey any object of this sort in this particular instance: and that is all that we strictly require. Even if in order to specify our data we have to make use of the theory which we are trying to base on them, it will still be illuminating to show how the theory is constructed: we can still regard it as a contingent fact that the data stand to one another in the relations on which the theory depends. Nevertheless, it ought to be possible, as I have said, to specify the data without making use of the theory: and clearly if this stronger position is tenable it is the more satisfactory.
RADICAL EMPIRICISM

I propose, therefore, to face the objection. It would, indeed, be unanswerable, if we had to maintain that qualia were recognized as qualia, or that in every case in which a P-statement was accepted, some E-statement was explicitly formulated and assented to. But we do not need to go nearly so far as this. The most that we have to claim is that in order to be in a position to make a judgement of perception we have at least to take note of the way that the object in question looks or, as the case may be, feels or smells or tastes or sounds. But if this is so, then I think that we are entitled to say that the acceptance of a P-statement does implicitly involve the acceptance of an E-statement. The reason why the E-statement is very seldom formulated is that we are usually not interested in the appearance of things except as a means to their identification. It is, however, on the basis of the unformulated E-statement that the identification is made. This is confirmed by the fact that when the P-statement is challenged, one does fall back upon an E-statement. I may be wrong, one says, but that is how it looks to me, or that is how it feels, or that is how it sounds. One does not speak in terms of qualia but one is in fact referring to them.

4. The Construction Outlined

Having given a rough sketch of the form which an experiential language might display, and having tried to meet the more serious objections which might be taken both to the possibility of a language of this kind and to the use to which I wish to put it, I shall now give an equally rough account of the way in which we organize qualia in order to arrive at what I have been calling the common-sense physical theory. I shall proceed all the more summarily, as a great deal of the ground has already been covered in our discussion of James’s treatment of the development of our concepts of space and time.

Following James, I shall adopt the traditional method of fictive construction. I shall try to trace the steps by which a single person might arrive at such a theory, on the basis of his experience. This is, as I have said, a piece of fiction. I am not implying that each of

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us has gone through such a process in his infancy, or that it was
gone through by any of our remote ancestors; I do not claim that
the common-sense conception of the physical world, in whatever
was its primitive form, was consciously adopted as a theory.
My procedure, like James’s, is also artificial in that I place my
subject in a situation where he has to do all the work for himself;
a situation in which it is, in fact, very unlikely that anyone would
acquire the use of any language at all. None of this matters, how-
ever, since, as I have already explained, this tale of construction is
only an expository device. If I can make the story sound plausible,
in its own terms, I shall have given what may pass as phenomenal
analysis of the way that physical concepts function.

The question which I am trying to answer may be put in the
Kantian form: How is the physical language possible? Since I shall
confine myself almost exclusively to the domain of visual per-
ception, the answer, besides being highly schematic, will cover
only an attenuated version of even the physical language of
common-sense: but this will be enough to illustrate the main
principles on which I believe that a more thoroughgoing analysis
could proceed.

As I have already indicated, in dealing with James’s construc-
tion of space, the empirical fact on which everything depends is
that qualia form relatively stable clusters. If we consider any
fairly elaborate *gestalt* there will, as a general rule, be only a small
number of contexts in which our observer comes upon it. The
reason for this, in physical terms, is that although things change,
they mostly change gradually and indeed imperceptibly, and that
although things move, they mostly stay put, in the sense that they
preserve constant spatial relations to a large number of other
things. In the case of qualia we also have to reckon with changes
which are dependent on the observer, though the observer in
our story is, of course, not yet in a position to make any such
distinction. The spatial relations of qualia will vary with his own
spatial relations to them; for instance, at one time one quale will
be beyond another, at another time this relation will be reversed.
There will also be variations among the qualia themselves as the
result of changes in the light or in the observer’s condition.
Nevertheless he still finds that his qualia form numerous configurations which are persistent, in the sense that when one or two members of the configuration are reinstated, the remainder are also reinstated, or at any rate reinstatable, by an overlap of sense-fields, that is, as we should say, by the observer's slightly altering his angle of vision. This fact enables our subject to pass from qualia to individuals, not of course to physical objects but to phenomenal individuals of a purely visual type. An individual of this sort is constituted by the occurrence of a visual quale as a member of a stable configuration.

