

THE CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH:

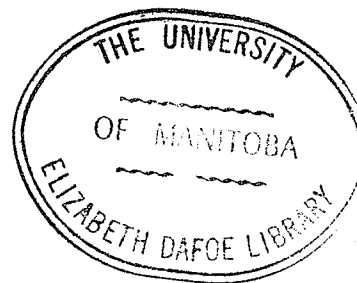
AN EXPOSITION AND A DEFENCE

An Abstract of a Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Philosophy

University of Manitoba



In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Abdul Matin

March, 1968

ABSTRACT

The present study aims at an exposition and a defence of the correspondence theory of truth. In both respects, its scope is limited.

Chap. I: Correspondence as the Meaning of Truth

According to the correspondence theory of truth, the truth of a proposition means its correspondence to a fact. There are theories which deny this "descriptive" view of the meaning of truth, and thus do away with the very foundation of the correspondence theory. Two of them -- namely, the redundancy theory and the performatory theory -- are considered. According to the former, truth-value expressions are redundant in the sense that they add nothing to the meaning of a sentence, and are mere assertion and negation signs. According to the latter, "true" and "false" do not stand for any property; they are not applied to anything at all, but function like "Yes" or "Ditto." Both of these theories are found unsatisfactory. Finally, it is argued that there is a genuine distinction between the meaning and the test of truth; and that, if so, the account of the meaning of truth given by the correspondence theory alone seems acceptable.

Chap. II: Proposition: the Subject-Term of the
Correspondence Relation

Correspondence as truth is a relation between two terms. These terms have been called the "subject-term" and the "object-term." The former is that to which "true" and "false" are applied; while the latter is that which justifies this application. Different kinds of "entities" -- judgments, propositions, beliefs etc. -- have been taken by different thinkers to be the primary bearers of truth-values. Examination reveals that propositions are the only primary bearers. A proposition has been defined as the abstract content of a judgment, which has no reality apart from the judgmental activity. This content is the assertion of a possible state-of-affairs consisting of the existence or non-existence of an object or object-complex. Finally, some theories of proposition -- those of Ryle, Woozley, and Russell -- have been considered and commented on.

Chap. III: Fact: the Object-Term of the
Correspondence Relation

The object-term of the correspondence relation is a fact. A distinction has been drawn between the propositional and the non-propositional sense of "fact," and a fact as the

object-term has been identified with a fact in the latter sense. A fact in this sense, and not in the other sense, is genuinely in the world. It is defined simply as the existence or non-existence of some object or object-complex. A fact, thus taken, does not itself exist, but simply is, in some sense. Later on, the views of Lucas, Strawson, and Woozley on the nature of a fact have been considered. These theories seem to constitute a serious threat to the correspondence theory; but none of them proves to be quite satisfactory in itself, or a real threat to the correspondence theory.

Chap. IV: What "Correspondence" Means

The problem now is one of considering what correspondence between a proposition and a fact exactly means. Several views expressed on this problem are found to be inadequate. Thus, it is not true (a) that the correspondence relation is not further analysable, (b) that it is analogous to the relation between a picture and what is pictured, and so on, or (c) that the relation is purely conventional. An alternative theory has been suggested in line with Russell's relational view of correspondence. It is argued that, within certain limits, the correspondence relation is further analysable in terms of a one-to-one correlation between the

propositional and the factual "constituents." Of course, in this respect, there is an important difference between an affirmative and a negative proposition. An affirmative proposition is true if and only if there exists a factual constituent corresponding to each propositional constituent, whereas a negative proposition is true if and only if there is at least one propositional constituent to which no existing factual constituent corresponds. To each affirmative proposition corresponds a positive fact; and to each negative proposition, a negative fact. Thus the correlation between a true proposition and a fact, each taken as a whole, is one-to-one.

Chap. V: Summary and Conclusions

A brief summary of the preceding chapters is presented in the final chapter. This is followed by certain observations of a general nature. Special reference is made to two problems pertinent to any comprehensive account of the correspondence theory, viz., the problem of considering whether or how far the correspondence theory applies to all different kinds of propositions, and that of defending (if possible) the theory against the apparently grave objections raised against it particularly by the coherence and the pragmatist theories.

THE CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH:

AN EXPOSITION AND A DEFENCE

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Philosophy

University of Manitoba

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Abdul Matin

March, 1968

PREFACE

The aim of the present study is an exposition of what is known as the Correspondence Theory of Truth. Its outcome may be anticipated as a defence of some form of the correspondence theory, although the main bulk of the discussion is expository rather than critical. The general position that has been upheld is that there is a distinction between the meaning and the test of truth, and that, whatever theory one may hold with regard to the latter, the correspondence theory seems to be the only valid theory with regard to the former (at least so far as factual propositions, i.e., propositions about the world -- about objects and events -- are concerned). It is, so to speak, hardly a theory at all; it is rather only a more systematic and elaborate expression of what is apparently the most fundamental sense in which the word, "truth," is generally used. It appears that a failure to see this, and indeed the whole controversy over the matter, arises mainly from a confusion of issues.

I am, however, thankful to Prof. G. G. Cosby, Department of Philosophy, University of Manitoba, for his very sympathetic guidance throughout the study. I take

this opportunity also to express my gratefulness to Prof.
J. T. Stevenson of the same Department for his very useful
suggestions on certain points.

A. M.

CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	i
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. "CORRESPONDENCE" AS THE MEANING OF TRUTH . .	6
A Statement of the Correspondence Theory	
of Truth	6
Theories Concerning the Function of Truth-	
Value Expressions	9
The redundancy theory; the performatory	
theory; the classical theory	
Final Defence of the Correspondence Theory .	24
II. PROPOSITION: THE SUBJECT-TERM OF THE	
CORRESPONDENCE RELATION	30
The Problem	30
Theories Concerning the Subject-Term	33
Statement; assertion; belief; sentence	
Propositions as the Subject-Terms of the	
Correspondence Relation	40
The nature of a proposition; sentences	
as the secondary bearers of truth-values	
Some Further Theories Considered	51

Chapter	Page
A proposition as the same as a sentence; a proposition as a combination of "bits of facts"; Russell's theory	
III. FACT: THE OBJECT-TERM OF THE CORRESPONDENCE	
RELATION	59
The Problem	59
The Nature of a Fact	61
Two senses of the word "fact"; the definition of "fact"	
Some Theories of Fact Considered	71
Facts as nothing absolute; Strawson's theory; facts as hypostatized events	
Conclusions	84
IV. WHAT "CORRESPONDENCE" MEANS	85
The Problem	85
Theories of Correspondence	86
Correspondence as unanalysable; the picture theory of correspondence; the conventional theory of correspondence; the operational theory of correspondence; the correlational theory of correspondence	
An Analysis of Correspondence in Terms of One- to-One Correlation	108
Sentences; propositions	
Some Possible Objections	121
The first objection; the second objection	

INTRODUCTION

Of late the problems of truth seem to have been one of the important battle-grounds in philosophy. The controversy among the idealists, the realists, and the pragmatists, and, more lately, the debate between Austin and Strawson -- both on the problems of truth -- are perhaps among the important features of recent and contemporary philosophy. The present study, however, will not be concerned with all the problems of truth, nor with all the different solutions that may have been advanced so far to any one of them. It will select for itself the correspondence theory of truth, and will try mainly to give a plausible exposition of what it precisely means.

There are different problems of truth; but the one to which the correspondence theory is an answer seems to be, sometimes, either overlooked or confused with some other. A good deal of trouble may have arisen simply from this source. Ayer, for example, observes that the only genuine problem about truth is the one relating to the criterion of truth.¹

¹A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1935), p. 87; and also "The Criterion of Truth," Philosophy and Analysis (Antony Flew, editor; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954), p. 238.

This seems mistaken, in whatever sense the word "criterion" may be taken. There is indeed more than one genuine problem about truth.

Of course, the word "criterion" seems to have a degree of ambiguity which may be partly responsible for the prevailing confusion over the subject. A.C. Ewing, among others, clearly distinguishes between the definition and the criterion of truth. He upholds the traditional correspondence theory as a theory of the definition of truth, and a different and liberal type of theory regarding the criterion. So far so good; but can we not use, if we choose, the word "criterion" in a different sense, and label "correspondence to a fact" as a criterion of truth? Indeed, this is what Ayer seems to have done in his article already referred to (although he hardly mentions the word "correspondence" in the other place in this connection). At any rate this seems quite possible in virtue of the ambiguity of the word "criterion." We may say, for example, that the proposition that some roses are red is true because it satisfies the criterion of correspondence -- because, that is, investigation has shown that there is an actual state-of-affairs (namely, some-roses being-red) answering to the proposition.

But even if we use "criterion" in this (misleading)

sense, we have but answered only one question regarding the truth of the proposition, and another question still remains to be answered. The question we have answered is: What is the criterion whose satisfaction has rendered the proposition true? The remaining question, on the contrary, is: How do we know, on this or on any particular occasion, whether the criterion has been satisfied? Here, presumably, one is faced with two possible procedures which are likely to lead to quite different consequences:

(1) One may arbitrarily use the word, "definition," where the word, "criterion" or "test," may be preferred, or conversely.

(2) One may fail to notice that there are two distinct questions as just indicated.

The first procedure may be a wholly unnecessary departure from common usage, and thus confusing and misleading; but its defects are not likely to cause any harm so long as the terms are used consistently and, preferably, with due warning. But the defects of the second procedure are grave and seem to be the real source of most of the prevailing confusion and debate on the issue in question.

However, there seems to be no reason to deny that

both of the above questions are genuine questions about truth,² and that they are different. There are of course other problems about truth, but the present study will not be interested in them. It will not be interested even in answering both of the above questions. The questions have been distinguished mainly as a basis for a precise delimitation of the present inquiry which will limit itself to considering a certain answer to the first question.

It seems true that our answer to the first question is a basic determinant of our answer to the second, but itself remains the same, however we may answer the second. This is part of the reason why in the present study a separate answer to the first question is not considered impossible.

The usual formulation of the first question, however, will be preferred here. Because of its ambiguity, the word "criterion" will be avoided as far as possible, and the two questions will be regarded, respectively, as the question about the meaning and that about the test of truth. Thus the questions will be formulated as follows:

- Q.1. What is the meaning of the words, "truth" and "falsity," or of "true" and "false"?

²Cf. Bertrand Russell, The Problems of Philosophy (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), pp. 119-120.

What do we understand by them, when they are applied to propositions, or when they occur in sentences? Or, what is the precise analysis of the expressions "is true" and "is false" (or "are true" and "are false")?

Q.2. What is/are the test/tests of truth or falsity, or of the legitimacy of our applying "is true" or "is false" to propositions? Or, simply, how are we to know in a given case whether the proposition is true or false?

The present study is interested in Q.1, but not even in the whole of it. There are propositions about the world (understood as the system of existents or actual states-of-affairs) and about what is sometimes described as truths of reason. The two kinds of propositions are usually contrasted as empirical or factual, on the one hand, and non-empirical or a priori, on the other. The present enquiry will be concerned with Q.1 in relation to the empirical propositions only. The position that will be defended is some form of the correspondence theory. The essay will be divided into four main chapters followed by a concluding chapter which will present a summary of the preceding chapters including a statement of the main findings of the study, along with some remarks of a general nature.

CHAPTER I

"CORRESPONDENCE" AS THE MEANING OF TRUTH

I. A Statement of the Correspondence Theory of Truth

The word "truth" has a good number of different senses.¹ Of these, only two seem to be primary, the rest being either derivative or even obsolete. In one of these two senses, "truth" means "conformity with fact; agreement with reality; accuracy, correctness (of statement or thought)"² or "conformity to fact or reality; the property of a conception, a judgment or proposition, a belief, an opinion, of being in accord with what is, has been or must be."³ More simply, "truth," in this sense, means the conformity of a proposition or statement with the existing state-of-affairs. In the other sense, "truth" means, not this property of a proposition or statement, but the very "thing" (proposition or statement) which has this property.

¹There are as many as a dozen listings under "truth" in The Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 2nd ed. The number is about the same in The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 3rd ed.

²The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 3rd ed.

³The Webster's Dictionary of the English Language, 2nd ed.

This ambiguity of the word, which is perhaps already a good deal, seems to be seriously aggravated by a third sense which, though not as common as the other two, may deserve mention, because it is also considerably in vogue and is perhaps the most confusing of all. In this third sense, "truth" does not mean conformity with fact or reality, but fact or reality itself. The extent to which its ambiguity is thereby aggravated may be evident from the fact that an acceptance of these three senses together permits us to say: "The truth of a truth is its conformity with truth." Perhaps nothing can be more puzzling than this.

There are, however, philosophical theories which are concerned with this semantic problem, i.e., the problem of the meaning of "truth." Such theories, usually, take the word "truth" in the first sense, i.e., they take truth to be the property of a proposition or statement, and try to explain what this property exactly is. One of these theories is known as the Correspondence Theory of Truth. In explaining the meaning of "truth" as a property of propositions or statements (or beliefs, or judgments, etc.) it seems to be in perfect conformity with the general dictionary meaning of the word. According to it, at least when we talk about the truth-value of a factual proposition -- i.e., a proposition about the world -- truth invariably means "agreement with reality" or,

more precisely, "correspondence to a fact." Thus, if p is a factual proposition, "p is true" is always synonymous with each of the following:

- (i) "p corresponds to a fact,"
- (ii) "p corresponds to an actual situation or state-of-affairs,"
- (iii) "p corresponds to a situation or state-of-affairs in the world."

These expressions are synonymous in the sense that we can and must utter them interchangeably if we utter them at all, or, that if, in any instance, we permit the use of any one of them, we must also permit the use of any other.

Thus the correspondence theory demands that we cannot say, for instance, that the proposition that the earth is round is true, even though there is no fact involving, in some sense or other, the earth and its round shape, corresponding to it; or conversely. Or again, one cannot assert truly that Canada is larger than the United States (i) if there is actually no country in the world corresponding to the phrase "the United States," or (ii) if, although there is such a country, it is actually larger than Canada; and so on.

This brief exposition of the correspondence theory may suggest (to a layman) that it is a simple theory, and that there is hardly any possible objection to it. But, as a

matter of fact, there are many knotty issues involved in it, and its validity has been seriously questioned by a good number of philosophers, though not always on similar grounds.

First of all, the correspondence theory claims to be a theory of the meaning or definition of "truth"; and hence a consideration of this theory may lead us back to an examination of how truth-value expressions ("is true," "is false," etc.) are used or function in our language. It may be, as the foregoing dictionary account of the meaning of truth may suggest, that this theory is implicit in the very way truth-value expressions are generally used, or that the very logic of the situations in which such expressions are generally used demands an unconditional consent to the theory. This is one reason why this examination is pertinent to the present study. Another reason is that there are theories as to the function of truth-value expressions which do away with any possibility of the correspondence theory. If such theories are indeed correct, the correspondence theory at once collapses. These theories may now be taken up.

II. Theories Concerning the Function of Truth-Value Expressions

There are at least three theories concerning the function of truth-value expressions in ordinary language. According to

the first theory, which is the most radical of all, "the words 'true' and 'false' are not used to stand for anything, but function in the sentence merely as assertion and negation signs."⁴ This theory may be called the Redundancy Theory of truth-value expressions. The second theory conflicts with the first one, but denies, like the first, that truth and falsity are properties of anything. This has already been named (by its exponent) the Performatory Theory of truth. According to the third theory, the expressions in question are neither redundant nor merely performative; "true" and "false" designate real properties of something, however this something may be named, and play a vital role in our language. In view of its position in the history of thought, it may be called the Classical Theory of truth-value expressions.

1. The redundancy theory. The redundancy theory originated with F.P. Ramsey, and was elaborated to some extent by Ayer. Ramsey observes straight off that "there is no separate problem about truth but merely a linguistic muddle."⁵ According to him, "it is true that Caesar was murdered" does not mean any more than "Caesar was murdered." In other words,

⁴Ayer, "Criterion of Truth," loc. cit.

⁵F.P. Ramsey, Foundations of Mathematics (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1931), p. 142.

as he says immediately after, this statement is the same as "Caesar was murdered."

His view seems to have two levels. At the first level, he recognises that "is true" and "is false" are not absolutely without a function. They are phrases which we sometimes use for emphasis or for stylistic reasons, or to indicate the position occupied by a statement in our argument.⁶ But at the next level Ramsey condemns these phrases as absolutely superfluous. Since, according to him, "It is true that Caesar was murdered" is just the same as "Caesar was murdered," to assert the first is to assert the second, and not to make any further assertion.

Finally, Ramsey observes that "it is clear that the problem is not as to the nature of truth and falsehood, but as to the nature of judgment or assertion," and it is "immediately obvious that if we have analysed judgment we have solved the problem."⁷ He wants to say that to assert "a has R to b" is to assert both that the judgment "a has R to b" is true, and that the "fact" that a has R to b exists; and conversely. And hence there is no separate problem of truth; all that is necessary is to analyse "He asserts a R b."

⁶Ibid., p. 142.

⁷Ibid., p. 143.

Ayer talks in the same vein; but, while Ramsey reduces the problem of truth to a problem of the analysis of assertion, he takes it to be solely a problem of the criterion of truth. "True" and "false," according to him, connote nothing; they do not stand for any property; and hence "there can be no sense in asking us to analyse the concept of 'truth',"⁸ or "there can be no logical problem concerning the nature of truth."⁹ The only genuine problem about truth is: "How are propositions actually validated?"¹⁰ That is to say, the only real problem of the theory of truth is that of determining methods of verification.

Now, if this account of "true" and "false" were correct, the correspondence theory, as an illuminating theory of the meaning of "truth," could not stand. But there are plausible theories to the contrary; and indeed there seems to be no good reason to accept this account.

