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LOGICAL SUBJECTS

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INTRODUCTION

The major concern of this essay is the subject/predicate analysis of propositions.

When I say "the subject/predicate analysis" I do not assume (what is false) that there is just one such analysis; rather, I assume that there is one version of this analysis widely current in contemporary philosophy. It is the analysis of singular propositions into referring components and non-referring components. This conception of the subject/predicate distinction is exceptionally imprecise, but is not completely uninformative. We do have a rough idea of what it is to refer to something and an intuitive conception of which propositional components we use as devices of reference and which ones we do not. And this gives us an embryonic conception of what the subject/predicate analysis looks like.

For the most part I will be working from this intuitive starting point (which does not, of course, rule out the drawing of counter-intuitive conclusions). And since this conception of the analysis is the received one in contemporary philosophy, my argument may be said to have a built-in conservative bias (which will make any radical conclusions all the more interesting). My major concern will be with singular propositions, that is, with those propositions to which the above conception seems to apply fairly straightforwardly. I share the common assumption that it is in terms of an analysis of singular propositions that we must turn to the analysis of general propositions, i.e. that the former are logically or analytically prior to the latter.

My first chapter will be concerned with Frege, and forms an exception to the above statement of methodological stance. For, while generally I assume that the notion of reference and the notion of a logical subject go together, this assumption would clearly be out of place in a discussion of Frege, who argued or assumed that the notion of reference applies equally to the two
components of his analysis. And, since his analysis (into 'proper name' and 'concept expression') is clearly in the same line of business as the subject/predicate analysis with which I am concerned, Chapter I is a convenient place to consider, and, hopefully, to reject, his alternative conception of that analysis.

In the following chapters I deal with definite descriptions (roughly, expressions of the form "the so and so"), proper names, and indexical expressions, all of which are, on an intuitive conception, 'referring expressions' and thus prima facie candidates for the role of logical subjects of those propositions in which they occur. It will not, I think, spoil any surprise endings if I say now that definite descriptions fail, and proper names and indexical expressions pass, the tests for successful candidature. The notion of identity raises its head in the chapter on proper names, and some of the issues are discussed in the next chapter which is devoted solely to that topic. In the final chapter, I combine a consideration of indexical reference with an attempt to draw some conclusions from what has gone before. I do not, however, place very much importance on these conclusions. What is more important is the question of how one (or I) would continue the line of argument and inquiry which forms the body of this thesis (into, e.g., the analysis of general propositions, the notion of quantification, etc.). Conclusions stated at the stage which I reach in this essay can only be promissory notes uttered in very uncertain times, and of negligible cash value.

Of the indefinitely large number of caveats which I might offer at this stage, one stands out. I have talked and will talk about the subject/predicate analysis of propositions.¹ There is a difficulty here in that if one conceives of propositions

¹ Except in the immediately following chapter, where I am discussing Frege. Since his terminology is important, I here pay lip-service to his view that notions of truth and falsity attach to the sentence via the 'Thought'.
(i.e. those items of which truth and falsity can be predicated) as non-linguistic items, it is hard to defend the practice by which one gives linguistic items (e.g. referring expressions) as their components. In fact, I have in this essay adopted the practice without defending it; I simply assume that the sentence/proposition relationship is such that one can talk of parts of sentences as if they were propositional components. How one could justify this procedure (without adopting the view - which I think to be false - that propositions are sentences) I do not know.
CHAPTER I

FREGE: COMPLETENESS AND INCOMPLETENESS

1.1 Frege thought that the terminology of 'subject' and 'predicate' was too intimately tied to merely grammatical considerations to be useful in logical analysis; he introduced in its stead the terms "proper name" and "concept expression". While discussing Frege I will follow his terminology. Despite the difference in terminology his analysis was a direct forerunner of what we would call the subject-predicate analysis of propositions. Indeed it is in large measure due to his looking beyond grammatical considerations that we can use the subject-predicate terminology with little risk of confusion with grammatical analysis.

Frege argued that proper names and concept expressions have at least one important characteristic in common - they are both names of non-linguistic items. The difference between them lies in their mode of naming and in what they name, and this difference is such, he claimed, as to yield an absolute distinction between the two: proper names are not, nor could they be, concept expressions; concept expressions are not, nor could they be, proper names. I will argue that Frege's way of drawing the distinction is unsatisfactory; that it is obscure and, when taken seriously, viciously paradoxical. The importance of his analysis lies in its establishing a framework within which all (or most) subsequent attempts to articulate the subject-predicate distinction have worked. The analysis commences with an examination of certain singular propositions; here the proffered analysis follows - roughly - a grammatical subject-predicate model. The analysis is then extended to capture other propositions - general propositions,

1. Actually Frege - or his translators - use the term "concept-word"; I have changed this since, more often than not, the 'concept-word' consists of more than one word.
for example, being analysed in terms of the analysis of singular propositions. It is at this point that the grammatical parallel, which hovers around the analysis of singular propositions, disappears.