It is to be remarked that the fact which makes this initial step possible is only contingent. It is imaginable that the appearances of things should be constantly undergoing abrupt processes of change, or that all the things that we observe should be continuously in motion relatively to one another, or that the condition of the observer should always be like that of one who is drugged to the point where his experience, as we should say, becomes quite phantasmagoric. Admittedly, if these were the facts, we should not be able to describe them in this way, because we should not have the standard from which they can be represented as deviations. We should not under these conditions possess the concepts which we have of physical objects, or if we somehow came to possess them we should have no use for them. There would not even be any application for the concept that we have of ourselves. It does not follow, however, that such a world would necessarily be indescribable; only that it would be resistent to the forms of description that we most commonly employ.

Having constructed phenomenal individuals out of the primitive qualia, the next major step which our subject has to take is to conceive of these individuals as being continuously latent. This is equivalent to their existing unperceived, though this way of putting it is not yet within our subject's reach, since he has still to acquire the notion of himself as a percipient. The material for this step is already at hand in the projection of spatial and temporal relations beyond the presented field, in the manner that James describes. It depends, as we have seen, upon the possibility of reinstating a given configuration by traversing one or other of a
limited number of relatively stable sensory routes. Since this process takes time, the projection is initially into the future. Our subject is therefore required to extend his original E-language in a way that enables him to refer to qualia which are indeed linked to the contents of his present sense-field, but are not themselves constituents of it. This extension seems quite natural, and I do not think that it raises any difficulty of principle. We may then suppose him to make the decisive move of locating his spatial projections not in the future but in the present. In other words, he regards the potential spatial extension of his visual field as being contemporaneous with it. A stable configuration of qualia is turned into a persistent entity through its being attached to every member of a continuous series of sense-fields either as a constituent or as a simultaneous spatial projection. In this way our subject arrives at the notion of a visual continuant.

The construction of tactual continuants follows the same principles, as indicated in James's theory. As we have seen, this theory, when suitably amended, provides also for the fusion of visual and tactual data and for the ascription to the resulting constructs of properties which belong to the other sense-modalities.

There is one individual which comes to be recognized as a visual continuant, not because the visual qualia which enter into its construction are set in a stable environment, but because they occupy a series of spatial positions which, in relation to the positions occupied by other overlapping sets of qualia, differ only minimally in successive sense-fields. This individual has the distinctive property of being almost totally pervasive. A complex principally of visual, tactual, and kinaesthetic qualia, it has a representative or set of representatives in every one of the observer's tactual sense-fields and in the vast majority of his visual sense-fields. It is, of course, the observer's body, not characterized by him as such, since he cannot as yet distinguish himself as a subject from the objects which he perceives, but marked out as what, following Peirce, we may call the central body. The concept of the central body, allowing as it does for the observer's

1 See above, pp. 240–1.
movement, assists, as we have seen, in the process of fusing visual and tactual space.¹

Our observer can now take the first step towards making the distinction between his own subjective experiences and the objective world which he perceives. He forms a rudimentary picture of the way the world works, on the basis of the concomitances which he discovers between different states of his phenomenal continuants. He allows these continuants to change within certain limits without losing their identity, the stability of the context being taken to override a slight variation in the qualia, and he also allows them to move, in this case taking the stability of the qualia as overriding a gradual diversity in the context. He then finds that these changes and movements of different continuants can be cross-correlated. There are, however, a number of presentations which do not fit into the general picture. They are, as we should say, his dreams, his hallucinations and his fantasies. He tries to accommodate them, to conceive consistently of things as behaving not only in accordance with his perceptions of them but also with the ways in which he imagines them, but this proves too difficult. I am of course speaking in our terms and not in his. For him all experiences are alike in status: it is just that there are certain complexes of qualia which he finds unmanageable. He therefore distinguishes a main story, the one which, as we should say, describes the objective world, from a number of subsidiary stories. There is nothing against the subsidiary stories in themselves. It is just that they do not fit in with the main story or with one another. We may suppose that he puts a special mark on the statements which go into the main story, as we might say, his sign for objectivity.