First of all, it is not clear how the problem of the meaning of truth could be reduced to the problem of the analysis of "assertion." Ramsey himself has not shown how this could be possible. It may be true that "is true" and "is false"

⁸Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, p. 89.

⁹Ayer, "The Criterion of Truth," loc. cit.

¹⁰Loc. cit.

are sometimes used for mere emphasis or stylistic reasons. But, on the one hand, this does not preclude the possibility of their having some further role; on the other, there are good reasons to believe that they do indeed have some further role.

Let p stand for "Caesar was murdered," and "It is true that p" for "It is true that Caesar was murdered." It may be that in some (or even most) cases, when somebody asserts "It is true that p," he does not refer to any statement already made by someone else, and all that he wants is to assert, maybe with some emphasis, that p. But this does not seem to be the only type of situation in which "is true" or "is false" is used. There are situations in which someone else has indeed already asserted that p; and in such situations "It is true that p" directly refers, not to the historic event (Caesar's murder, in the present case) stated in p but to the statement that p.

This point may be further clarified with reference to some other types of sentences in which "true" and "false" are used. If instead of saying "It is true that p," the other man says "Your statement that p is true" or simply "p is true," then it seems quite inappropriate to say that the two individuals are making the same statement, or that "is true" or "is false" is in every case (in Ramsey's words) "an

obviously superfluous addition." It is possible to imagine a people who never think in terms of truth or falsity. Such a people would never use any truth-value expression; and in that case, some members of the group might say "Caesar was murdered," but none would say "Yes, your statement is true." This may suggest that expressions of the form "p is true" have come into vogue in order to serve a purpose which expressions of the form "p" cannot serve.

It seems correct to say that statements of the form "p is true" belong to a different level of talk from those of the form "p," or that there is a "type-difference" between the two. Thus, although Strawson's own positive thesis (which will be considered shortly) is unsatisfactory, he has rightly pointed out that some statements involving the use of truth-value expressions do not merely repeat the original statement, but contain an implicit meta-statement to the effect that some statement is already made. And Woozley, objecting to Ayer's contention that "true" and "false" are merely marks of assertion and denial, contends that some cases of p and "p is true" are not identical, though logically equivalent. When so used, he continues, "p is true" is a second order proposition, a proposition about p. He clarifies this point, very aptly as it seems, by saying that, in this use, "p is true" (i) is not equivalent to "If you assert p,

then what you assert is what I assert," (ii) but to "If you assert p, then what you assert is true."

Ayer is quite right in saying that to ask "What is truth?" is to ask for an analysis of "p is true" where the values of p are propositions. But how is it evident from this that "true" and "false" add nothing to the sense of a proposition? The truth seems to be far from that, if the above analysis is correct. If "p is true" is at least in some, if not most, cases a meta-statement about p, then it cannot be denied that "true" and "false" add to the sense of a proposition. And hence, "p is true" admits of a different analysis from p.

J.L. Austin objects to the view under consideration by saying that while p is a statement about the world exclusive of itself, "p is true" is a statement about the world inclusive of p. If this is true, as it seems to be, then it must be an error to say that the two statements are not different. This point may be further brought out in the following way.

Let X, for instance, say, "The sky is clear"; and let Y say to X "Your statement 'The sky is clear' is true." There is no disputing that neither statement will by itself affect the sky in any way (though the physical process involved in making them may).

Let us now imagine two listeners. The first listener

only listens to what X says, looks up, and finds that so-and-so is the case. The second listener comes later and listens only to what Y says; but he also looks up and finds that so-and-so is the case. In this sense, the two statements may be said to have practically the same meaning. It may also be true that so far as the sky is concerned, both X and Y have made exactly the same assertion. But that does not necessarily mean that their statements as such are exactly the same.

First of all, although both statements may, in a sense, be said to be about the sky, they do not refer to the object, the sky, in the same manner. Whereas X's statement is directly about the sky, Y's statement is only indirectly so. Y's statement is directly about X's statement, and thus has, so to speak, a different logic from the other statement. It is quite likely that, although the overt reactions of the two listeners were the same, their total responses were different: whereas the first listener did not, the second listener did think of some X as having made a statement, which Y's statement referred to. If there were actually no such X, and if the second listener had on inspection found none other than Y, he might even doubt the mental health of Y. This is because unless X has already made his statement, there is no appropriate occasion for Y's statement, and to that extent Y's statement is redundant. Herein, if nowhere else, con-

sists the logical difference between the two statements; and it is because of this difference that the two statements do not appear to admit of the same analysis. Whereas X's statement is a simple subject-predicate proposition (assuming that "the sky" is a proper name), Y's statement is, roughly, analysable into three more elementary statements:

- (i) X has (or, You have) made a statement;
- (ii) This statement is that the sky is clear;
- (iii) This statement is true.

This may have shown that Ramsey's view that "true" and "false" are redundant expressions is hardly acceptable; and similarly with Ayer's contention that there can be no separate logical problem concerning the nature of truth. Bertrand Russell has pointed out¹¹ that there are, not one, but two questions about truth. There is a question as to what we mean by truth and falsehood, which is different from the other question as to how we are to know in a given case, whether our belief is true or false. What is more interesting, he remarks (though in a bit different manner) that while the latter question is "of the greatest difficulty," the former one is less difficult but "preliminary." Russell's view seems quite convincing. Truth and falsity do not seem to be simple,

¹¹Russell, Problems, pp. 119-20.

unanalysable notions, so that if somebody says of a proposition -- e.g., the proposition that Canada is to the north of the United States -- that it is true, it is legitimate to ask "What do you mean?" In other words, it is legitimate to ask him for a definition of "truth." And even when he has defined truth, it is further possible to ask him, "How do you know that the proposition that Canada is to the north of the United States satisfies this definition?" This duality of question about truth does not seem baseless. It seems correct to say not only that both of these problems are genuine, but also that the former of the two is fundamental to the latter. As long as truth is left undefined, there is no basis for deciding whether or how far a particular proposition is true or false.

2. The performatory theory. The performatory theory has been advocated by Strawson, and defended by him against the redundancy theory as well as the classical theory -- more particularly, against Austin.¹² In agreement with the redundancy theory, he denies that "true" and "false" stand for properties, or even that they are applied to anything (sentence, statement or proposition), but, in disagreement with the same theory, he contends that, nevertheless, they

¹²Vid. The Austin-Strawson debate, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XXIV (Supp., 1950), pp. 111-72.

are not redundant and mere assertion and negation signs. According to him, the expression, "That's true," functions like "Yes" or "Ditto" (and similarly with "That's false"). It is used to perform the act of confirming a statement already made; not to make any further statement about the statement, but only to express our agreement or disagreement with it. In some cases, a statement using "true" or "false" may be shown to involve an implicit meta-statement to the effect that some statement is already made; but that is not the main purpose of their use, either when such a meta-statement is involved or when not.

Strawson's main point against Austin (whose view will be considered shortly) is that Austin wrongly thinks that truth-value phrases are ever used to make statements about statements; and once this is shown to be false, the whole edifice of the correspondence theory that he builds up collapses.

Strawson's position, however, seems to have been very appropriately assessed by Prof. Warnock, and also by Austin himself. Warnock rightly points out that there is no real contradiction between Strawson and Austin, provided the former sees the one-sidedness of his position. It may well be allowed that very often "is true" is used merely performatively; but Strawson is unjustified in claiming that this is always the case. Warnock's principal arguments are as follows:

(i) The locution "That's true" does no doubt have an agreement-indicating role; but that is "because of what is meant by the words and done by the one who utters them."¹³ Their statement-making role is the "essential underlying rationale" of their performatory role. "It is precisely because, as Austin says, one who says 'That's true' therein makes a certain statement about a statement that, as Strawson says, he thereby expresses (for instance) his agreement with it."¹⁴

(ii) Strawson tries to drive home his point by arguing that there are other locutions (e.g. "Yes," "I quite agree" etc.) besides "That's true" which can be used for the same purpose, and thus there is no real logical (notwithstanding some grammatical) difference between them. But Warnock argues -- correctly, again -- that although these locutions may be used for the same purpose, they are not used "in the same way," since there are contexts in which they are not indifferently interchangeable. In the contexts of decisions or appraisals, for example, although we can express our agreement by using "I agree" or "You are right," it would be out of place to say "That's true." Evidently, there is some restriction on the

¹³G.J. Warnock, "A Problem About Truth," Truth (George Pitcher, editor; Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1964), pp. 62-63.

¹⁴Loc. cit.

use of "That's true" for expressing assent: only statements can be agreed to by using "That's true." "That -- more or less -- only statements can be agreed with in this way is explained if the utterance states, about what it refers to, that it is true; and I cannot imagine how else that fact is to be explained."¹⁵

Austin makes similar allowances for Strawson, but claims that these allowances do not disprove his (Austin's) theory. He even goes one step further than Strawson in envisaging the performatory aspect of the role of truth-value expressions, but he denies that an utterance cannot be a statement, simply because it has a performatory aspect. To say "You are a cuckold" may be to insult somebody, "but it is also at the same time to make a statement which is true or false."¹⁶

Two most noteworthy charges of Strawson are that Austin (i) misuses such words as "statement," "fact" and "state-of-affairs" and (ii) confuses the genuine problem of truth with another quite different problem. But the first of these charges is doubtful (and will be considered in the following two chapters), and the second one also does not

¹⁵Ibid., p. 65.

¹⁶J.L. Austin, Philosophical Papers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 101.

seem strong enough. Strawson identifies the genuine problem of truth as the problem about our use of "true," and the other problem as that of elucidating a certain type of "word-world-relating discourse." Even allowing for his conception of the first problem, it may be said that he is providing us only with a partial solution (a half-truth): he explains at best only one use of "true," neglecting the other and more important one.

It is not clear, however, how one could avoid being involved in the problem of elucidating the word-world-relating discourse if (i) one is explaining the use of "true" and (ii) such a discourse is, as he says, "built into" or "contained in" it. It seems undeniable that the problem of explaining the use of "true" is part of that word-world-relating discourse. How can a judgment about the world be true or false without reference to the world as such? But if so, "true" cannot be used or explained without reference to the relation between words and the world, and hence also except as part of the general word-world-relating discourse. Not only this, any fair or full account of our use of "true" or "false" may warrant a correspondence theory of truth, in some form or other. It may be difficult, as it presumably is, to explain the theory; but that does not by itself justify Strawson's claim that the theory "requires, not purification, but

elimination."¹⁷

At any rate, Strawson has not substantiated his claim that "true" has only a performatory use by showing that this is actually the case, that people do, as a matter of fact, use the word only in that way; nor has he shown that the statement-making use of "true" is logically unjustified -- that it involves some sort of logical error.

3. The classical theory. Not much, perhaps, remains to be said about the last theory. This seems to be the common sense view, and also the one that has been maintained by the overwhelming majority of thinkers who have come to grips with the problem concerned. It denies both of the two positions already considered, and claims that "true" and "false" are used to say something about something else. What this something else is, whether it is a statement or a proposition or a judgment or a belief and so on, and what exactly is said about it are, of course, by themselves matters of great controversy, which will be considered later on. What the foregoing considerations seem to have shown is that the doctrines that claim to threaten the very possibility of the correspondence theory are not at all sufficiently warranted, being based upon

¹⁷P.F. Strawson, "Truth," Truth (George Pitcher, editor; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 32.

a confusion of issues or oversight of facts, that "true" and "false" are neither redundant nor merely performatory, and that there is a real problem of the definition of truth which is quite distinct from the problem of the criterion of truth.

III. Final Defence of the

Correspondence Theory

This seems to furnish the correspondence theorist with a basis on which he may make two fundamental claims on behalf of his position as follows:

(1) There is no logical objection to believing that "true" and "false" are not always used directly to talk about the world, but that at least sometimes they are used directly to talk about our talk about the world.

(2) When so used, some form or other of the correspondence theory is implied by the meaning of the sentences in which they occur. In other words, "correspondence to a fact" is the definition of truth, the meaning of the word "true" (at least in one of its important uses).

Claim (1) has already been considered in the preceding section. Certain things may, however, be said by way of clarifying it a little further. It may be asked: If "p is true" is a different statement from p, what sort of statement is the former, and exactly how does it differ from the latter?

The answer might be that in asserting p we talk about something in the world; whereas in asserting "p is true," we talk about p itself.¹⁸ But they are, up to a point, of the same nature, and may be described in the same way. If, for example, p is called a proposition, or a statement, or a judgment, the same can be said of "p is true." Further, both of them are descriptive: whereas p describes an actual or possible state-of-affairs, "p is true" describes p, i.e., ascribes to it a certain property, namely, truth. Yet there are important points of difference between them. First of all, a proposition of the form "p is true" is complex, compared with one of the form "p," as may be evident from their very form. Secondly, although p and "p is true" are logically equivalent, they cannot function in place of each other. If, for example, X makes a statement, and Y wants to say that the statement is true, it will be unnatural on his part simply to repeat X's statement; again, unless X's statement is already made, it

¹⁸In a sense "p is true" also may be about the world, and p about a statement. This is precisely a matter of directness and indirectness. (But this does not entail that they are the same statement.) When somebody says "The cat is on the mat," his statement is directly about the world; but it may also be interpreted to mean "If anybody says that the cat is on the mat, his statement will be true." Hence indirectly (or dispositionally, as Woosley puts it) it is a statement about a (possible) statement. On the other hand, to say "The Statement that the cat is on the mat is true" is also to say "The cat is on the mat." Hence indirectly it is about the world.

it will be odd on Y's part to use a sentence of the form "p is true" (precisely, "Your statement that p is true").

However, it now remains for the correspondence theorist to justify his claim (2). To justify it is to justify a definition. If the definition were claimed to be a reportive one, its justification would consist mostly in furnishing lexiconic evidence (and lexiconic evidence, at any rate, does not seem to contradict the correspondence theory, but rather supports it); and then it would hardly be such a persistent bone of contention. The real question seems to be whether truth could be meaningfully (and usefully) defined as correspondence to a fact, whether there is any logical difficulty involved in such a step, so that one must look elsewhere for the definition in question; or, assuming that the common man's notion is that truth means correspondence to a fact, whether there is any necessity or justification for accepting that notion.

No adequate consideration of this question seems possible without reference to the whole debate between different theories of truth, which is beyond the scope of the present study. Certain observations may, however, be made which will, presumably, go in favour of the correspondence theory.

First of all, the distinction between the definition of truth and the test or criterion of truth should not be lost

sight of; and, if so, to solve the problem of definition is not necessarily to solve the problem of test, and conversely. It seems that if correspondence to a fact be taken to be the test of truth, nothing else remains to be its definition; and then we are reduced to the position that either there is nothing like a definition of truth, or that correspondence to a fact is at once both the definition and the test of truth.

But neither of these alternatives seems acceptable. First of all, the distinction between definition and test is nothing peculiar to truth. Given that fire and smoke are causally connected, the existence of smoke is evidence for the existence of fire; but that does not mean that fire and smoke are identical. Again, a sweet smile may be evidence for one's being pleased, without being identical with the latter. Similarly, anything may be evidence for the truth of a proposition, without being identical with the truth itself. The very meaning of the word "test" seems to entail that there is some X of which any given test is a test of. "Test" is a relative term; and it seems meaningless to present some Y as a test without also presenting an X as what it is a test of. But if truth has a definition, besides having a test, what could this definition possibly be?

To say that coherence with a body of true propositions, whatever the dimension of the body, is the definition of truth,

truth, would be to say "p is true if and only if p coheres with the body of true propositions, whether or not there is a fact corresponding to it"; to say that workability or utility is the definition of truth would be to say "p is true if and only if p works or is useful, whether or not there is a fact corresponding to it," and so on. This seems too awkward for anyone to accept, so long as one understands what this exactly means. It seems absurd to believe that a proposition which is, ex hypothesi, about "the world," (i.e., about a real entity other than itself) can be true or false in virtue of any intrinsic quality, but only with reference to the object it is about. But if a reference to its object -- which may ultimately be a reference to a "corresponding" fact -- is essential, there is hardly any point in retaining the coherence- or utility-element in the above definitions. These elements not only turn out to be redundant, but lead to difficulties, since the definition of truth cannot be made its test as well, just as its test cannot be made its definition.

A simple objection to the possible suggestion that correspondence is both the definition and the test of truth may be that this is impossible, if the definition and the test of truth are, by definition, different. If the test of truth is what provides evidence for whether a particular

proposition fulfils the condition laid down in the definition of truth, then it is not clear how the same thing could be both the definition and the test of truth. Further, given that correspondence to a fact is the definition of truth, to say that p is true would be to say that p corresponds to a fact. If correspondence were allowed to be a test as well, then we would be reduced to a tautology; since, in that case, to say that p is true because it satisfies the given test would be to say that p corresponds to a fact because it corresponds to a fact.¹⁹

¹⁹Cf. "I want to know whether p is true."
 "What do you mean?"
 "I want to know whether p corresponds to a fact."
 "How do you want to do that?"
 "I want to know whether p corresponds to a fact
 by checking whether p corresponds to a fact."

CHAPTER II

PROPOSITION: THE SUBJECT-TERM OF THE CORRESPONDENCE RELATION

I. The Problem

Once truth is defined as correspondence to a fact, two questions arise. First, for correspondence to be possible at all there must be at least two terms between which the correspondence relation is to hold. What, then, are these terms? Secondly, what exactly is to be understood by correspondence itself? The present and the next two chapters will be concerned with these questions. The questions are inescapable; and after the correspondence theorist has defined truth as correspondence to a fact, his next task will be to answer them. Indeed, until these questions are adequately answered, his theory is left (as Woozley, for instance, clearly points out) at the popular level of vagueness and confusion, with virtually nothing done by way of defending it against its rivals.

Of course correspondence theorists have not left these questions unanswered. But there is no complete agreement among them; and indeed, sometimes, they even differ fundamentally. It seems quite difficult to choose between

the different theories that have been advanced by them. In the present chapter, however, an attempt will be made to consider their solutions only to part of the first question.

To begin with, there is a distinction between the judgmental and the non-judgmental, and also between the linguistic and the non-linguistic. For instance, when somebody judges (i.e., thinks) that Hitler committed suicide, his act of judging is an event which may be called judgmental, whereas Hitler's suicide is an event which may be called non-judgmental. Again, when he hears somebody else say "Hitler committed suicide," this utterance and his hearing of the same are both linguistic events, while Hitler's suicide is a non-linguistic event.

Now it seems correct to say that "true" and "false" are applicable (and also are actually applied) only to the judgmental and the linguistic,¹ and that what justifies the application is to be looked for in the non-judgmental and

¹Non-judgmental and non-linguistic events merely occur, or do not occur, and non-judgmental and non-linguistic objects merely exist or do not exist; they are neither true nor false. Occurring or existing is entirely different from being true; and if we use "true" to mean both, we only create a peculiar linguistic convention (cf. "God is the supremely true" or "Frustration of some sort or other is the inevitable truth of life"), but cannot obliterate the distinction. And if we use "being true" exclusively to mean occurring or existing, then we shall only need some other expression for the other matter.

the non-linguistic. One might talk of "x-sphere" as including whatever is judgmental or linguistic, and of "y-sphere" as including whatever is non-judgmental or non-linguistic, and say that correspondence as truth is a relation between some x of the x-sphere and some y of the y-sphere. One might call x and y (for want of better terms), respectively, the "subject-term" and the "object-term" of the correspondence relation. It seems true -- and this is the fundamental contention of the correspondence theory -- that x cannot be true or false apart from its relation to y, unless the words, "true" and "false," are used in an arbitrary manner. If x is about y, then x presumably cannot be true or false without a reference to y.

In the preceding discussions no strictness has been observed in this respect, and different things have been allowed to take the place of x -- judgment, statement, and what not. But what precisely is this x? Is it a judgment, or a statement, or a proposition, or something else?

Opinions, or at least practices, widely differ on this point: there are different candidates for the role of x. Indeed, there has been a sort of population explosion on the side of both x and y, particularly, of the former. It seems, however, that propositions are the ultimate bed-rock of all our talk about truth and falsity, so far as the x-side is

concerned. Sentences are the next and secondary rock resting on the former. A sentence, merely as a linguistic unit (event or object), is not what it is, and is of little concern to us, unless it is related to a proposition. This suggests that "true" and "false" can be sensibly applied, primarily, only to propositions, and only derivatively to sentences, uttered or written. And so far as they apply to propositions or sentences they are adjectives of a certain type. But one may, if one so chooses (and indeed philosophers have sometimes so chosen), make judgments (as acts of thinking) the primary bearers of truth-values; and, in that case, "true" and "false" should be treated as adverbs in disguise.

II. Theories Concerning the Subject-Term

There seem to be some good reasons for one's preference for the view about x, which has just been outlined:

(1) First of all, it may be desirable to cut down the population explosion by a resort to Occam's razor. Perhaps too large a number of terms -- "statement," "assertion," "belief," "sentence," "proposition" etc., -- are often indiscriminately scattered over the philosophical literature, sometimes vieing with one another for taking the place of x. Often some intermediaries are brought in between x and y,

wrapping the issue in "unnecessary mystery."² Their number may be cut down, if, of course, that is reasonable; and also the issue may be simplified as far as possible. In particular, it may be desirable not to be overawed and misled by abstract substantives, and to keep close to reality.

(2) It may be desirable for the sake of precision and simplification to discover "the indispensable minimum" of x, its bare essence, excluding from it all irrelevant psychological and social associations.

(3) If a number of terms equally serve the purpose, preference may be given to those which are less vague and less ambiguous, to those which are more so. This is, again, for the sake of precision and simplification.

These reasons, however, may each serve as a guiding principle in our assessment of the other theories -- in our choosing from among the puzzling cluster of terms that have taken the place of x. Let us then turn to the other theories of the bearer of truth-values.

1. Statement. It is a very common practice, both inside and outside philosophy, to ascribe truth and falsity to statements. A witness swears in a legal procedure that

²Cf. Russell, An Outline of Philosophy (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1927), p. 265.

he will give a true statement; a police officer is expected to prepare a true statement about a criminal case. Russell once held that "true" and "false" are predicates which apply primarily to statements, and by extension to beliefs and hypotheses -- a view which is not, of course, the only view expressed by him. Austin, however, considers the matter systematically, and arrives at a conclusion that casts almost all votes for "statement." He tries to show that even when we apparently apply "true" and "false" to such other things as words and sentences, our real target is some statement; that is to say, words or sentences are said to be true only insofar as they refer to a statement.

But there seems to be a grave objection to this theory.

"A statement," says Austin, "is made, and its making is a historic event, the utterance by a certain speaker or writer of certain words (a sentence) to an audience with reference to a historic situation, event or what not."³ It appears that by a statement he means a speech-episode, a linguistic event, actual or possible. But thereby he fails to satisfy the second of our principles. It seems that when somebody simply thinks that Canada is larger than the U.S.A. without uttering the same to anybody including himself, his thought

³Austin, Philosophical Papers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), pp. 87-88.

is still susceptible of truth-value judgment. Thus, (i) if we mean by a statement a speech-episode and yet (ii) substitute statements for x, we are going beyond the "indispensable minimum." The fact seems to be that it is only the "content" of a judgment (propositional content or thought-content) which is expressed or asserted in a speech-episode, and not the speech-episode itself, which is the basic and minimal bearer of truth-values. At least sometimes we only think that so-on-so is or is not the case, without spelling out our thought in the form of a sentence.⁴ A statement is usually public, and always the expression of some thought, not the thought itself. The thought-content that is expressed in a statement is what is usually meant by a "proposition" (taking this ambiguous word in this restricted sense); and it is propositions that seem to be the primary bearers of truth-values.

2. Assertion. Sometimes assertions take the place of statements. But that is perhaps theoretically worse. "Assertion" is more ambiguous than "statement"; and is, paradoxically no doubt, both wider and narrower than the

⁴The behaviorists regard thinking as sub-vocal talking. That is a matter of controversy into which the present study will not enter. At least Austin seems not to mean sub-vocal talking by a statement.

latter in denotation. We talk not only of "assertion," but of "self-assertion"; it is thus wider in denotation than "statement." (Austin sees this side, but not the other side.) It is narrower, since assertion is contrasted with denial, while both assertions and denials are statements. When Ayer treats "true" and "false" as assertion and denial signs, he is illustrating this narrower use of the word.

At least in one of its uses, however, "assertion" violates the second principle. A proposition is true or false, even when it is only entertained, and not exactly asserted. One may very well say, "Well, I am only considering the proposition (or statement), but I am not asserting it." When indicative sentences are used in make-believe, or for the purpose of illustration, they express propositions which are true or false, although nobody asserts them. To assert a proposition is to claim truth (not falsity) on behalf of it, but it is true or false even before such a claim is made. Of course, a difference ensues when such a claim is made, but that relates only to the claimer, who thereby becomes a bearer of quite other predicates, such as "right" or "wrong," and not "true" or "false."⁵

⁵Of course, (as will be explained later on) assertion in a soft sense is a part of the content of a proposition. However, "assertion is ambiguous in another way: when it is said that our assertions are the bearers of truth or falsity, "assertion" is taken to denote both assertions and denials.

3. Belief. Often "true" and "false" are applied to beliefs. To quote another view of Russell, truth, he says, is a property primarily of beliefs and derivatively of sentences.⁶ Pragmatists usually prefer talking of beliefs as true or false, apparently because knowledge, in their view, hardly ever entirely transcends the limitations of a belief. But Ayer, for example, does not agree with this, and observes that "to say that a belief ... is true is always an elliptical way of ascribing truth to a proposition"⁷

But "belief" also does not seem to be the suitable term. Like every other term under consideration, it is also ambiguous: it is taken to mean either belief (what is believed) or believing (the act of holding a belief). Further, "belief" is sometimes used in a different context in which it is contrasted with knowledge. Austin rightly observes that "a man is said to hold a true belief when and in the sense that he believes (in) something which is true, or believes that something which is true is true."⁸ "Belief" contextually implies a disclaimer to knowledge, an absence of adequate grounds for making an assertion or denial (while

⁶Russell, An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1940), p. 295.

⁷Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, p. 88.

⁸Austin, Philosophical Papers, p. 86.

"knowledge" entails the presence of such grounds) -- a fringe of meaning which is irrelevant to our present purpose. We are not interested in whether somebody merely believes x or knows it, but in understanding the nature of x itself.

4. Sentence. Will "sentence" do? It has perhaps received the minimum of votes, cast particularly by logical positivists. Russell, as just noted, allows sentences to be bearers of truth-values in a derivative sense. Austin also would allow something like this, though in a different manner. But Strawson, consistently with his denial that truth is a property of anything, objects to any such theory. In talking about a sentence, he would say, one may ask what the sentence means, but not whether it is true or false; the only adjectives that appropriately apply to sentences are "ungrammatical," "misspelt" etc.⁹

It seems that the question whether sentences are in any way bearers of truth and falsity cannot be answered straight off. A sentence, being linguistic, cannot be the primary bearer of truth-values; since language is only a conventional instrument of communication (and partly of

⁹Strawson, "Truth," Meaning and Knowledge: Systematic Readings in Epistemology (Ernest Nagel and Richard B. Brand, editors; New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1965), p. 161.

thinking as well), and, as an event or object, a sentence is absolutely meaningless unless it is related to some thought or proposition. But we may well ascribe truth or falsity to sentences, as Russell admits, in a derivative sense. But even then there is a difference: a "sentence-type" is a more primary candidate than a "sentence-token."

III. Propositions as the Subject-Terms of the Correspondence Relation

1. The nature of a proposition. It is, however, "propositions" that have most often been regarded by philosophers as the primary bearers of truth-values. This is true not only of the traditional but also of the modern philosophers -- even of such "tough-minded" realists and positivists as Moore, Russell, Wittgenstein,¹⁰ and Ayer. But the word, "proposition," has not always been used in the same sense. In traditional logic, it has been used to denote the verbal expression of a judgment. But, in recent times, it has been used mainly to mean either (i) the content of a belief or statement (or the meaning of a declarative sentence) or (ii) a sentence-type. The content of a belief is, again, regarded either as abstract or as concrete. But the general tendency

¹⁰There is, of course, some difference of opinion on Wittgenstein; but that may be ignored here.

is to oppose the theory which presents a proposition as a sort of Platonic entity, subsisting between a statement (or a sentence) and a fact. Ryle, Woozley, and Gale, for example, have advanced very convincing arguments against this theory;¹¹ and Ayer also warns us against committing ourselves to any such theory, himself defining proposition simply as "a class of sentences."¹²

The arguments of such thinkers against the Platonic or realistic view of proposition may not be reproduced here, although they appear to constitute a good ground for rejecting the theory. It may be observed, however, that this theory is wedded to a more general theory of subsistence, pre-eminently associated with the name of Alexius Meinong, which no longer finds sympathy with contemporary thinkers. On the one hand, it is difficult to see what sort of reality or substantiality

¹¹Vid. Ryle, "Are There Propositions?," PAS, XXX (1929-1930), pp. 91-126.

A.D. Woozley, Theory of Knowledge: An Introduction (London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1949), Chap. 5.

R.M. Gale, "Propositions, Judgments, Sentences, and Statements," Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (Paul Edwards, editor; New York: The Macmillan Company & The Free Press, 1967), pp. 495-505.

¹²Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, p. 88.

a proposition, apart from an actual or possible act of thinking, could possibly have. On the other, the realistic theory of proposition -- in view of the fact that it seems possible to explain the phenomena of judging and stating, truth and falsity, and so on, without believing in propositions as independently real entities -- does not seem to consist with the principle of Occam's razor. But this need not imply that we cannot talk of propositions at all. If "proposition" is redefined in the logically permissible way, there is perhaps no reason to shy away from it. In fact, this is what has been attempted by a number of contemporary philosophers, such as Russell, Ayer, and Ryle.

It seems that we can very well talk of propositions much in the same way in which we can talk of "redness" or "honesty." In other words, we are logically permitted to talk of propositions provided we regard them as no more or no less than abstract substantives. There is nothing like redness as an individual entity, but only as an aspect of red objects; again, there is nothing like honesty as an entity but only as an abstract aspect of honest ways of behaving. Similarly, a proposition may be defined as the universal content of a class of (actual or possible) judgments. This common content does not exist or occur; yet it is this common content, this common aspect, which makes the judgments

judgments of the same class, so that any one of them, at a particular time, is as true or false as any other.

This meaning of the word, "proposition," however, may be made clearer by contrasting a proposition with both a judgment and a sentence.

(1) To take up an example, the sentence, "I think that Canada exports wheat to China," represents a judgment which is a sort of act-content complex. The word "judgment" is ambiguous, and means either an act of judging or what is judged. This "what is judged" may be called the content of the judgment. It could be said that, in the present instance, "I think" stands for the act of judging, and "Canada exports wheat to China" for the content of the judgment. This content is nothing analogous to the content of an egg, for example, and is not separable from the judgment in the same way as the content of an egg is from an egg-shell; (unlike the latter) it cannot exist or occur apart from the judgment. In other words, a judgment is a complete whole in which the act and the content are separable only in thought; that is to say, insofar as they are distinct, it is possible to pay attention to them separately and take one into consideration rather than the other.¹³ There is no mere "judging" or "that,"

¹³A proposition, thus understood, may be said to be the internal accusative of a judgment; and propositional verbs

but only "judging that"; and yet the that-clause occurring in a sentence of the form, "X judges that . . .," may be exclusively attended to and passed judgment upon.

This may have brought out (i) that, so far as existence is concerned, there is only one thing, namely, the act of judgment; (ii) but still, in some sense, we may talk of two things and consider them separately. This may be one good reason for distinguishing between "judgment" (act of judging) and "proposition" (however difficult it may be to express the distinction in clear terms), and not considering the latter redundant or a logically dubious kind of entity. Furthermore, it seems not only possible but necessary to distinguish between them, even though they do not exist or occur separately. A judgment, as an act, is an event and is datable -- a property which cannot be ascribed to a proposition. Again, a proposition being a common content of a class of actual or possible judgments, there can be a varying plurality of judgments corresponding to one and the same proposition. When, for example, there are three other persons besides me judging that Canada exports wheat to China, there is a total of four different acts of judging (and, in that sense, four different judgments), but only one proposition (or common thought-content).

such as "to think," "to state," "to believe" etc. may be said to take an accusative only in this sense.

(2) A proposition differs from a sentence in quite a different way. A sentence is a more or less complex linguistic symbol used for various purposes such as asking questions, making commands, expressing emotions, and so on. But sentences may be said to be true or false only when they are used to make statements or to express propositions. Such sentences have usually been distinguished from propositions and statements, but not always. Russell, for instance, sometimes calls them statements (forms of words), and sometimes a kind of proposition, viz., word-proposition.¹⁴ Again Ryle, in his article mentioned earlier, completely identifies sentences with statements and propositions. It is perhaps better to call them just sentences, and distinguish them from propositions as defined above.

By a sentence, however, is meant either a sentence-type or a sentence-token. The latter alone is an actual or existing something, while the former is perhaps nothing but an abstraction from a class of sentences. A written sentence-token is an object like a table or a tree, and is a concrete part of the world; while an oral sentence-token is an event like the wailing of the fire-brigade siren or an earth-quake,

¹⁴Russell, Logic and Knowledge (R.C. Marsh, ed.; London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956), p. 308.

and a part of the world's history. With this in mind, we may ignore this type-token distinction, unless it is relevant on special occasions, and talk indiscriminately only of sentences. A sentence, then, may be shown to play, or to be able to play, a double role: viz., that it expresses a proposition and describes a possible state-of-affairs. For instance, the sentence, "Canada exports wheat to China," may be said (i) to express the proposition that Canada exports wheat to China, and (ii) to describe the corresponding state-of-affairs, viz., "Canada's exporting wheat to China." Indeed, a sentence (i.e., an indicative sentence) derives its significance entirely from these sources. It is, however, clear that a sentence is not to be identified with a proposition, since an expression cannot be identical with what it expresses. A sentence is a linguistic, while a proposition is a logical, entity; a sentence (i.e., a sentence-token) is a physical object capable of sensuous apprehension, whereas a proposition is something that neither exists nor occurs, and can be apprehended only in thought. A sentence belongs to a particular language, and is subject to the variable conventions of that language; a sentence is, for example, an English sentence or a French sentence, but the proposition it expresses is neither English nor French. Further, we may use two or more different sentences of the same language to express one and the same proposition.

However, a proposition as the abstract content of a judgment may be defined simply as the assertion¹⁵ of a possible state-of-affairs¹⁶ consisting of the existence or non-existence of an object or object-complex. Thus defined, a proposition may be said to have two components: (1) the concept of a possible state-of-affairs, and (2) the assertion that such a state-of-affairs is the case. The latter component, again, consists of (a) the concept of an object or object-complex,¹⁷

¹⁵One could also say "assertion or denial"; but then the analysis of the proposition would be different from the one given below. Either approach seems equally plausible. ("Socrates does not exist" may be taken to contain (i) either the assertion of Socrates' non-existence, or (ii) the denial of Socrates' existence. Here seems to be a puzzle-box containing, not blind alleys, but too many open alleys between which it seems impossible to choose except on grounds of simplicity.) The present one has been chosen for its relative simplicity. Assertion, however, is to be taken in its soft sense in which it is a case of merely having a pro-attitude, and should be distinguished from assertion in its strong sense in which it involves an emphasis or a claim.