At this point we need to introduce a second observer, a Man Friday for our Robinson Crusoe. The importance of Man Friday, so far as Crusoe is concerned, is that he also makes use of signs. What this means for Crusoe is that qualia, in the form of sounds or marks or movements, which he is able to associate causally with the Friday-continuant, can be interpreted by him as

¹ This process is well described by Henri Poincaré in his essay on 'L'Espace et la Géométrie' in *La Science et l'Hypothèse* (1902).
fairly reliable indicators of the course of his own experience. He then discovers that while the great majority of Friday's indications of the presence of various configurations of qualia fit in with the main story, there are a certain number which fit in neither with the main story nor with any of the subsidiary stories. He therefore forms the idea of a further set of subsidiary stories, namely those told by Friday, and distinguishes them both from the main story and from the subsidiary stories which are told by himself, the important point being that it is only with the appearance of another sign-using continuant that sense can be attached to his identifying the central body with himself.

Let us now suppose that other observers, other sign-using bodies, come upon the scene. They not only provide our Crusoe with further corroboration of his main story, but also enable him to acquire the idea of himself, identified still through the central phenomenal continuant, not only as a figure in the main story which is accepted by other sign-makers, but also as a maker of signs corresponding to nothing that the others recognize and so as a recorder or spectator of worlds existing only for him. So the private-public distinction is made, from which self-consciousness arises, permitting by the same route the attribution of consciousness to others, and the eventual development of the distinction between mind and matter.

The final result is that the main story becomes autonomous. The objects which figure in it are credited with an existence of their own, independently of the contribution of any of the story-tellers. This goes with the assumption that they are all telling the same story, even though their versions of it may differ. The variations in detail are attributed to differences in the equipment of the story-tellers or in their point of view. But once the distinction is made between the story as it is in itself and any particular versions of it, including one's own, the position is reached where all one's experiences, not only those which furnish the subsidiary stories, but even those which furnish the main story, are considered to be subjective. The theory becomes dominant; and, in the way that I have tried to explain, the elements out of
which it has been constructed are taken up into it and assigned a subordinate position.

I am very well aware that this is only a rude sketch of a construction, and that it involves some very audacious leaps. An unkind critic might say of it that it abundantly illustrated what Russell has called the advantages of theft over honest toil. The most that I can claim for it is that it may contain an outline of the truth. There remain one or two general comments that I wish to make on it.

The first is that the ordering of events in time is a slightly more complicated matter than the ordering of objects in space. Both depend ultimately, as we have seen, upon the projection of relations which are sensorily given to us. But whereas these relations are sufficient in themselves to generate a spatial system, without our having to make any special assumptions about the objects which they relate, beyond the fact that they are relatively stable, they are not quite sufficient for the ordering of events in time. The reason for this is that the positions which we assign to events in an objective time order depend, roughly speaking, on our assessments of the relative positions that they would appear to have to observers at different points in space, and in making these assessments we appeal to scientific laws, such as those concerning the velocity of sound and light. It is in this way that we come to distinguish between the objective temporal order of events and the subjective order of our experiences. This was the distinction on which Kant relied, in the 'Second Analogy' of the Critique of Pure Reason, where he attempted to prove that phenomena are necessarily subject to a principle of universal causation. But the attempt is unsuccessful: his principle is much too general, too empty of content, to do the work that he requires of it. What we need are more specific laws which we are not obliged to regard as holding a priori. Thus, our dating system depends on the assumption that the earth's revolutions, on its own axis and around the sun, are uniform processes in the sense that they always occupy equal periods of time. Indeed, this sets our standard of temporal equality. To speak of any other processes as being equal in their duration is to imply that they take up the
same quantity of hours or days, or whatever the unit may be, upon this temporal scale. But this standard is not sacrosanct. It could be abandoned if it led to unsatisfactory results; that is to say, if it were found to assign equal durations to processes which we had other and better reasons for regarding as unequal. We should then rely upon some different law, for instance the law that the velocity of light is constant, and so be left free, on this new basis, to conclude that the earth's revolution was not the uniform process that we had taken it to be. Our standards of measurement are always cross-checked and this in itself prevents them from being sacrosanct. We are not in the position of having to regard any single one of them as infallible.