¹⁶Not necessarily actual, since in that case no proposition could be false. Any actual state-of-affairs is also a possible state-of-affairs. But, for instance, that the war in Vietnam will come to an end in 1968 is a (merely) possible state-of-affairs.

¹⁷The word "object" is being taken in a liberal sense to mean anything which may be said to exist or not to exist -- a thing such as a book, or a property such as its weight, or a state such as happiness or unhappiness, and so on. An object-complex will mean a complex of two or more objects related in a certain way. But, for the sake of simplicity, the relation itself may also be referred to as an "object."

and (b) the concept of the existence or non-existence (existing or not existing) of this object or object-complex. When the assertion is one of existence, what is meant is that there is an actual object or object-complex corresponding to the concept thereof; when of non-existence, what is meant is that there is not an actual object or object-complex corresponding to the concept thereof.

For example, the proposition, "Bertrand Russell exists," consists of the concept of the possible state-of-affairs, namely, the existence of the object (the individual) named Bertrand Russell, together with the assertion that such a state-of-affairs is the case. The proposition, "The golden mountain does not exist," consists of the concept of the possible state-of-affairs, namely, the non-existence of the object called "the golden mountain," together with the assertion that such a state-of-affairs is the case. Again, "Canada exports wheat to China," consists of the concept of the possible state-of-affairs, namely, the existence of the object-complex composed of three objects, viz., Canada, China, and wheat, and their peculiar relation of "exporting...to ..." (or simply exporting), together with the assertion that such a state-of-affairs is the case; and similarly with other propositions.

A proposition is either affirmative or negative, and this is determined by the nature of the possible state-of-

affairs involved. A proposition is affirmative or negative according as it contains the concept of the existence or the non-existence of some object or object-complex. Thus the first and the third of the above propositions are affirmative, while the second one is negative.

2. Sentences as the secondary bearers of truth-values.

Now a proposition, thus defined, may be regarded as the only primary bearer of truth-values, since it alone seems to satisfy all the conditions laid down at the beginning of the previous section. First, it does not necessarily commit us to any kind of undesirable Platonism. Furthermore, herein we seem to discover the "indispensable minimum" which excludes all irrelevant associations, psychological or otherwise; and so on. But, although a proposition thus defined may be said to be the primary bearer of truth-values, "true" and "false" are applicable, though not primarily, to sentences as well, and this may be justified by the peculiar way a sentence relates to a proposition or a state-of-affairs.¹⁸ A sentence (precisely, an indicative sentence-token), strictly as a sentence, is not merely a more or less complex pattern of

¹⁸Cf. The opposite view expressed by W.E. Johnson in his Logic (Cambridge: University Press, 1921) Part I, Chap. 1, p. 1.

sounds or marks; it has a meaning and expresses a proposition. As a mere pattern of sounds or marks, it is only a constituent of the world on all fours with other constituents; but, insofar as it expresses a proposition, it is more than an ordinary constituent of the world -- a very distinct and unique type of constituent. Thus there may be no objection to holding that (i) indicative sentences are bearers of truth-values, (ii) even though they are to be so treated only in a derivative sense. In other words, to say that an indicative sentence is true is to say that the proposition it expresses is true, or that the state-of-affairs that it describes exists.

We may even go further. There seems to be no reason for being too "fastidious" about the bearer of truth-values. Perhaps there is no absurdity in the suggestion that, derivatively, "true" and "false" may be applied not only to sentences but also to other things such as beliefs, statements etc. (This seems quite possible, provided, of course, it does not engender confusion or needless debating.) There does not seem to be any quaintness in the following expressions:

"The statement that diamond is the hardest known mineral is true."

"Some of his assertions are false."

"Your utterances are quite true."

"These are all false ideas."

And if thorough-going scepticism is the only reasonable epistemological doctrine, it will be preferable to talk only of true and false (in the peculiar sense that may be allowed by scepticism) "beliefs." Our ordinary practical or theoretical purposes are not perhaps much affected by whichever way we may choose to talk. The sort of scrutiny and "pick and choose" that has been done here is indispensable only when we want to arrive at precision and theoretic satisfaction; since we cannot have a clear conception of the relation of correspondence unless we already have a correct and clear idea of the terms of the relation.

IV. Some Further Theories Considered

Let us now consider a few theories on the problem in question, and offer comments, showing their relation to the one already developed in the previous sections.

1. A proposition as the same as a sentence. Quite long ago, Ryle raised the question, "Are there propositions?," and gave a rather elaborate answer.¹⁹ He discussed the doctrine of substantial propositions with reference to Brentano's theory of intentionality, and tried to show that

¹⁹Ryle, "Are There Propositions?," loc. cit.

it is altogether unsatisfactory. The substantial theory (or the proposition theory, as it is also called) maintains that there must be propositions as a special class of substances, independent both of thinking minds and the physical world; since (i) whereas a mind cannot think without an object to think about, there is no physical or mental fact which it thinks about when it thinks falsely, and (ii) the same thing can be thought by different persons on the same occasion or by the same person on different occasions. Such arguments are apparently persuasive, but really baseless. The substance of Ryle's objections to this theory is that, on the one hand, it leads to embarrassing conclusions, and, on the other, it does not advance our account of how we know things.

Ryle, however, does not merely reject the proposition theory, but advances what he thinks to be a better substitute for the same. He retains the word "proposition" as the name for that to which "true" and "false" are primarily applied, but redefines it in a quite different way. A proposition is, according to him, the same as a sentence or a statement. It is not what we think or talk about, but what we talk or think in.

There may not be any objection to redefining "proposition" according to one's purpose; but there seems to be no good reason to agree with Ryle when he identifies the primary

bearer of truth-values with a proposition as defined by him. He would be right only if thinking were identical with uttering a sentence or making a statement (which is not the case). Thus although Ryle may be said to have succeeded in showing the unsoundness of the proposition theory, he cannot be said to have provided a flawless substitute.

2. A proposition as a combination of "bits of facts."

And the same is perhaps true of Woozley, who follows the same procedure but arrives at a different conclusion. He reduces the question "Are there propositions?" to "Do sentences have meanings?" -- and answers that they have. A proposition, he says, is the same as the meaning of a sentence, not the sentence itself, as Ryle maintains. But what does a sentence mean? It means a right or a wrong combination (done by the judging mind) of "bits of facts." It is because he defines "proposition" in this way that he is led on to the view that truth is "identity of proposition and fact" (i.e., a true proposition is identical with a fact). But such a view seems not only to be deficient, but to lose itself in a paradox. First, it is deficient because it ignores propositions (as has been defined above) as the primary bearers of truth-values. Secondly, the paradox about this view is that it applies "true" and "false" to things to which they

cannot be applied. A proposition as a (mental) combination of bits of facts seems to be nothing but a possible state-of-affairs; but a state-of-affairs can only be real or fail to be real; it cannot be true or false. Woozley's view thus leads us to talk, not of true or false, but of real or unreal propositions. Woozley does away with correspondence, but as a matter of fact he does away with truth and falsity. He fails to discover the x we have been looking for.

It may be that he has been misled by the equivalence of "It is true that p" and "It is a fact that p." But "true proposition" and "fact" cannot name the same thing, if we mean by a fact an existing state-of-affairs, since existing and being true, presumably, are not the same.²⁰ If we force them to name the same thing, we shall be in need of a third expression to make our talk about truth possible. A similar mistake seems to have been committed by Cousin.²¹ If a proposition, as he defines it, is a factworthy set of real elements and consists of a thing and a quality, or two

²⁰Cf. Austin's clear denial of identity between a true statement and a fact: "between stating, however, truly, that I am feeling sick and feeling sick there is a great gulf fixed."

²¹vid. D.R. Cousin, "Truth," PAS, XXIV (Supp., 1950), pp. 157-72.

things and a dyadic relation, or in general of n things and an n-adic relation, it is not understood how it could differ from a fact or could be said to be true or false.

3. Russell's theory. Now for Russell. He has indeed a lot to say on the present problem, and seems to have entered further than most (if not all) into it, though not through the same door. He once held that "truth is applicable primarily to a form of words, and derivatively to a belief."²² A bit over a decade later he reverses the order: "truth ... is a property primarily of beliefs, derivatively of sentences."²³ The theory defended in the present chapter is more in agreement with his latter view than with the former, but in full agreement with neither. No form of words is capable of truth-values unless it expresses a proposition or a belief, and hence it cannot be a primary bearer of truth-values. But we must also disregard beliefs as primary bearers of truth-values for reasons noted earlier.

Even previous to his former views, however, Russell deals rather elaborately with the problem of the nature of propositions, and less elaborately with the problem of their

²²Russell, Outline, p. 273.

²³Idem, Inquiry, p. 295.

truth and falsity.²⁴ He defines a proposition as "what we believe when we believe truly or falsely" or as "the content of a belief,"²⁵ and distinguishes between word-proposition and image-proposition. A word-proposition is one which is expressed in words, while an image proposition is one which consists of images; as a rule, a word-proposition directly means an image-proposition, whereas an image-proposition directly refers to an objective (i.e., the fact which makes the belief true or false).

In the present article, Russell does not claim that propositions as defined by him are the only things to which "true" and "false" are to be applied; and hence he cannot be said to have ignored the fact that propositions as defined here are the primary bearers of truth and falsity. However, his theory which identifies the content of a belief (in our case, of a judgment) with an image-proposition or a word-proposition does not seem convincing. Thinking or believing involves imagination, or, maybe, a speech-episode, but neither an image nor a sentence can perhaps be said to be

²⁴Russell, "On Propositions: what they are and how they mean," Logic and Knowledge.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 285, 308.

the content thereof. Thinking or believing may be done in images or words (which are concrete facts); but its content is an abstract universal, i.e., a proposition. In other words, images or words are only auxiliary to a judgment. A possible state-of-affairs may be pictured to one's mind by a corresponding image, or described to oneself by a certain sentence. We may be unable to apprehend what a possible state-of-affairs would be like without somehow visualizing it, or to express our thought to others without using some symbols (which, again, may be understood by others only by means of similar visualizing); but the state-of-affairs itself, actual or merely possible, is not the same as the image or the sentence.

Let us consider, for example, the state-of-affairs that about twenty million people were killed in the last world war. The actual state-of-affairs is terribly complex, too complex for our limited powers of imagination; perhaps no single image can possibly picture it, either precisely or sufficiently elaborately, to our mind. It is because of this (and also for other reasons, which may be briefly indicated later on²⁶) that there are grave difficulties in-

²⁶Infra, ch. iv, sec. ii.

volved in identifying a proposition with an image or a sentence -- difficulties that relate particularly to a precise account of the correspondence relation.

CHAPTER III

FACT: THE OBJECT-TERM OF THE CORRESPONDENCE RELATION

I. The Problem

If truth is a relation of correspondence, and if the subject-term of this relation is a proposition or a sentence, the question now is: What is the other term? In other words, what is the y in the y-sphere to which a true proposition or a true sentence corresponds?

It seems to be a common practice among the correspondence theorists to describe y as a fact. Of course, the word "fact" is not always used. Thus, for example, Russel uses a generic word, namely, "verifier," to name the object-term that corresponds either to a true or to a false proposition,¹ and a specific word, namely, "fact," to name the object-term that corresponds only to a true proposition.² Schlick talks both of agreement with reality and agreement with a fact. Austin uses not only "fact," but also "historic situation"; and so on. But whatever word they may use, they seem to mean

¹Russell, Inquiry, p. 291.

²Idem, Outline, p. 273.

the same thing, viz., "a real situation or an actual state-of-affairs."

The important thing, however, seems to be, not how we name the object-term, but the realisation that there must be such a term, and that a proposition must in some sense correspond to it, if the same is to be true. This is important, because, presumably, it is here that the correspondence theory fundamentally differs from other theories -- especially, from the coherence theory. Instead of talking of "correspondence," we may as well talk of "agreement," and agreement is possible either with a fact or with a proposition (or a set of propositions). But while the coherence theory defines the truth of a proposition as its agreement with the whole body of propositions, the correspondence theory defines truth as agreement with a fact or existing state-of-affairs which is supposed to be absolutely other than a proposition.

But what is, after all, a fact? It is not perhaps enough to say that a fact is the same as a real situation or an existing state-of-affairs. It is not enough mainly because the word "fact" is not unambiguous. It may be remarked -- and this is expected to be clear as the discussion proceeds -- that the ambiguity of the word "fact" is indeed responsible for a considerable part of the confusion and

controversy over the soundness of the correspondence theory. Some have gone as far as to reject the correspondence theory altogether, apparently because they have taken the word "fact" in a certain sense, ignoring its other senses. Defining "fact" thus seems to constitute a very important step in an exposition of the correspondence theory. How, then, to define the word?

II. The Nature of a Fact

1. Two senses of the word "fact." "Fact" originally meant a deed or an act, and is now used at least in four different senses. Two of them, in the current use of the word, seem to be fundamental, and most relevant to the present discussion. These senses may be described as its "propositional" and "non-propositional" senses. In the former sense, a fact is the same as a true proposition (or a true statement). "We note," says Austin, "that when a detective says "Let's look at the facts" he doesn't crawl round the carpet, but proceeds to utter a string of statements...."³ That "fact," in one sense, is synonymous with "truth" or "true statement" is a common dictionary listing. In this

³Austin, Philosophical Papers, p. 91.

sense, to say

"It is a fact that the earth is round"

is to say

"It is true (or a true proposition) that the earth
is round."

In the latter sense, however, "fact" means not a true proposition but what a true proposition is about, or what makes a true proposition true. In this sense, a fact is nothing judgmental or ideal; it is neither a statement nor a proposition, but something of an altogether different kind. It is not the bearer of truth-values, but the objective condition of a proposition's being true or false. In this sense of "fact," to say

"It is a fact that the earth is round"

is to say

"The earth's being round is an actual state-of-
affairs (or a real situation in the world)."

While a proposition is (sometimes) about a fact, a fact, in this sense, is not about anything. In brief, a fact in the non-propositional sense is what a fact in the propositional sense is about.⁴

⁴This meaning of fact in the non-propositional sense is perhaps clearly indicated in the Webster's New Inter-

Now when the correspondence theorist presents a fact as the object-term of the correspondence relation, he takes the word "fact" in the non-propositional sense. Russell observes:

... the truth or falsehood of a belief always depend upon something which lies outside the belief itself. If I believe that Charles I died on the scaffold, I believe truly, not because of any intrinsic quality of the belief, but because of an historical event which happened two and a half centuries ago. If I believe that Charles I died in his bed, I believe falsely: no degree of vividness in my belief, or of care in arriving at it, prevents it from being false, again because of what happened long ago, and not because of any intrinsic property of my belief. Hence, although truth and falsehood are properties of beliefs, they are properties dependent upon the relations of the beliefs to other things, not upon any internal quality of the beliefs.⁵

Thus Russell considers it an indispensable requisite of a theory of the nature of truth to make truth or falsity of "beliefs" dependent upon something other than beliefs, which he subsequently calls "facts." To quote him again: "The third of the above requisites leads us to adopt the view --

national Dictionary (second ed.) as follows: "That which has actual existence, whether subjectively or objectively considered; any event, mental or physical; an occurrence, quality or relation, the reality of which is manifest in experience or may be inferred with certainty; more narrowly, an actual happening in time or space. Fact in its primary meaning as an object of direct experience, is distinguished from truth."

⁵Russell, Problems, p. 121.

which has on the whole been commonest among philosophers -- that truth consists in some form of correspondence between belief and fact."⁶

But, again, it is not perhaps enough to say that "p is true" means "p corresponds to a fact in the non-propositional sense of the word 'fact'." Granted that there are propositions, one may legitimately ask a correspondence theorist what he precisely means by a fact in this sense, or exactly how he will define a fact. A fact, the latter may reply, is something which is real or actual, or which is in the world. But "things," "qualities," "events," etc. are also in the world. Are they facts? We say "It is a fact that the earth is round." Do we refer to the earth, or to its round shape, or to its being round, or a complex of all these? Again, we say "It is a fact that Bertrand Russell exists." What is the fact here? Is it the individual, or his existence, or both?

2. The definition of "fact." The problems about the nature of a fact just referred to have perhaps never been considered in sufficient details. A fact is usually distinguished from a thing, or its qualities, and so on. In brief,

⁶Loc. cit.

a distinction is drawn between the "constituents" and the "substance" or "stuff" of the world, between what the world consists of and what its basic elements are. Thus, Wittgenstein said that the world consists of facts (of "all that is the case"), or is "the totality of facts," although objects make up the substance of the world, and that a fact is "a combination of objects (things)."⁷ In the same vein, Russell contends that a fact is "anything complex."⁸ He says that whether "particulars" (i.e., the particular elements of the world) are simple or not, a fact is always something complex. As he puts it:

If the world contains no simples, then whatever it contains is a fact; if it contains any simples, then facts are whatever it contains except simples. When it is raining, that is a fact; when the sun is shining, that is a fact. The distance from London to Edinburgh is a fact.⁹

Thus, according to him, a fact is anything that cannot be expressed by a single word; the full expression of a fact always involves a sentence. For example, we express or state a fact when we say that a certain thing has a property, or

⁷Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (S.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness, trans.; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 7.

⁸Russell, Logic and Knowledge, p. 285.

⁹Loc. cit.

that it has a certain relation to another thing; but the thing which has the property or the relation is not itself a fact.

Like Russell, Moore also regards facts as something different from things etc. He contends that there is a type-difference between "facts" and "things," consisting in the fact that whereas the latter can be said to exist, the former cannot. Precisely, he distinguishes between what exists and what simply is. A particular thing, such as a lion, he says, exists; but there are two kinds of things which are (i.e. have being) but do not exist. These are facts, and universals or general ideas. In order to keep this distinction clear, and also because the word "fact" is ambiguous, meaning (as he says) both what exists and what simply is, he prefers to call facts by the name "truths."¹⁰ He argues:

It is in the highest degree unnatural to say of these that they exist. No one, for instance, would think of saying that the fact that lions exist itself exists; or that the fact that $2 + 2 = 4$ exists.¹¹

Or again:

It is quite natural to say of a lion that he exists, but it does not seem natural to say that his existence

¹⁰ G.E. Moore, Some Main Problems of Philosophy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953), p. 311.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 301.

also exists, though it is natural to say that his existence is a fact or a truth.¹²

Such theories are by no means fully clear, nor have they been generally accepted. Moreover, they do not seem to be quite free from difficulties. Russell, for instance, has not clarified what he exactly means by the complexity of a fact, and in what way exactly a fact could be distinguished from a true proposition and said to be in the world. According to him, both of the expressions, "it rains" and "the distance from London to Edinburgh," express a fact; but the latter is only a phrase and not a complete sentence. In the next place, Moore seems to be of opinion that it is merely "unnatural" to say that a fact, for example, the existence of a lion, exists; he does not say that it is "illogical" or "meaningless." But unnaturalness is not a logical difficulty, which permits that in course of time general usage may make it natural to say that the existence of a lion itself exists. But then we are involved in an infinite regress: we shall have to admit that the existence of existence, or the existence of the existence of existence also exists, and so on ad infinitum. This seems puzzling, if not fantastic or even meaningless.

Nevertheless, it may be possible or even necessary

¹²Ibid., pp. 311-12.

to define "fact" along some such theory. It seems that a fact has to be different from a thing, since otherwise the distinction between "naming" or "referring," on the one hand, and "stating that" or "judging that," on the other, cannot be maintained, whereas the distinctions seem undeniable. It may be argued that we name or refer to a thing, such as a book; but we never judge or state a book, although we judge or state "that the book exists," "that the book is brown," and so on. In brief, whereas we refer to or name a thing (or a property, or a relation, and so on), we judge or state its be-ing or be-ing so and so etc. It seems difficult to give a meaning to expressions of the form "that X exists" or "that X is red" and so on, unless we admit that, in some sense, there can be be "entities" which are not just things and are complex in a sense in which things are not; and, furthermore, it may be difficult for sentences containing such expressions to be true unless there are in the world such entities.

If this is true, then such theories may have legitimately claimed that objects (i.e., things, and their properties, relations, etc.) are not the only "things" in the world. And Moore may have been quite right in pointing out that the precise respect in which facts differ from other constituents of the world is difficult to define, but easy to see.¹³

¹³Ibid., p. 296.

But what is that difference exactly? It seems that, whereas an object may be said to exist, or not to exist, a fact may be defined as whatever simply is or is the case (or an instance of "its being the case that"¹⁴). Thus taken, a fact is not any object or object-complex as such, but its existence or non-existence.¹⁵ Bertrand Russell, for example, is by himself an object; but his existence (or existing) is a fact. "Bertrand Russell" is a name, but "that he exists" expresses the fact consisting of his existence. And accordingly, the proposition, "Bertrand Russell exists," may be said to correspond to the fact consisting, not of Bertrand Russell, but his existence, and "The golden mountain does not exist" to the fact consisting of the non-existence of the golden mountain; and so on.

¹⁴Not "its not being the case that." In ordinary usage, "It is not the case" is synonymous with "It is not a fact."

¹⁵Besides the difficulties mentioned in the previous paragraph, there seems to be one special reason for which a correspondence theorist may not be willing to identify facts with objects. Let us consider the proposition, "The golden mountain does not exist." If a fact were an object as such, what would be the fact corresponding to this proposition? The possible answer that it is the world exclusive of the golden mountain may or may not work; but there is no reason to stick to it if a simpler answer is available. On the other hand, if the correspondence theorist dislikes this answer, he may have to concede that the proposition is true in virtue of the existence of no corresponding fact. Generalized, the concession is that some propositions are true in virtue of non-correspondence to a fact -- a concession he may not be willing to make.

Facts, thus defined, may be either positive or negative.

A positive fact is simply the existence, and a negative fact the non-existence, of something. Thus the existence of Bertrand Russell is a positive fact, whereas the non-existence of the golden mountain a negative fact. Again, each fact has one or more "constituents." The constituent of a fact is anything whose existence or non-existence is the fact. It is either an object or a relation (involved in an object-complex). Bertrand Russell is the constituent of the fact that he exists, the golden mountain of the fact that the golden mountain does not exist. Each constituent of a positive fact does indeed exist; otherwise the corresponding proposition could not be true. But the case with a negative fact is different. If it has only one constituent, then the corresponding proposition is true in virtue of its non-existence. If it has more than one, then at least one of the constituents must be non-existent, so that the corresponding proposition can be true. (This point will be elaborated in the next chapter.)

Now, as the present definition of "fact" shows, a fact may be said, not to exist, but merely to be in some sense. Objects exist or do not exist; but their existence or non-existence simply is or is the case. It appears that, whether there are or are not other things which could be called facts

in this sense, the existence or non-existence of objects or object-complexes is, at any rate, something which could be said simply to be in some sense, and thus called a fact in that particular sense. A man holding a book in his hand perceives it by touch; he may also perceive it by sight if he looks at it; but in doing either he may be said to "perceive," in some sense, the existence of the book as well. Again, if the book is taken away from him and destroyed in front of him, he may be said to perceive or see for himself, in some sense, the non-existence of the book. If so, then the actual existence or non-existence of something, and hence each fact, may be described as a real aspect of the world, or, in Russell's terminology, "a feature in the constitution of the world."¹⁶ In other words, a fact, thus taken, may claim to be in the world as truly as any existing object (any real thing, property etc.) and to be something quite different from chimaeras or griffins, as Moore would say.

III. Some Theories of Fact Considered

There are, however, theories of fact which are inconsistent with the one outlined above. Apparently, therefore, they constitute a serious threat to the correspondence theory,

¹⁶Russell, Logic and Knowledge, p. 285.

and it may be pertinent here to consider some of them.

1. Facts as nothing absolute. According to one of these theories, there are no facts in an absolute sense. A fact, either in its propositional or non-propositional form, is usually taken to be absolute, in the sense that it is nothing subjective, or relative to our apprehension or recognition. Thus if a proposition (including the time-element) is true, it is true because of some objective ground, and once true, it is true for all times to come. Again, if a fact as an existing situation in the world, is indeed a fact at time t, it is a fact at time t, irrespective of whether we think of or know it. It is to this use of the word "fact" that this theory seems to be objecting.

This theory has been represented by J.R. Lucas who recommends a total ban on "worshipping facts."¹⁷ The view that there are facts in an absolute sense is considered by him to be "not only false but dangerously false." Referring to the ambiguity of the word "fact," he observes that we should be "chary of making facts the cornerstone of our thinking." There are no facts in the absolute sense. Facts are only

¹⁷J.R. Lucas, "On not worshipping Facts," Philosophical Quarterly, VIII (April, 1958), No. 31, pp. 144-156.

points of agreement in a dispute; "a fact is a fact relative to a given dispute, or relative to two or more persons at a given time arguing about a given point." Thus the word "fact" is an incomplete symbol, the complete locution being "facts in respect of such and such a dispute."

In a way, the thesis of Lucas seems quite clear. He draws examples from law and history to demonstrate the relativity of facts. There is no doubt that a legal investigation, as a rule, starts with certain statements taken for granted; nor in every case can a historian possibly begin from the beginning. This is true even of philosophical thinking: usually philosophical investigations of one field start with certain propositions of some other field taken for granted. Hence, there is no disputing about this particular use of the word "fact." But there is no reason to accept certain other things that he says.

(a) Lucas claims that "fact" is one of several words whose functioning can be correctly understood "only in the context of a dialogue or dispute." This implies that the use of "fact" that he elucidates is its only correct use. This seems to be an entirely baseless claim. There is good reason to believe that "fact," in its current use, primarily means either a true statement or a real state-of-affairs (Lucas's

phrase, "factual fact," may also indicate that), and that the use which Lucas mentions is perhaps only derivative. At least there can be no disputing that "fact" has other correct uses than the one Lucas mentions.

(b) Although, according to Lucas, a fact is relative to a discourse, he does not allow anything to be a fact. "A fact," he says, "is what a disputant would concede as true if he were a reasonable man living at that time."¹⁸ Again: "Facts do not make the reasonable man, the reasonable man makes the facts. They are what the reasonable man cannot but concede."¹⁹ Thus he defines a fact in terms of a reasonable man; but it is not understood how he would define a reasonable man. He cannot possibly define a reasonable man in terms of a fact, since that would be circular. Perhaps the only plausible alternative left for him is to lay down a set of rules relating to evidence and say something like this: "A reasonable man is one who accepts a statement as a fact when it satisfies $R_1, R_2, R_3 \dots R_n$ rules of evidence." But can we define evidence without reference to facts (to what he calls factual facts)? It seems that Lucas ignores the clear

¹⁸Ibid., p. 150.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 153.

distinction between "facts" and our statements about them. Our statements about them may be relative to a discourse and always more or less doubtful, but that does not logically entail that there are no facts as such (i.e. facts as features of the real world).

Lucas does not make it clear why a reasonable man "cannot but concede" to certain statements. The only reason that he mentions is that there is much external control in their case. But perhaps by such external control in its ultimate form we usually understand correspondence to some fact in the world. If we mean anything else, we may have to give ourselves either to pure authoritarianism or downright scepticism -- alternatives, neither of which, it seems, we would be happy with.

(c) There are no absolute facts, Lucas says. By this he means that all facts are relative to a discourse and that every statement is in principle dubitable. Perhaps this is for him unnecessarily going too far; since, even if he is granted that a fact is only what is accepted as a point of agreement in a dispute, it is not inconsistent with this to think that there are certain propositions which are assumed in some dispute or other and are yet perfectly doubtless. It is not clear whether he would say that propositions relating

to sensations of the moment, or such propositions as "two plus two is equal to four," are also relative.

2. Strawson's theory. Another theory of fact seems to disallow the use of the word "fact" in the non-propositional sense, and, on that basis, reject the correspondence theory. This theory may be ascribed to Strawson and Woozley. Strawson distinguishes between what a statement is about, and what makes a statement true or false. Things, persons etc., or, in a word, objects are what a statement is about, whereas facts are what makes a statement true or false. But objects alone are in the world (and there is a type-difference between objects and facts). "The world," he says, "is the totality of things, not of facts."²⁰ Thus he distinguishes facts from objects, and also grants that a fact is "the only plausible candidate for the desired non-linguistic correlate of "statement."²¹ So far, he is in agreement with the correspondence theorist; but he very fundamentally differs when he contends that facts are nothing in the world. "Fact," he says, is wedded to "that"-clauses, like "true," "states" etc.; and "there is nothing unholy about this union. Facts are known,

²⁰Strawson, "Truth," Truth (George Pitcher, ed.), p. 40 (foot-note 6).

²¹Ibid., p. 37.

stated, learned, forgotten, overlooked, commented on, communicated or noticed. (Each of these verbs may be followed by a "that"-clause or "the fact that"-clause.) ... They are not, like things or happenings on the face of the glove, witnessed or heard or seen, broken or overturned, interrupted or prolonged, kicked, destroyed, mended or noisy."²²

This seems to make it clear that he is not taking "fact" in the non-propositional sense. But what then is a fact? He does not say either of the two things he might have said. He might have said either that a fact is the same as a true proposition, or that a fact is something like a ghost lying between a true proposition (or statement) and an existing state-of-affairs. It seems quite difficult to say what his position exactly is. But there seems to be some good reason to believe that it is the latter position that he is really getting at. According to him, a statement as the bearer of truth or falsity is non-episodic; it is not the act of stating but what is stated.²³ Such a statement, when true, corresponds to a fact. This suggests that, on his view, the relation between a proposition (what is stated) and a fact

²²Ibid., p. 38.

²³Ibid., p. 33.

is one of correspondence and not of identity, that there are two things and not one. But if there are two things, a proposition (or what is stated) and a fact, and if a fact is neither a true proposition nor anything in the world, then it is not clear how facts in this sense could be anything but philosophical ghosts. Again, Strawson describes a fact as non-linguistic and pseudo-material; but if so, it is difficult to see what exactly a fact is, if it is not the same as a true proposition.

On the other hand, one could also say that his own account of "statement" and "fact" really inclines him towards the other position, viz., that a fact is the same as a true proposition (although he need not necessarily commit himself to the same). "Facts," he says, "are what statements when true state"²⁴ Simply, a fact is what is stated, and not the episode of stating. But a statement (as the bearer of truth-values) is also, according to him, what is stated and not the episode of stating. In other words, both a fact and a true statement are, according to him, what is stated. But, if so, it is possible, though not necessary, that the two are regarded by him as identical.

If this other possible version of Strawson's view is correct, certain conclusions follow:²⁵

²⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

²⁵ Whether this version of Strawson's view is correct

First, he cannot at all talk of correspondence between a statement and a fact: the word "correspondence" is, precisely, robbed of all its meaning.

Secondly, his theory is not an answer to, but only a modification of, the question under consideration. On his theory, to say, "p is true" is but to say "p is a fact"; and our original question "What is the meaning of saying that p is true?" is not solved but only transformed into "What is the meaning of saying that p is a fact?" So long as Strawson considers this question, as he indeed (partly rightly) does, as part of the word-world relating type of discourse, it is not clear how he could answer it without invoking facts in the non-propositional sense.

Strawson, however, contends that "while we certainly say that a statement corresponds to (fits, is borne out by, agrees with) the facts, as a variant on saying that it is true, we never say that a statement corresponds to the thing, person etc., it is about."²⁶ Does he mean that there is some opposition between "corresponds to X" and "is about X" (that

or not, such conclusions will indeed follow from any theory which identifies a true proposition and a fact, and offers a fact in this sense as the objective ground of truth and falsity.

²⁶Ibid., p. 37.

is to say, that if anything corresponds to X, it cannot be about X, and conversely)? That would, presumably, be quite wrong (and this is important, because if it were absurd to talk of correspondence in the other sense, then the account of correspondence to be given in the next chapter would be impossible). First of all, there seems to be no objection to saying that a statement can, and indeed must, correspond to the X it is about, if it is to be true. This may be denied only if the expression, "corresponds" or "corresponds to a fact," is taken in a very special sense. But taking an expression in a special sense is not necessarily a disproof of a theory. Secondly, Strawson's view seems to be this: "A statement, when true, is true of something in the world, in virtue of its correspondence to a fact about that something." But while a fact in the non-propositional sense is not about a thing, but only involves a thing, and is therefore as truly in the world as the thing it involves, a fact of no other sort could perhaps be, in his words, "the only plausible candidate for the position of what (in the world) makes the statement true." It is curious that while a thing, a person etc., is the non-linguistic correlate of one part of a statement, and a quality or property the non-linguistic correlate of another part of the same statement, the non-linguistic correlate of the whole statement, so Strawson thinks, is a fact which is neither a thing nor a quality. One may be led to say this only if one is predisposed to allow

"fact" to mean nothing but a true statement or some mysterious entity.

It may be clear from this that Strawson takes the word "fact" in a peculiarly restricted sense, and makes that a ground for rejecting the correspondence theory. His argument seems to be this: "The correspondence theory needs facts as something in the world; but there are no facts in this sense; therefore, the correspondence theory must give way." This argument must be fatal, provided the premises are true.

But it all depends upon what the correspondence theorist means by "fact." He may either show that what he means by the word is not really a pseudo-entity, but an entity in the world, or redefine the word if the former procedure leads him nowhere.

(It seems curious to believe that he needs something which is virtually nothing.) At any rate, the correspondence theory does not seem to stand or fall with our use, or even with the existence or non-existence of a word, even if it is the word "fact." What matters is not how we name the object-term of the correspondence relation, but the existence and the nature of the term. And, therefore, if at least one of Strawson's arguments against the validity of the correspondence theory is that "fact" is never so used as to denote anything in the world, and if this is one of the reasons for his saying that the correspondence theory "requires, not purification, but

elimination,"²⁷ then his case does not seem to be strong enough.

3. Facts as hypostatized events. Now for a few words on Woozley. In his provisional exposition of the correspondence theory, a proposition and a fact are the two terms of the correspondence relation; but, in his final theory, the truth of a proposition means its being identical with a fact. By certain arguments he tries to show that an event cannot be the other term. For example, Mr. Attlee's broadcast on the Home Service Radio at 9.15 p.m., August 10th, 1947, is an event, but what makes the proposition about it true is the fact (that Mr. Attlee did broadcast etc., etc.) about this event. Thus, like Strawson, he also allows only an unduly restricted use of the word "fact." By a fact he means "an hypostatized event, an abstraction of what happened in an event." To quote him:

The way in which I am using 'fact' and in which it is commonly used is such that it does not make sense to ask of a fact "When did it happen?" or "Where did it happen?" The dropping of the Atom bomb on Hiroshima was an event which occurred in August 1945, but the fact did not occur then.²⁸

According to him, therefore, a fact is something non-spatial

²⁷Ibid., p. 32.

²⁸Woozley, Theory of Knowledge, p. 136.

and non-temporal, and once something is a fact, it is always a fact.

Woozley thus seems to be subject to objections similar to those raised against Strawson:

(1) If a true proposition is the same as a fact, there is no longer any point in talking about correspondence; and indeed Woozley's final version of the correspondence theory bears this out. As a matter of fact, like Strawson, he also may be said to have done little more than putting the old wine of our problem in a new bottle without advancing a real solution.