Something of the same flexibility extends, indeed, to the entire construction. Not only is it conceivable that the primitive data themselves should have been differently selected, but even given our present stock of sensory predicates, and the patterns in which they are instantiated, we could have erected a different structure on them. For instance the fact that qualia occur in stable clusters, which makes it possible to construct phenomenal continuants, would equally well support a theory in which the only persistent individuals were regions of perceptual space. Another possibility would be to have only momentary individuals, consisting of what would be described in our present theory as the phases of phenomenal continuants, or even to create a 'static' world by ascribing predicates not just to regions of space but to stretches of space-time. And if it is possible, as I have suggested, to eliminate singular terms, we could dispense with individuals altogether and make our physical language, like our experiential language, wholly predicative. It must, however, be admitted that these alternatives are all more complex and psychologically less natural than the physical theory of common-sense.

In the popular sense, in which pragmatism is thought to lay stress upon the primacy of action, my development of James's empiricism has not been pragmatic. Like him, I have followed the classical empiricists in treating the observer as a passive recipient of qualia, or rather as one who is active only in the sense that his past experience and present interests and expectations may
make a difference to the character of the qualia with which he is presented. I have not started off with infantile agents. I make no apology for this. I am quite prepared to accept it as an empirical fact that children are players rather than spectators and that without this activity they would not acquire the use of ordinary language as readily as they mostly do. This is not to say, however, that they begin with the concept of themselves as agents, still less that this concept has to be taken for granted in any theory of perception. To say that one is bound to start with it is to assume that a programme like James's cannot be carried out. If the scheme which I have outlined is acceptable, I have shown that the concept of the observer as an agent need not be taken as a starting point. This does not mean that I am unable to accommodate it, at least in its physical aspect. It seems to me to depend rather simply on the correlation of movements of the central body with changes in the phenomenal environment. In its psychological aspect, it raises once more the difficult question of intentionality, which we encountered in our discussion of belief.

4. On What There Is

The aim which I set myself was to make out a general case for the thesis that our conception of the physical world can be exhibited as a theory with respect to our experiences. I said that if I were successful, as I hope I have been, it would give James most of what he wanted, though not all. The question which remains to be considered is whether it would justify his taking 'pure experience' to be 'the one primal stuff or material in the world, a stuff of which everything is composed'.

This is a difficult question to answer, mainly because it is not clear what the issue is. If James is contending only that the world is constructible out of experiences, the answer would depend upon the conditions which the construction is required to satisfy. The form of phenomenalism which I have been defending may appear rather weak, but it is the strongest programme that I

1 See above, p. 298.
believe to have any chance of success. Even if I am right, however, the matter does not rest there, since James's thesis is capable of another interpretation. He might be thought to be claiming, and probably himself meant to claim, that pure experience is all that there is. But when it is interpreted in this way, the thesis is very dubious indeed.

To begin with, it is not clear what a claim of this kind amounts to, outside the framework of a given system. We know that there is no greatest prime number, because this is a conclusion for which we can give a mathematical proof. We know that there are protons, because of the part which they play in a well-established scientific theory. We know, on the basis of historical evidence, that Julius Caesar was a real and not a mythical person. We know that there are many kinds of insects, because we can observe them. We do not know whether there are abominable snowmen or whether the man in the iron mask really existed, but we do know what sort of information would lead us to accept their existence. In all such cases, there are acknowledged criteria for deciding whether objects of the kind in question exist; and these criteria operate within a theoretical system.

But now if we look at the theory which I have constructed, so far as possible along the lines that James laid down, it gives us no licence at all for saying that only experiences exist. The fact is rather that experiences, so far from being all that exists, have only a secondary title to existence, since it is only through their association with living bodies that they gain the necessary foothold in an objective time-order. Experiences are attributed to persons, or to other sentient beings: but not only is it logically possible that the world should not contain any sentient beings, but there is good empirical evidence that it did not do so at some time in the past and will no longer do so at some time in the future.

It must be made clear that there is no contradiction between what I have just said and the thesis that the world is constructible out of experiences, in the way that I have outlined. When I speak of the world I am speaking of what is represented by the true propositions of the theory. The theory is indeed reached by
generalizing and extrapolating from the data of human experience, but it is not just a summary of these data. It contains no predicates that are not cashable at the experiential level, but it does not carry the implication that they are actually cashed in every instance in which they are exemplified. On the contrary, the fact that no limits are set within the theory to the projection of spatio-temporal relations, whereas the region of space-time which is occupied by sentient beings may be taken to be limited, ensures that there are more occurrences than are actually observed. It is essentially this spatio-temporal projection that enables the theory, as it were, to live a life of its own. Not only does it gain independence of its origins but, in the way I have tried to explain, it obtains sovereignty over them.