(2) In what category of entities would a fact possibly fall, according to Woozley? A fact, as the hypostasis of an event, might have been the same as a meaning; but a meaning cannot be what makes a proposition true or false. What, then, to understand by the hypostasis of an event? The event itself occurs at a certain time, and is both placeable and datable. How then could its hypostasis be out of place and time? A fact, he says, is an aspect of an event; how could an aspect exist apart from the something of which it is an aspect? His conception of a fact, and of its distinction from a thing and an event, is left obscure until these points are clarified.

IV. Conclusions

Discussions in the present chapter seem to have made three main points, as follows:

(1) The *y* or the object-term of the correspondence relation is always a fact in the non-propositional sense, i.e., in an objective and absolute sense, in which a fact is an actual state-of-affairs or real aspect of the world, logically independent of our thought and interest, an entity which is not exactly the same as an individual object but nevertheless genuinely in the world.

(2) There seems to be no genuine logical objection to believing in facts in this sense, and no justification for restricting the use of the word "fact" so as to keep it from meaning anything other than a true proposition or a ghostly something which is neither a true proposition nor a real situation in the world.

(3) We may not, if we choose, use "fact" to mean entities which are aspects or constituents of the real world, and which our propositions are about, but we cannot elucidate at least one function of the locution, "p is true," without reference to such entities. We may use some word or words to name them, but that by itself does not make any difference in our grounds for believing in them, nor in the validity of the correspondence theory, if the theory is valid at all.

CHAPTER IV

WHAT "CORRESPONDENCE" MEANS

I. The Problem

Previous discussions may have shown that both propositions and sentences should be regarded as the bearers of truth-values, though not in the same sense, and that a proposition or a sentence is true only when it corresponds to a fact (in the non-propositional sense). The purpose of the present chapter is to consider what "corresponding to a fact" exactly means. Questions relating to it divide themselves into two groups. (1) Questions in the first group concern the kind or type of the correspondence relation. What sort of relation this "corresponding to a fact" exactly is? Is it a relation of sameness or similarity? Is it a kind of picturing, or a case of mere structural homogeneity between the terms of the correspondence relation? Is it something absolute, or something purely conventional and relative? (2) Questions in the second group concern whether the structural similarity, if any, between the terms of the correspondence relation is partial or complete. Is it a case of perfect one-to-one correlation between the constitu-

ents of the terms, or between the terms as such? Again, is the correlation between the terms one-one, or one-many, or many-one, or many-many?¹

It seems that this question as to what "correspondence to a fact" exactly means has not so far been given due attention, whereas it appears to be crucial in any elucidation and vindication of the correspondence theory. However, in the course of discussions and debates on the correspondence theory -- sometimes, on the theory of truth in general, or even on some different problem -- more or less different views have been expressed, which may be regarded as theories of the correspondence relation. And it seems possible to classify or name these theories (roughly at least) for the facility of exposition. The present chapter will immediately undertake a brief consideration of these theories, which will be followed by certain general suggestions as to a possible solution of the problem in question.

II. Theories of Correspondence

1. Correspondence as unanalysable. One possible

¹The correlation is one-one if to one proposition there corresponds only one fact, and conversely; it is one-many if to one proposition there corresponds more than one fact, but not conversely; and so on.

theory of correspondence is that the correspondence relation is unique and elementary, and, therefore, unanalysable. On such a theory, it is impossible to explain correspondence in terms of anything else, or to define it except ostensively, and it is futile to raise the questions enumerated above. But there is perhaps no sufficient justification for such a theory: it seems quite possible to ask for some elucidation of the correspondence relation. It does not seem enough to say that a proposition corresponds to a fact even when the meanings of "proposition" and "fact" have been adequately explained; some explanation and clarification of what is precisely meant by the correspondence relation seems necessary. In fact, the word "correspondence" itself is not free from ambiguity. It is used in more than one sense. We talk of correspondence between two persons living apart, of correspondence between two clocks keeping the same time, of corresponding words (i.e., equivalents) of two or more languages, of a negative proposition corresponding to an affirmative one, and so on. What, then, is correspondence between a proposition (or a sentence) and a fact? This appears to be a genuine question; at least, there seems to be no clear reason to believe that it is a pseudo-question, or that correspondence is not further analysable at all.

But correspondence theorists have not always regarded this question as genuine or important. A.C. Ewing is an instance in point. He points out that one of the objections of the coherence theorists against the correspondence theory is that "no tenable account can be given of this correspondence, for, whether it is regarded as copying or as similarity in structure or as one-to-one correlation very serious difficulties arise."² In his reply to this objection, he contends:

It seems clear, however, that such criticism cannot be final, for the reason why all accounts of it involve great difficulties may be simply that the relation is unique and unanalysable. ... Our failure to define it may be simply due to the fact that it is intrinsically such as neither to require nor to admit of a definition. If any relation be unanalysable, ... such a fundamental relation as the one between a true judgment and its object is as likely to be so as any, and it seems to be radically different from any other relation of which I can think.³

Again, in his restatement of the correspondence theory "in a form which will escape the objections brought against it," he suggests:

... it will be safest to give up any attempt to explain what correspondence is in terms of any other relation,

²Ewing, Idealism: A Critical Survey (Strand; W.C.: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1934), 3rd ed., p. 195.

³Ibid., pp. 195-196.

and simply to treat the relation between a true judgment and its object as unique and unanalysable, at least till a satisfactory analysis has been found for it. We know what it is like, at least partially, in particular cases, because we know what is meant by holding true beliefs concerning some particular fact, but we are not committed to the view that it can be analysed, or, still less, to any particular analysis of it.⁴

Ewing's move in saving the correspondence theory seems to be quite a fair one, so far as it goes. If, indeed, the correspondence relation were perfectly unique and unanalysable, it would be futile on the part of the critics of the correspondence theory to argue that the theory is invalid because no further account of correspondence can be given. They would have to show, in Ewing's words, "both that the relation must be thus reducible and that it has not been reduced successfully."⁵ But the fact seems to be that, whether it satisfies the critics or not, a "further account" of correspondence can be given, that the correspondence relation can be explained in terms of something simpler. Even Ewing himself has no objection to an attempt to explain it further, nor is he trying in all that he says to show that the attempt must fail; all that he emphasizes is that "we

⁴Ibid., pp. 201-202.

⁵Ibid., p. 196.

certainly need not deny the presence of such a relation if and because it [i.e., the attempt] does fail."⁶

Brentano, however, is another instance in point. He offers a definition of truth in terms of correspondence, which is in line with Aristotle and is simple enough: "a judgment is true if it asserts of something that is, that it is, and asserts of something that is not, that it is not -- and a judgment is false if it contradicts that which is, or that which is not."⁷ "And this is all," he then observes, "there is to the correspondence of true judgment and object which we have heard so much about."⁸ He thus seems to be suggesting that it is neither necessary nor possible to elucidate the correspondence theory further than eliminating all confusions and misunderstandings about it, and that this redundancy as well as this impossibility derives from the fact that "the ultimate and the most effective means of elucidation must always consist in an appeal to the individual's intuition, from which all our general criteria are derived."⁹ He seems

⁶loc.cit.

⁷Franz Brentano, "On the Concept of Truth," Readings in the Theory of Knowledge (J.V. Canfield and F.H. Donnell, eds., New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1964), p. 275.

⁸Ibid., p. 275.

⁹Ibid., p. 278.

to believe that the notion of correspondence is as elementary as the notion of a sensible quality, since he asks:

"What would be the use of trying to elucidate the concepts of red or blue if I could not present one with something red or something blue?"¹⁰

Brentano's suggestion (as well as Ewing's) may be quite significant, if we consider the fact that the problem of analysing the correspondence relation seems, indeed, to be an extremely difficult one. And further, any analysis of the correspondence relation is likely to look (though it need not necessarily be) trivial or too naive. Yet the fact remains that philosophers have not left the problem quite unattacked, and that, if the account of the terms of correspondence relation outlined in the previous discussions is at all correct, then it may be possible to show that the correspondence relation is analysable in terms of something more elementary, namely, "correlation" between the constituents of a proposition and those of a fact. It is not therefore necessary that one should merely say, following Brentano, that to correspond means "to be adequate, to fit, to be in agreement with, to be in harmony with" etc., and leave the matter at that. In other words, it is not necessary to hold that

¹⁰Loc. cit.

while truth is explained in terms of correspondence, correspondence itself cannot be explained in terms of something simpler.

It is, of course, true that "appeal to the individual's intuition" must come into effect at some stage of the explication; the explication cannot go on ad infinitum. If correspondence were indeed explicable in terms of correlation (or whatever else), one might still ask: In what other terms could correlation itself be explained? Could it be reduced to anything more elementary? Perhaps the answer is "No"; and this seems to be the stage where there is no alternative to an appeal to intuition. It appears, therefore, that, although one is bound to halt somewhere in one's analysis of the relation between a true proposition and a fact, it is not just correspondence which is that halting-point.

2. The picture theory of correspondence. This is another possible theory of correspondence, which may be ascribed to (the early) Wittgenstein and, with some reservations, to Russell. Every meaningful and non-tautologous proposition, according to Wittgenstein, is a picture of a prototype in the real world; and it is true or false according as it pictures the prototype correctly or incorrectly. Again, Russell's exposition of the truth of what he calls

image-propositions may be brought under the picture theory insofar as an image is a mental "picture" of an actual or possible state-of-affairs. He wants to say that the elements of a true image-proposition of the form "A is to the left of B," for instance, will have a sort of one-to-one correspondence to the elements of the prototype in the world.¹¹

But the picture theory does not seem to give a true account of the correspondence relation. No doubt that an image may be called a picture in a wider sense of the word "picture," but an image is not a primary bearer of truth-values. Russell's point of one-to-one correlation between the elements of an image-proposition and those of a fact is rather of little bearing on the present problem. But, letting that alone, there does not appear to be in every case a one-to-one correlation between a fact and a corresponding image that may be called up in our mind when we think of the fact; and Russell himself admits this at least in the case of image-propositions corresponding to what he calls negative facts. In such simple cases as "A is to the left of B" there may be a perfect one-to-one correspondence between an (affirmative) image-proposition and a corresponding fact; but this

¹¹ Russell, Logic and Knowledge, pp. 315-16.

does not seem to be true of complex cases.

Whether or not the picture theory is true of images, it is, at any rate, not true of propositions and sentences. Neither a sentence nor a proposition is anything like a picture even when it perfectly corresponds to a fact. The function of a picture is iconic;¹² it is something spatial, and "represents" what is pictured only by imitating the the spatial features of the latter. And this is why a picture can represent only what is spatial, i.e., what consists of spatial elements having spatial relations. "A picture is a visual pattern and can show only what is visually accessible. A still-life of a duck cannot show the taste of the bird as it may show its markings."¹³ But, first of all, a sentence is not necessarily a spatial entity (only written sentences are so); and a proposition is never so. Secondly, even a written sentence, though by all means a spatial entity, is not a picture, but only a set of arbitrary scratches conventionally adopted for the special purpose which they serve. Hence, Daitz seems right when he tries to show (though in a different but allied context) that a picture

¹² Cf. E. Daitz, "The Picture Theory of Meaning," "Essays in Conceptual Analysis" (Antony Flew, ed.; London: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. 59.

¹³ Ibid., p. 54.

account of language, of words and sentences, is mistaken. He distinguishes between the iconic and the conventional mode of signification, and maintains that while a picture signifies iconically, a sentence does so conventionally. A sentence signifies or means something, not because it resembles or has properties in common with the latter, but because it has been a convention to use it to state the latter.

There is, however, one important consequence that follows from the fact that a sentence is not a picture. Their distinction implies that there may be some attributes which, if ascribed to a picture, cannot be ascribed to a sentence; and, indeed, there are some such attributes. For example, a picture corresponds to an original and is, as a copy of the original, either faithful or unfaithful to the latter. But since the relation between a sentence and a state-of-affairs is different from that between a copy and its original, a sentence cannot be said to be faithful or unfaithful (in the same sense). Again, if we allow that a picture can be said to be accurate or lifelike, we cannot allow the same of a sentence. This distinction may be further brought out by saying that while a picture may be said to be true to the original, a sentence may be said to be true of

a fact.¹⁴

3. The conventional theory of correspondence. This theory belongs to J.L. Austin. He defines truth in terms of correlation and two types of conventions, descriptive and demonstrative.¹⁵ A statement, according to him, is true when the historic state-of-affairs to which it is correlated by the demonstrative conventions is of a type with which the sentence used in making it is correlated by the descriptive conventions. But although he thus upholds a correspondence theory of truth, he rejects, as he puts it, the commonly-given "too restricted and too colourful a meaning" of the expression "corresponds." "The only essential point," he says, "is this: that the correlation between the words (= sentences) and the type of situation, event, etc., which is to be such that when a statement in those words is made with reference to an historic situation of that type the statement is then true, is absolutely and purely conventional."¹⁶

This theory is perhaps only partly right: right only insofar as the truth of a sentence is concerned.¹⁷ A sentence

¹⁴Cf. Austin, Philosophical Papers. p. 171.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 89-90.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁷The theory might be true of "statements" as well,

being a purely conventional device for communication, its truth or falsity must also be in some sense a matter of convention -- absolutely and purely, as Austin claims. A sentence belonging to one language is no better than a jumble of meaningless noises or scratches in the context of another; and even the same sentence of the same language, which is true at one time, may be false at another, if the relevant conventions of that language undergo a change. For example, the sentence, "The tiger is carnivorous" which is true (in English) today, may turn out to be false a hundred years hence, if, other conditions remaining the same, the English-speaking people adopt the convention of meaning by "tiger" what they now mean by "cow." It is also possible that the English-speaking people may gradually shift from English as it stands now to a language syntactically different from the former. Thus, for instance, they may utter "Catamat" in order to communicate the same thought or to make the same statement as they now do by uttering "The cat is on the mat."¹⁸

Thus, it appears that the truth of a sentence, as

if a statement were purely a matter of uttering or taking down a sentence; but, as a matter of fact, a statement is (essentially) a matter of asserting a proposition, besides being the utterance or taking down of a sentence.

¹⁸Cf. Pitcher, Truth (Introduction), p. 12.

correspondence to a fact, is conventional on at least two counts.

First, a language is a system of symbols, and the validity of any symbolic system is absolutely determined by convention (i.e., common agreement or general usage); so that the truth or falsity of a sentence belonging to a language may change along with changes in the conventions (or rules) of that language. Secondly, the meaning, or perhaps the referring-cum-descriptive function, of a sentence is also a matter of convention. And so far Austin seems quite right when he says:

There is no need whatsoever for the words used in making a true statement to 'mirror' in any way, however indirect, any feature whatsoever of the situation or event; a statement no more needs, in order to be true, to reproduce the 'multiplicity,' say, or the 'structure' or 'form' of the reality, than a word needs to be echoic or writing pictographic.¹⁹

This shows that, although a sentence (about the world) cannot be true without relation to some state-of-affairs within the world, yet its truth does not depend upon there being any structural similarity between the state-of-affairs and itself. If, for instance, there are three distinct elements in the corresponding state-of-affairs, the sentence

¹⁹Austin, Philosophical Papers, p. 93.

itself need not have three distinct parts as a necessary condition of its being true. Thus, granting that in the state-of-affairs, viz., "the cat's being on the mat," there are three elements (the cat, the mat and the relation of one of them being upon the other), "Catamat" is as true as "The cat is on the mat," provided, of course, the existing conventions replace the latter expression by the former, or bring both into vogue as synonymous. There is no logic, no law of reason, which is either for or against it; it is simply a matter of general agreement, a matter of convention, and to that extent arbitrary. It hardly makes sense (except as a matter of historical or psychological interest) to ask why people come to adopt one convention rather than another, or adopt two or more different conventions for one and the same purpose; the only questions that can be raised relate to consistency, precision, convenience, and so on.

But although the conventional theory is true of sentences, it is hardly true of propositions. Thought may be closely related to, or even inseparable from language; but still the two are different. The conventional theory would be true of propositions as well as of sentences, if the two were not different -- if, in other words, propositions also, like sentences, were purely a matter of convention. But

propositions, in the sense in which they are the same as neither sentences nor statements (in the episodic sense), have perhaps never been regarded as conventional. Nor does it seem possible to regard them as such. A proposition would be conventional, only if it were chosen and generally accepted from among an indefinite set of possible propositions capable of performing the same function, just as a sentence or even a whole language is chosen from among an indefinite set of possible sentences or languages, capable of performing the same function. But it does not seem meaningful to say that propositions are conventional in this sense. There may be conventions as to which one of a number of synonymous sentences should be used to express a proposition. For example, a language may have no sentences in the passive voice; or there might have been only "All men are mortal" and not "All human beings are mortal" in English. Again, there may be psychological or moral principles determining which propositions a person will or ought to entertain. For instance, a man who has never heard of Canada is not likely to entertain any propositions about this country; or a morally sound person is not likely to think that his neighbour is a rogue before he knows him sufficiently well. But nothing of these makes it sensible to say that a proposition is conventional. First

of all, that the expression of a proposition is conventional does not entail that what is expressed, the proposition, is itself conventional. Secondly, psychological or moral principles of the kind just indicated determine which propositions alone a person will entertain, but do not affect what a proposition as such is.

If, then, it is true that a proposition is nothing conventional, it follows that the truth or falsity of a proposition is by no means a matter of convention. More precisely, the truth or falsity of a proposition does not at all depend upon linguistic (or other) conventions or customs, but solely on objective situations in the world, which it is or purports to be about. It may be noted here that Austin is led into the conventional theory presumably because he regards a statement (in the episodic sense) as the primary bearer of truth. If the bearer of truth and falsity be nothing but an uttered (indicative) sentence, then, because a sentence has only a conventional significance, or functions according to generally accepted rules, whatever truth or falsity it (the bearer) may have must itself be a matter of convention. But if it is true to say that a proposition, and not a statement in Austin's sense, is the primary bearer of truth, then, and perhaps only then, truth retains its character as something absolute and above conventional

relativism.

4. The operational theory of correspondence. John Dewey has described his instrumental theory of truth as a form of the correspondence theory.²⁰ He equates truth with what he calls "warranted assertibility": to say that a belief is true is to say that we are justified in holding it to be true, since it satisfies certain conditions and operations of inquiry. An inquiry is set by the presence of a problem, and a proposition is "affirmed" (not "asserted" as he puts it) as a tentative solution to that problem; the proposition no longer remains a mere proposition, but achieves the status of a warranted belief (or "judgment"), when (operational or experimental) evidences show that it meets the demands of the problem. Thus, in elucidating the operational sense of correspondence, Dewey observes:

... my own view takes correspondence in the operational sense it bears in all cases except the unique epistemological case of an alleged relation between a 'subject' and an 'object'; the meaning, namely, of answering, as a key answers to conditions imposed by a lock, or as two correspondents 'answer' each other; or, in general, as a reply is an adequate answer to a question or a criticism; as, in short, a solution answers the requirements of a problem."²¹

²⁰Cf. His statement, "I hold a 'correspondence' theory of truth." Problems of Men (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946), Part III, Chap. 10, p. 343.

²¹Ibid., p. 343.

With this as the meaning of correspondence, Dewey claims that his type of theory is the only one entitled to be called a correspondence theory of truth.

But how far is this claim justified? First of all, Dewey's theory is relevant to the present examination only if it is indeed a theory of the meaning of truth (since other problems about truth fall outside the scope of the present study). But it is not clear whether the operational theory is a theory of the meaning or of the test of truth, or of both. It should be construed as a theory of the test of truth, when Dewey contrasts it with Russell's theory.²² He wants to say that Russell's theory is unacceptable, because, although it may be granted that it rightly holds that the truth of a certain type of propositions is a direct causal relationship between those propositions and certain corresponding events, "this view does not, as I see the matter, answer the question how we know that in a given case this direct relationship actually exists."²³ Dewey is here dealing with a problem which Russell (rightly) considers to be quite different from the problem of the meaning of truth; and whether his

²²Cf. Russell, Inquiry, Chap. 16.

²³Dewey, Op. cit., p. 342.

answer is right or wrong is immaterial to the present examination.

When, however, he offers warranted assertibility as "a definition of the nature of knowledge in the honorific sense according to which only true beliefs are knowledge,"²⁴ his theory should be construed as a theory of the meaning of truth, and is fully pertinent to the present examination. The question under consideration, then, splits itself up into two sub-questions: (i) Is his theory really a form of the correspondence theory at all? (ii) Is his theory the only genuine form of the correspondence theory?

The first question may seem relatively difficult to answer. Correspondence is usually taken to be a relation between a fact and a proposition as an assertion of the fact; but, in the operational theory, correspondence is treated as a relation between a proposition (as formulating a problem²⁵) and an event as an answer to the problem. But the two relations -- one between an assertion and what is asserted, and the other between a problem and its solution -- are

²⁴Dewey, op. cit., p. 332. Also cf. "That which guides us truly is true -- demonstrated capacity for such guidance is precisely what is meant by truth ..." Idem, Reconstruction in Philosophy (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), p. 156.

²⁵The proposition as a tentative solution to a problem (i.e. as a hypothesis) is now itself a problem.

perhaps quite different. While a proposition as an assertion of a possible state-of-affairs can be said to be true or false, it seems awkward to say the same of a problem. A problem can be solved, unsolved or resolved, but not true or false. Whatever else the operational theory may be, it does not appear to be a theory of the meaning of truth, even though it may really be a correspondence theory (insofar as a problem and its solution may be said to correspond to each other in a certain sense of "correspondence"). And this entails an answer to the second question. If the operational theory is not a correspondence theory of truth, it is certainly not the only genuine type of the correspondence theory.

Dewey's theory may be said to work well as a theory of the test of truth; but even then it is true only of those types of propositions which, for logical or circumstantial reasons, do not admit of direct verification. A universal proposition, formulating a general scientific hypothesis, such as "All bodies gravitate," cannot be proved by direct means; perhaps, in the final analysis, it cannot be proved at all. It is so far only a leading principle, a hypothesis which is accepted as true only insofar as it satisfies theoretic (or even sheer practical) needs, or solves theoretic problems. Again, a proposition, such as "The interior of the

earth is semi-solid," cannot be proved or disproved by direct means with the available methods of geological exploration. Its truth or falsity, therefore, can be tested only with reference to its theoretic (or practical) consequences, or, in Dewey's words, its "demonstrated capacity" for guiding us truly. But there are propositions -- e.g. immediate propositions of the senses -- the verification of which does not, presumably, involve any operation in the instrumentalist's sense. It is here that the instrumentalist theory of truth does not seem to hold water even as a theory of the test of truth.

5. The correlational theory of correspondence.

According to this theory, there is correspondence between a proposition and a fact when the two are exactly identical (i) in respect of their constituents (terms) and also (ii) in respect of the relation between their constituents. Thus correspondence means exact one-to-one correlation between a proposition and a fact. This is, roughly, the theory of Bertrand Russell who, of course, has presented his view in more than one of his writings, and in more than one form. A clear exposition of it (in one form) occurs in one of his earlier works, namely, The Problems of Philosophy, where, however, he presents beliefs and judgments as bearers of truth-

values. Thus he contends that judging or believing "is a certain complex unity of which a mind is a constituent; if the remaining constituents, taken in the order which they have in the belief, form a complex unity, then the belief is true; if not, it is false."²⁶ The other constituents are called by him object-terms, and their relation the object-relation. Now, judging or believing is itself a kind of relation, and a judgment or belief is true only when the object-terms are related by the object-relation in the same sense (or order of the relation) as they are in the judging or believing itself. To quote Russell's own example, in the belief²⁷ "Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio," Desdemona and Cassio are the object-terms, and loving, the object-relation. In the belief these object-terms are related by the object-relation in a certain sense of the relation (the relation goes from Desdemona to Cassio); and the belief would be true if and only if the object-terms would actually be related in the same sense of the relation.²⁸

There seems to be no objection to such a theory of

²⁶Russell, Problems, pp. 128-29.

²⁷Believing being taken as a relation, the subject of the present belief, Othello, is also treated by him as a constituent of the belief.

²⁸Cf. Russell, Logic and Knowledge, pp. 315-319.

correspondence so far as it goes; it is not clear how otherwise correspondence could be elucidated. But the fact remains that the correlational theory as just explained is only a half-truth: it applies only to relational propositions. It does not seem to apply at least to (i) sentences, and (ii) pure existential propositions.

That it does not apply to sentences is not perhaps very difficult to see. A sentence may or may not have distinguishable parts correlatable with the distinct elements of the corresponding fact. It may well be a single word (cf. "Catamat") and yet describe a whole complex state-of-affairs, in which case it is out of place to talk of agreement in respect of relation, or even of one-to-one correlation between constituents. Again, a pure existential proposition, simple or complex, does not necessarily assert or deny a relation. Further, when simple, it has only one constituent. Hence, in any case, there seems to be no scope for construing correspondence between a pure existential and a fact as a matter of correlation between terms in relation.

III. An Analysis of Correspondence in Terms of One-to-One Correlation

Discussions in the preceding section may have shown

that none of the existing theories of correspondence is fully satisfactory. Yet if it is true that the correspondence theory is a correct theory of truth, and also that the correspondence relation is not quite unanalysable (however difficult the analysis may be, or however trivial or naive it may look), then it must be possible, if the correspondence theory is to stand, to give a satisfactory analysis of the correspondence relation. It appears that this analysis is a task which is yet to be undertaken on a comprehensive scale.

The development of a satisfactory theory of correspondence in sufficient details is likely to be complicated by the intrusion of some other allied problems (e.g., the epistemological problem as to whether or how far experience is a genuine source of knowledge, or the metaphysical problem as to what is a thing or a property or a relation, and so on), besides those which are strictly problems of truth. But such an ambitious task is not within the scope of the present study. In the remaining part of this chapter, however, an attempt may be made to throw some light on the line (or one of the possible lines) along which such a theory may be developed.

First of all, any fully satisfactory theory of correspondence must provide for at least all kinds of primary bearers of truth-values. Hence the form of such a theory

will be determined by the theory of what these bearers are. Propositions and sentences seem to be the primary bearers of truth, of which, again, the former seem to be the more primary. If so, then a full account of the correspondence relation should refer to both. It may be noted here that this account will consist of answers to the set of questions raised at the beginning of this chapter, and that these answers may follow partly as conclusions from discussions in the preceding section.

1. Sentences. Insofar as sentences are concerned, it may be said (i) that correspondence between a sentence and a fact is fully contingent upon the conventions of the language to which the sentence belongs. Whether there is or is not a fact corresponding to a sentence cannot be determined without reference to what possible situation in the world is being meant by the sentence; and this other question can be answered only with reference to the rules (i.e., conventions) of the language to which the sentence may belong. Therefore, whether there is a fact corresponding to a sentence, and thus whether a sentence is true or false, is purely a matter of convention. (ii) Further, any such correspondence need not necessarily be a case of exactly one-to-one correlation between the elements of the sentence and those of the corresponding fact. If there is such a correlation, well and good;

but that has little bearing on the truth or falsity of the sentence. If a sentence is true, it is perfectly true, whether the correspondence is exactly one-to-one in the above sense, or one between the sentence as a whole and the fact as a whole. As a matter of fact, a sentence derives its truth or falsity entirely from the proposition it expresses;²⁹ and hence it is enough if the corresponding proposition bears such a one-to-one correspondence to the fact.

It is, of course, true that the more developed the language to which a sentence belongs, the greater the likelihood that the sentence will have distinct parts expressing the distinct constituents of the corresponding proposition (or describing the distinct constituents of the corresponding fact). Hence, objections against the correspondence theory, which bank upon the absence of a one-to-one correlation, often invent a most primitive kind of imaginary language consisting of the "Catamat"-type of sentences. Perhaps any such objection will hardly apply to sentences of any existing developed

²⁹ This however, must not imply that, because the correspondence of a proposition to a fact is non-conventional, the same must also be true of the sentence which expresses it (the proposition). That a sentence expresses a proposition itself depends upon conventions, and therefore the conventional nature of truth or falsity of a sentence cannot be disproved by such a move.

language. Of course, it is impossible to consider whether there is a one-to-one correlation between a sentence and a fact unless the rules of the language to which the sentence belongs are known. Hence, unless in the objections of the above kind the rules of the imaginary language in question are given, little can be said as to whether there is or is not one-to-one correlation, and at least to this extent such objections may be quite pointless.

2. Propositions. Propositions, however, seem to be free from all the limitations of a sentence in respect of (i) the absoluteness of correspondence and (ii) the exactness (in a sense to be explained shortly) of one-to-one correlation, if any. Perhaps not much remains to be said on the first point, besides what has been said in the preceding section. But the second point seems too demanding and apparently unconvincing. Yet an examination may reveal that it is not just as it looks.

A fact has been said to be, not an object or object-complex, but the existence or non-existence thereof, and each fact has been said to have one or more constituents.³⁰ Now, like a fact, a proposition also may be said to have constitu-

³⁰Cf. supra, pp. 69-70.

ents. Whereas the constituents of a fact are the objects or relations whose existence or non-existence constitutes the fact, the constituents of a proposition are the concepts of such objects or relations. Thus any concept contained in the first component of the complex concept of the possible state-of-affairs involved in a proposition³¹ is a constituent of that proposition. The concept of Bertrand Russell, for example, is the only constituent of the proposition, "Bertrand Russell exists"; the concept of Canada, China, wheat, and the relation of exporting between them³² are the constituents of the proposition, "Canada exports wheat to China"; and similarly with other propositions.

If this account of "fact" and "proposition" is plausible at all,³³ then truth and falsity may be explained

³¹Cf. supra, pp. 47-48.

³²This qualification seems indispensable. An idea of the general relation of exporting (or any other relation) will not yield an object-complex. The proposition asserts the existence of a particular instance of the relation. This, however, may show that the relational constituent in any object-complex cannot be taken exclusively of other constituents, and thus the object-complex constitutes a whole in which parts can be distinguished but not separated. This may also show that there must be a limit to the analysis of the correspondence relation in terms of one-to-one correlation.

³³If not, that may throw doubt on the present exposition of the correspondence theory, though not necessarily on the validity of the theory itself. It may be correct to say that the theory need not be bound up with any particular

as follows. First of all, an affirmative proposition is true when there is a positive fact corresponding to it; similarly, a negative proposition is true when there is a negative fact corresponding to it; and furthermore, the correlation between a proposition and a fact (each taken as a whole) is one-to-one. This principle may be illustrated very simply. A positive fact is the existence, whereas a negative fact is the non-existence of something. Thus the proposition, "Bertrand Russell exists," is true in virtue of the corresponding fact, namely, the existence of Bertrand Russell. Similarly, the proposition, "The golden mountain does not exist," is true in virtue of the non-existence of the golden mountain; and so on. There seems to be no other fact which could make this proposition true, or no other proposition which could be true in virtue of the presence of this fact.

In the next place, correspondence may be said to obtain primarily (i) either between propositional and existing factual constituents, (ii) or, between a fact and its concept involved in the corresponding proposition, and derivatively, between a fact and a proposition as a whole. "(i)" is true of an affirmative, and "(ii)" of a negative proposition. Let us

definition of its terms.

first consider the case of affirmative propositions -- the proposition, "Bertrand Russell exists," for instance. If there does indeed exist the factual constituent (namely, Bertrand Russell) correlatable with the corresponding propositional constituent, then, trivially, there is the existence of this factual constituent corresponding to his concept involved in the proposition. And if his existence is indeed the case, then (trivially again) there is correspondence between its "being the case" and the assertion-element of the proposition.³⁴

The matter seems to be a little more complicated in the case of negative propositions. There is, for example, no existing factual constituent corresponding to the (only) constituent of the proposition, "The golden mountain does not exist." Hence no one-to-one correlation between propositional and existing factual constituents (which is invariably present in the case of affirmative propositions) is present in this case. But this very non-existence of the factual constituent is the fact in this case, and this (non-existence) corresponds to its concept involved in the proposition. And again, this non-existence's "being the case"

³⁴"Russell exists" = "Russell's existence is the case."

corresponds to the assertion-element in the proposition.³⁵

Finally, whether there is correspondence between a proposition and a fact depends upon the nature of the correspondence between their constituents. Thus:

1. An affirmative proposition is true if and only if there exists a factual constituent corresponding to each propositional constituent.
2. A negative proposition is true if and only if there is no existing factual constituent corresponding to at least (and any) one of the propositional constituents; it being irrelevant to its truth or falsity whether there exist factual constituents corresponding to the remaining propositional constituents, if any.

Principle 1

An affirmative proposition asserts the existence of a factual constituent corresponding to each one of its constituents. Hence it cannot be true unless the number of existing factual constituents is the same as the number of its (propositional) constituents. But this numerical agree-

³⁵If this is true, then all that is necessary in verifying a proposition is to ensure (i) in the case of an affirmative proposition, that there is such one-to-one correlation between the two sets of constituents, and (ii) in the case of a negative proposition, that there is no

ment or identity is not enough; there must be qualitative identity as well. Propositional constituents and existing factual constituents are so fundamentally different that there cannot be qualitative identity between them in the sense in which two books, or even pleasure and pain, for example, can be said to be qualitatively identical. (Two books are qualitatively identical insofar as both of them are books, and pleasure and pain at least insofar as both of them are possible states in living beings.) There is qualitative identity between a propositional and a corresponding existing factual constituent when the latter is the same object as the one whose concept is the corresponding propositional constituent. Thus, for example, the existence of Mr. L.B. Johnson will not render the proposition, "Bertrand Russell exists," true; it is Bertrand Russell himself who must exist if the proposition is to be true. In other words, if the propositional constituent is the Russell-concept, the corresponding existing factual constituent must be the Russell-object; otherwise there is no constitutential correspondence, and the proposition is false.

such correlation between at least one propositional and one factual constituent. This point, however, may be clearer in what follows.

Principle 2

This principle shows that there is much difference between affirmative and negative propositions with respect to the nature of correspondence between constituents. A negative proposition (as also an affirmative proposition) may be said to be simple when it has only one constituent, complex when more. When simple, its truth demands that there should be no qualitatively identical existing factual constituent corresponding to the propositional constituent. When such a factual constituent does not exist, the resulting fact, which is the non-existence of the factual constituent whose concept is the corresponding propositional constituent, renders the proposition true.

The truth or falsity of a complex negative proposition is determined in a similar, but not exactly the same way. The non-existence of a single qualitatively identical factual constituent is enough to make the proposition true; otherwise, i.e., if all the qualitatively identical factual constituents exist, the proposition will be false. For example, "Canada does not export rice to China" will be true if (i) there is no country like Canada or China, or nothing like rice, or (ii) in spite of the existence of all these three, there is no relation of exporting having this particular

"sense" and connecting all of them.³⁶ It may be apparent from this that, once one factual constituent is found to be non-existent, it is irrelevant to the matter whether the remaining factual constituents exist or not. If they do not exist, that will not make the proposition "truer"; if they do, that will not make the proposition false. The reason is that a complex negative proposition asserts the non-existence of a certain object-complex, and the non-existence of a single factual constituent entails the non-existence of the object-complex as a whole.³⁷

This may have shown that affirmative and negative propositions constitute two fundamentally different kinds, and the analysis of correspondence in terms of one-to-one correlation is quite different in the two cases. Whereas, in the case of the former, truth depends upon the presence of qualitatively as well as numerically exact one-to-one correlation between the propositional and the (existing) factual constituents, in the case of the latter, truth depends upon the absence of one-to-one correlation in this sense.