But why, it may be objected, should the question of what there is be decidable only within a given system? Why should one not put the system itself in question, at least to the extent of assessing the claims to existence of the entities which it admits? Surely this is quite a common philosophical procedure. For example, one may do mathematics and yet raise the question whether there are numbers; one may make moral judgements and still find a point in discussing whether there are values; one may discourse in abstract terms and dispute whether there are universals; one may accept current physics and doubt whether there are atomic particles; one may even discourse at the level of common-sense and yet raise the question whether there are physical objects. Are we simply going to dismiss all such questions as meaningless or contradictory?

I do not think that we can simply dismiss them. Nevertheless they are also not to be taken quite at their face value. The interest which they present is to be found always in the negative thesis, or rather in the reasons for which the negative thesis is put forward. What is it that makes a philosopher want to say that such and such a type of entity does not exist? The reason may be that he thinks that he has found a logical flaw in the concept under which the entities in question fall. More frequently, it is that he

1 Cf. my essay on ‘Metaphysics and Common-Sense’ in Metaphysics, ed. Kennick and Lazerowitz.
is engaged in the advocacy of some form of reductive analysis. So, for example, the denial that there are values is most probably to be construed, not as a profession of moral nihilism, but as the expression of a belief in the validity of a prescriptive or even a naturalistic analysis of moral judgements, as opposed to the safe but unilluminating ‘realistic’ procedure of simply taking value predicates to stand for value properties. Similarly, to deny that there are atomic particles is a way of committing oneself to an operationalist treatment of scientific concepts; to deny that there are physical objects, even of the common-sense variety, is a way of professing phenomenalism. It is interesting to note that just as the apparently negative thesis turns out to have a positive content, so the converse also holds. The point of insisting that there are values, or physical objects, or whatever type of entity may be in question, is just to deny that the concepts under which they fall are susceptible of any such analysis.

There may be some question as to the conditions which the analysis has to satisfy for it to be seen as eliminating the entities on which it operates. For instance, Professor Quine has suggested that we should regard ourselves as committed to acknowledging the existence of any set of entities over which we quantify. This means in effect that entities are to be regarded as eliminable only if it can be shown that whenever we appear to be talking about them our statements can be translated or paraphrased in such a way that no mention is any longer made of them. In the case of physical objects, this condition would be satisfied only if phenomenalism were tenable in its strongest form: it is plainly not satisfied by the weak reduction for which I have been arguing.

On the other hand, one might be prepared to take a less stringent view of ontological commitment. An opponent of Platonism might still think himself entitled to deny the existence of abstract entities even though he had not, for example, found a method of translating statements about numbers into statements about numerals. He might be content with an informal explanation, along some such lines as Wittgenstein follows in his *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, and he might take this, rightly or

1 W. V. Quine, ‘On What There is’, in *From a Logical Point of View* (1953).
wrongly, as being enough to show that doing mathematics 'came down' to operating with numerals. If we found his explanation satisfactory, we should then have to consider whether we were prepared to count it as a proof that numbers are eliminable.

The point to notice here is that, when they are viewed in this light, ontological questions are questions for decision. A good illustration is to be found in the problem of the relation between the 'world' of science and the 'world' of common-sense. Is what is really there before me the solid continuous coloured table of common-sense or a set of discrete colourless physical particles? It has been argued that this is a false dilemma, on the ground that descriptions of chairs and tables belong to a different order of discourse from the propositions of a scientific theory.\(^1\) Since the members of either order can in their different ways be shown to be true, there can be no conflict between them. This is quite correct, in so far as all true statements must be mutually compatible, but it misses the point. There is no conflict so long as we concern ourselves only with questions of truth or falsehood, without venturing into ontology. But if we insist on posing the ontological question, then the scientific and common-sense descriptions of the world do come into conflict, if only because they compete for the same regions of space. We can consistently accept the common-sense statement that there is a table here, together with the scientific statement that there is a set of particles here, because there are independent ways of testing both statements, and these different groups of tests can each be satisfied. But if we are constructing a picture of the world, then I do not see how we can consistently think of this area as being exclusively occupied by a solid, continuous, coloured object and as being exclusively occupied by a set of discontinuous, volatile, colourless, shapeless particles. In this position we have to opt for one view or the other. At the same time we must not be misled into thinking that we are pronouncing on a question of fact. One is tempted to say: Never mind how we choose to regard the world. How is it in itself? What is really there, the table or the particles? What does God see? But this is to forget that we have not supplied any