³⁶The sense of a relation simply means the direction(s) in which the relation goes. China might instead export rice to Canada, but then the sense of the relation would be different, and the proposition would not be true.

³⁷Cf. $(\neg p \vee \neg q) \equiv \neg (p \cdot q)$.

This difference between the two cases may be further clarified by entering into some details. Let us consider the propositions, "The earth is round," and "The earth is not flat," and take up the first one first. A plausible suggestion would be to construe this proposition as asserting the existence of "the round earth," and thus to regard it as identical with the proposition, "The round earth exists." If this suggestion is accepted, correspondence in this case may be said to obtain between a single propositional constituent, namely, the concept of the round earth, and a single existing factual constituent, viz., the actual body, the round earth. But it might be argued that the two propositions are, as a matter of fact, different; that the former is complex in a way the latter is not. If this is true, then the proposition may be taken to have, not one, but three constituents -- the concept of the earth, the concept of round shape, and the concept of a relation (between the two) which might be called "the relation of having the property of."³⁸ And if so,

³⁸This may create trouble. Usually a proposition of this kind is treated as "subject-predicate" and distinguished from a "relational" proposition such as "Canada exports wheat to China." The two indeed seem to be different in some important respect. But this difference may be maintained by bringing in the distinction between internal and external relation, and regarding the relation of "having the property of" (or, conversely, of "being the property of") as internal. On the one hand, there may not be any serious objection to this move insofar as the present analysis is concerned. On

correspondence in this case may be shown to be an instance of one-to-one correlation between three propositional and three existing factual constituents.

The case with the other proposition is different. Three constituents of this proposition are: the concept of the earth, the concept of flat shape, and, again, the concept of the relation (between them) of "having the property of." What makes the proposition true is the non-existence of the property of flat shape in the earth. In other words, its truth depends upon the absence of one-to-one correlation between the propositional and the existing factual constituents.

IV. Some Possible Objections

1. The first objection. It might be argued that the foregoing analysis of correspondence between a fact and a negative proposition is, in a sense, arbitrary and inadequate. In the case of "The earth is not flat," for example, the corresponding fact is not the non-existence, but the existence of an object-complex, viz., the one consisting of the earth, "round shape," and the relation between them of "having the

the other, if this proposition is indeed complex, it must have at least three constituents one of which will be a relation, since two unrelated objects cannot form a complex.

property of"; and this other object-complex is precisely the opposite of the one whose existence would make the proposition false.

This objection might be fatal to the present theory if "fact" were taken to denote only the existence of something and never its non-existence. But there seems to be no good reason to limit the denotation of the word in that way (provided the general approach to its definition, which has been adopted here, is agreed upon). It may be said that the earth is not flat, because it is round; but it may equally be said that it is round, because it is not flat. In verifying the proposition, "The earth is not flat," it may be unnecessary to know that it is round, or what shape it is of, but simply to determine by some means that it is not flat.

2. The second objection. It might be argued, in the next place, that, although it has already been asserted that correspondence between a proposition and a fact (unlike that between a sentence and a fact) is absolute and exact, these examples suggest that, as a matter of fact, it is only relative and approximate. This relativity may not spring from the conventional nature of language, since a proposition

is not a linguistic entity; but it seems that any ordinary enumeration of constituents, of a fact or a proposition, is relative to our interest and perspective in a given case.

It might be said in reply that this relativity of enumeration seems undeniable; but the fact remains that it does not, in the final analysis, affect the absoluteness and exactness of correspondence. That the enumeration of constituents is relative may not be difficult to see. For instance, in one of the above examples, "wheat" has been taken to be one constituent; but it is understood that Canada does not export a single grain of wheat. The fact is that the unity of a constituent is logical rather than ontological or physical, and that, because it is logical, it can be adjusted according to the requirements of analysis in a given case. The same thing may be treated as one, or two, or many according to our purpose or convenience. If this were not so, the above analysis of correspondence (in terms of numerical and qualitative exactness) could hardly be justified.

But it seems that this relativity does not rob correspondence of its absoluteness and exactness; and that is because whether there is correspondence or not depends upon what we intend or mean when we entertain a proposition or make a statement, and there seems to be no relativity about

intend-ing or mean-ing in a sense which might conflict with the absoluteness in question.³⁹ If, for example, in entertaining the proposition, "Canada exports wheat to China," we mean "four" things (of a certain description), and if there are indeed these four things in the world, then, as it seems, the correspondence is, ipso facto, absolute and exact. An object or object-complex may be physically inseparable from another, or the complex objective situation may contain an irrelevant extra over and above the object-complex meant; but so long as these four "things" are there in the situation, and only these four "things" are meant, the absoluteness and exactness of correspondence are perhaps beyond question.

And it is because of the same reason that the correspondence theory is, presumably, above the traditional controversy between idealism and realism (or any similar controversy). In claiming, for example, that the proposition, "The earth is round," is true because there is a fact corresponding to it, we may mean by an existing factual constituent,

³⁹"The train is coming." We may mean that just one thing is coming, (the train as a totality), or a few things (the engine, and, say, ten cars attached to it). Perhaps there is relativity in mean-ing in this sense. But this does not seem to affect the absoluteness of correspondence in the intended sense.

roughly speaking, (a) either an actual or possible datum of experience, or a set of such data, (b) or a substratum in addition to such datum or data. But this duality of what we may possibly mean does not seem to affect the possibility of the absoluteness and exactness of correspondence, but only the possibility of verifying whether the correspondence in question is really there. It may be that, if we mean (b), no direct verification is possible; but that, again, does not seem to entail that correspondence itself is impossible.⁴⁰

⁴⁰Unless the word, "substratum," is absolutely meaningless -- in which case, of course, the whole proposition or statement will be nonsensical and not merely false.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study of the correspondence theory of truth has been of a limited scope. It has not been concerned with all the problems that may be raised in connection with the theory. It has simply tried to present a positive, constructive account of the theory, showing, partly as a digression, that certain counter-theories questioning the soundness or the very possibility of the theory are not well-founded.

Chapter I presents a statement of the basic tenet of the correspondence theory, and tries to show that there is some good reason to accept it. The basic tenet of the theory is (i) that it is a theory of the meaning (and not of the test) of truth; and (ii) that this meaning of truth is that to say that a proposition is true is to say that it corresponds to a fact. An examination of this leads back, as a prerequisite, to a consideration of three different theories as to the use of truth-value expressions, viz., the redundancy theory, the performatory theory, and the classical theory. The first theory has been advanced by Ramsey and

Ayer, and the second by Strawson; and both of them have been found to be unsatisfactory. Analysis shows, on the one hand, that truth-value expressions are not always redundant, and, on the other, that the performatory theory may elucidate some particular use of truth-value expressions, but not all uses of them. This automatically lends support to the third theory which is the position of the correspondence theorist. According to this theory, truth-value expressions are primarily used, not to talk about the world, but to talk about our talk about the world. In other words, these expressions are meta-linguistic, and cannot, therefore, be redundant.

Finally, it has been shown that, if it is admitted (and there is good reason to do that) that there is a real distinction between the definition and the test of truth, the same thing cannot be said to be both. Thus, on the one hand, "correspondence to a fact" cannot be made both the definition and the test of truth; on the other, if "correspondence to a fact" is made the test of truth, nothing else remains to be its definition.

Chapter II introduces the basic task in any construction of the correspondence theory. It is argued that, for correspondence to be possible at all, there must be at least two terms between which correspondence is to hold. Hence

a correspondence theory of truth must clearly indicate what these terms are. Some liberty has been taken to call them the subject-term and the object-term. The subject-term is the bearer of truth-values, that to which the adjectives, "true" and "false," are applied. An examination of various theories as to the primary bearer of truth-values has led to a conclusion in favour of propositions. By a proposition has been meant, neither an abstract entity like Meinong's subsistents, nor a possible state-of-affairs, but the abstract "thought-content" of a judgment (i.e., act of judging). A distinction has been drawn between a proposition and a sentence; and the latter too has been recognised as a bearer of truth-values, though only in a derivative sense. Russell's class of image-propositions has been rejected as a class of bearers of truth-values.

In Chapter III, the object-term of the correspondence relation has been identified as a fact. A distinction has been made between the propositional and the non-propositional sense of "fact," and a fact as the object-term of the correspondence relation has been identified with a fact in the latter sense. A fact in the propositional sense is nothing but a true proposition; it is something abstract, devoid of spatio-temporal properties, and is, by no means, an aspect

or feature of the real world. On the contrary, a fact in the other sense is properly within the world. It is an "aspect" of the world as truly as things (and their properties and relations) are, although the latter can be said to exist, whereas a fact simply is in some sense. A fact, thus taken, has been identified, not with things as such, but with their existence or non-existence.

In the latter part of the chapter, some theories of "fact" have been criticised and found to be unsatisfactory in themselves, or unworthy as a ground for rejecting the correspondence theory. These are the theories of J.R. Lucas, Strawson and Woozley. Lucas denies the existence of facts in an absolute sense, but his arguments to that effect are not convincing. In the next place, it is not prima facie clear what Strawson's view exactly is. Analysis, however, seems to show that he takes the word "fact" in neither of the two senses distinguished in Chapter II, but means by a fact some ghostly entity. It has been argued that not only (i) is he thereby using the word "fact" in a special sense, but also (ii) this, by no means, is giving him a good case for rejecting the correspondence theory. Finally, Woozley's view of fact is similar to that of Strawson, and is subject to similar criticisms.

Chapter IV deals with the next important task of the correspondence theorist, viz., the task of explaining what "correspondence" between a proposition and a fact exactly means. Different views have been expressed on this problem, but none of them seems fully adequate. First of all, it is not true that the correspondence relation is not further analysable; but it is also not true that it is analogous to the relation between a picture and what is pictured, or that between a problem and its solution. Thus, the picture theory of the early Wittgenstein as well as the instrumentalism of John Dewey has been rejected. Moreover, Austin's conventional theory of correspondence also has been found to be only partly true -- true of sentences, but not of propositions.

The constructive, alternative theory that has been suggested is in line with Russell's relational view of correspondence. First of all, there are two kinds of propositions: affirmative and negative. Facts also are of two kinds: positive and negative. A positive fact is the existence, while a negative fact is the non-existence, of something. It has been argued that there is a one-to-one correlation between propositions and facts, each taken as a whole. To each true affirmative proposition corresponds a positive fact; and to each negative proposition corresponds a negative fact;

and thus there is only one fact corresponding to one proposition, and conversely.

Secondly, there is a good deal of difference between an affirmative and a negative proposition with respect to the way a fact corresponds to them. In the case of the former, there must be an existing "factual constituent" corresponding to each "propositional constituent"; whereas, in the case of the latter, there must be at least one propositional constituent to which no existing factual constituent corresponds. Thus the truth of only affirmative propositions is explicable in terms of one-to-one correlation between propositional and existing factual constituents.

Finally, it has been argued that, although both propositions and sentences are bearers of truth-values, there is a fundamental difference between them. Whether there is or is not a fact corresponding to a sentence, or whether there is or is not a one-to-one correlation between the constituents of a fact and the components of a sentence, will ultimately depend upon the standing "rules" of the language to which the sentence belongs. But the rules of a language are a matter of convention, and hence correspondence (or correlation) in the case of a sentence cannot be absolute. A proposition, on the contrary, is free from this limitation.

This brief survey of the four chapters, however, may have made it clear that the present exposition of the correspondence theory is by no means a complete one. A complete exposition should take account of certain other problems, and two of these problems are:

(1) How does the correspondence theory (or does it) apply to all different types of propositions, simple or compound, analytic or synthetic, and so on?

(2) How to defend the theory against the grave objections that have been raised against it, particularly by the coherence and the pragmatist theories?

Whether or not there are other problems, these, at any rate, seem to be of great importance and deserve an elaborate treatment which is, of course, beyond the scope of the present study. It may be observed, however, that the correspondence theory seems to be applicable, without exception, to all factual propositions. So long as the words, "proposition" and "fact," are taken in the sense in which they have been taken here, and so long as a proposition is, directly or indirectly, about the world, it appears that the correspondence theory holds good of all simple (factual) propositions. And if so, it may necessarily hold good of all compounds consisting of simple propositions of this type.

As to the other problem, it may be noted in a summary way that the most formidable attack on the correspondence theory seems to be that the theory "is forced to choose between scepticism and self-contradiction."¹ The contention is that we can know a fact either directly or through the medium of a judgment; but if we know by the medium of a judgment, the fact as such ever remains unknown, and hence no comparison between a judgment and a fact is logically possible; and if we know directly, there is no judgment to be compared with the fact. In the first case, we end up in a sort of scepticism (or an infinite regress of judgments, trying to catch hold of the fact but ever catching hold of another judgment and never the fact as such); in the latter case, the correspondence theory ends up in a self-contradiction, since a direct grasp of the fact implies the non-existence of one term of correspondence, namely, the judgment.

The real pivot of the argument seems to be that so long as we approach a fact through a judgment (or a proposition or an idea), no contact with the fact as such is possible. In other words, we cannot have both a judgment and a fact at

¹B. Blanshard, The Nature of Thought (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1939), II, p. 269.

the same time. The point to be made in stating this argument, however, is not that this argument is irrefutable (which it does not seem to be), but simply that if this or any such argument were really irrefutable, the correspondence theory would indeed have to give way. This is not because the theory, in that case, would be impracticable, since practical consequences have nothing to do with the logical validity of a theory, but because a theory which involves either an infinite regress or a self-contradiction must be unsatisfactory.

Finally, it may be observed in passing that a defence of the correspondence theory, which the present essay partly claims to be, is not necessarily an opposition to every other theory of truth. It is, of course, evident that since the correspondence theory is a theory of the meaning of truth, any other theory claiming to be a theory of the same, must be rejected by the correspondence theorist. But it seems that the correspondence theory is not and cannot be a theory of the test of truth (so long as a distinction between the meaning and the test of truth is consistently maintained), and that a correspondence theorist may and must accept some other theory as a theory of the test of truth. It thus appears that the correspondence theory need not conflict with other theories of truth if they are properly formulated, i.e., formulated as theories of the test of truth. And indeed there

are correspondence theorists (e.g., Bertrand Russell and A.C. Ewing) who, more or less avowedly, associate themselves with other theories, so far as the question of the test of truth is concerned.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acton, H.B., "The Correspondence Theory of Truth," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XXXV (1934-35), 177-94.
- Austin, J.L., "Truth" and "Unfair to Facts," Philosophical Papers. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1961.
- Ayer, A.J., "The Criterion of Truth." Philosophy and Analysis. M. Macdonald, editor; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954.
- , Language, Truth and Logic, Chap. 5. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1935.
- Baylis, C.A., "Facts, Propositions, Exemplification and Truth," Mind, LVII (October, 1948), 459-479.
- Brentano, F., "On the Concept of Truth." Readings in the Theory of Knowledge. J.V. Canfield and F.H. Donnell, editors; New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964.
- Cousin, D.R., "Truth," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XXIV (Supp., 1950), 157-72.
- Daitz, E., "The Picture Theory of Meaning." Essays in Conceptual Analysis. Antony Flew, editor; London: The Macmillan Co., 1966.
- Dewey, J., Problems of Men, Part III, Chap. 10. New York: Philosophical Library, 1946.
- Ewing, A.C., The Fundamental Questions of Philosophy, Chap. 3. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1951.
- , Idealism: A Critical Survey, Chap. 5, Sec. 1. Strand, W.C.: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1934.
- Gale, R.M., "Propositions, Judgments, Sentences, and Statements." Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, VI, 495-505. Paul Edwards, editor; New York: The Macmillan Company and The Free Press, 1967.

- Hamlyn, D.W., "The Correspondence Theory of Truth." Philosophical Quarterly, XII (July, 1962), 193-205.
- Herbst, P., "The Nature of Facts." Essays in Conceptual Analysis. Antony Flew, editor; London: The Macmillan Company, 1966.
- Joachim, H.H., The Nature of Truth. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1906.
- Lucas, J.R., "On Not Worshipping Facts," Philosophical Quarterly, VIII (April, 1958), 144-156.
- Moore, G.E., "Facts and Propositions," Philosophical Papers. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959.
- , Some Main Problems of Philosophy, Chaps. 3, 14-15 and 17. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953.
- Pitcher, G., editor, Truth. Contemporary Perspectives in Philosophy Series. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964.
- Ramsey, F.P., Foundations of Mathematics, Chap. 6. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1931.
- Russell, B., The Problems of Philosophy, Chap. 12. London: Oxford University Press, 1912.
- , An Outline of Philosophy, Chap. 24. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1927.
- , "On Propositions: what they are and how they mean," Logic and Knowledge. R.C. Marsh, editor; London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956.
- Ryle, G., "Are There Propositions?," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XXX (1929-30), 91-126.
- Schlick, M., "Facts and Propositions." Philosophy and Analysis. M. Macdonald, editor; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954.
- Sellars, W., "Truth and 'Correspondence'," Journal of Philosophy, LIX (January, 1962), 29-56.

Sørensen, H.S., "An Analysis of 'To Be' and 'To Be True':
A Linguist's Approach to the Problem," Analysis,
XIX (June, 1959), 121-131.

Strawson, P.F., "Truth." Meaning and Knowledge: Systematic
Readings in Epistemology. E. Nagel and R.B. Brandt,
editors; New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.,
1965.

Wittgenstein, L., Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. D.F. Pears
and B.F. McGuinness, trans.; London: Routledge
and Kegan Paul, 1961.

Woozley, A.D., Theory of Knowledge: An Introduction,
Chaps. 5-6. London: Hutchinson & Company, Ltd.,
1949.