criteria for determining what there really is, in this sense. We are
no longer raising a question which can be settled by a recognized
experimental procedure. Given two different orders of discourse,
we are asking which of them we want to reify. This is not a
purely arbitrary question. One can give reasons for going one
way or the other. But they are not compelling reasons. In the
end it comes down to a matter of choice. The word ‘really’, in
this special usage, calls for the expression of an ontological
decision.

It is not indeed necessary that this demand should be met. It
may very well be that the best course is to take no ontological
decisions at all. If we adopt this policy, we shall construe questions
about the reality of different sorts of objects only as asking
whether the statements which figure in different types of theory
are true. We shall take up a position outside the different theories
only for the purpose of asking how the sets of statements of which
they respectively consist are logically or epistemologically related.
Questions like ‘Are there numbers?’ ‘Do numbers exist?’ ‘Are
numbers real?’ will be construed either as questions which can be
answered affirmatively by giving examples of numbers or as
questions about the possibility of reducing numbers to numerals.
Otherwise they will not be admissible. In the same way, we shall
ask how E-statements are related to P-statements and how they
are both related to the statements that occur within physics, but
we shall not admit as a further question the question: Do colour-
qualia, or tables, or protons, or only qualia and protons, but not
tables, or only tables and protons but not qualia form part of the
real furniture of the world? Our reason for refusing to counter-
tenance any such question will be that if we are able to determine
which statements at each of these levels are true and how state-
ments of different kinds are related to each other, there are no
matters of truth or falsehood left to be decided.

Nevertheless we can hardly prevent people from taking up
ontological positions, if they are so minded. And in that case why
should they not decide, with James, to look upon experiences
as the stuff of reality and treat the physical objects which figure
either in ordinary or in scientific discourse as merely ‘entities of
reason'. In favour of this decision it can be argued that it keeps to the epistemological priorities and that both kinds of physical objects are in fact theoretical constructs with respect to qualia. Even so, I do not think that this course is to be recommended. After all, the only point of having an ontology is to obtain a viable picture of the world, and this is something that qualia are not equipped to furnish. The E-language game is too rudimentary. So far as anything can be, qualia are pre-theoretical, and as we are now construing it, the question what there is comes up for decision only with respect to theories, in the special sense in which any system that allows one to distinguish between what is real and what is not real is a theory. This being so, the only serious candidates are naïve realism, considered, of course, as a form of ontology and not as theory of perception, and scientific realism. I shall not here attempt to adjudicate between them.

Whichever choice is made, it will leave no room for qualia as substantial entities. They will be buried in descriptions of the way things look to people and the way people are affected by various forms of stimulation. But this does not detract from their epistemological priority. We could not intelligently opt for the ontology of naïve or even of scientific realism, if the assumptions which are carried by the common-sense view of the world were not vindicated in our experience. In other words, it is only the character and the arrangement of qualia that make these decisions possible. But this is quite consistent, as I have shown, with their being assigned a subordinate adjectival position in the picture of the world which they make it possible to construct.

In dissenting from James on this aspect of his thesis that experience is the primal stuff of the world, I have taken a pragmatic view of ontology. It is pragmatic in the sense that once it has been established by the appropriate criteria that a given set of propositions is true, and there being no means of translating out the entities which figure in them, the question whether these entities are to be reified is treated as a matter of convenience. The thesis, which is often attributed to James, that truth is a matter of convenience is not acceptable: and in fact we have seen that James did not hold it, except in the domain of morals and theology. He
did think that pragmatism afforded a means of solving metaphysical disputes, though he did not apply it to the metaphysical side of his own radical empiricism. The idea that practical considerations can be allowed to determine what there is, rather than to determine what is the case, is a modern development of pragmatism. The distinction is finely drawn, but I hope that I have succeeded in bringing it out. On this view, the question of reality becomes pragmatic just at the point where it goes beyond the question of truth.