My discussion will also take place in the framework provided by Frege. I will be concerned primarily with the analysis of singular propositions, and will assume that general propositions can be analysed in a way derivative of the analysis of singular propositions.

1.2 Let us then take two (apparently) singular propositions and examine Frege's analysis of them:

(1) Brutus was defeated in battle.
(2) The assassin of Caesar was defeated in battle.

Frege would have given a parallel analysis of both these propositions. The 'proper name' in (1) is the grammatical proper name "Brutus"; in (2) it is the definite description "the assassin of Caesar"; the concept expression is, in both cases, "was defeated in battle". In making the assumption that grammatical proper names and definite descriptions are sufficiently alike to be grouped together as 'proper names' (in this chapter I will use the expression "proper name" to refer to Fregean proper names unless there is an explicit rider to the contrary), Frege was perhaps influenced by his use of an arithmetical model as the genesis of his analysis: if there is a distinction between proper names and definite descriptions in arithmetic (e.g. between "4" and "2+2"), it is not a well marked one. At any rate, whether or not there is an important logical distinction between ordinary (i.e. grammatical) proper names and definite descriptions is a question which will be discussed at some length later on, and I will pass over it now.

Both items in the proposed analysis are to be construed as names - proper names as the names of objects and concept expressions as the names of concepts. To every name - proper name or concept expression - there attaches a mode of naming, a property in virtue
of which the linguistic expression attaches to that item it names. This property Frege called the sense. Thus, there are three levels at which we may talk of proper names and concept expressions: the linguistic level, the level of sense, and the level of reference (of that which is named).

That which distinguishes the two components of the analysis applies at each of these three levels. Proper names are characterised by Frege as being complete or 'saturated'; concept expressions are incomplete or 'unsaturated'. This applies at the linguistic level; proper names are complete linguistic items, concept expressions are not; at the level of sense: proper names have a complete mode of naming, concept expressions do not; and at the level of reference: that which is named by a proper name - an object - is a complete non-linguistic item, whilst that which is named by a concept expression - a concept - is an incomplete non-linguistic item. The incompleteness which characterises concept expressions is, at each level, an essential incompleteness. These items are, by their very nature, incomplete. When a concept expression is completed (by a proper name) what is formed is not a completed concept, but a complete item of another kind, a declarative sentence; the completion of the sense of a concept expression yields a Thought - the sense of a declarative sentence; and the completion of a concept yields a truth-value - the reference of a declarative sentence.

Now, the notion of an essentially incomplete item is obscure and looks perilously close to being a contradiction in terms. Normally, to say something is an incomplete item of a certain kind implies the possibility of its being completed and becoming a complete item of that kind. One is tempted to ask: What else could "incomplete" mean? And Frege provides no clear answer to this question.

1.3 Indeed, he only provides a small hint at what he is trying to express with his doctrine of completeness and incompleteness.
He writes:

...not all the parts of a thought can be complete; at least one must be 'unsaturated' or predicative; otherwise they would not hold together. 2

In this one sentence, Frege brings to the surface and then submerges a question of almost overpowering obscurity. The problem—very roughly—concerns the resynthesis of what, in analysis, has been separated. We start with a complex but unitary item, a sentence or proposition, and give as analysis of it, those items which are, or are claimed to be, its proper components. But this, it seems, is not sufficient: we must also explain how it comes about that these items 'come together' in the original, unitary complex. And this is where Frege comes in with the doctrine of incompleteness: the concept expression combines with the proper name because it is 'unsaturated'—it needs the proper name. This, however, is not very helpful; the notion of 'unsaturatedness' is avowedly metaphorical and therefore useless unless filled out in more concrete terms (one might as well say that one of the components was 'sticky'). A more sympathetic reading of the notion might yield something like 'apt for propositional combination' or something of the sort; this might be a helpful insight into the nature of predication, but is circular if given as an explanation of propositional combination.

Without claiming to be very clear as to the nature of the problem which Frege seems to be unearthing here, nor, a fortiori, as to its application to the analysis of propositions, I venture one remark. In general, when we explain how 'things' come together to form other 'things' (e.g. bricks to form a wall), we do not do so by talking about the nature of the components, or not primarily.

2. Frege: "On Concept and Object" (Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege, Edited by P. Geach & M. Black (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952); hereafter cited as GB), p. 54.
We give a 'principle of construction': we say that certain things (the components) when put together in a certain way, constitute a certain sort of whole. On this model, we would expect a 'principle of construction' for propositions, and this is not what the doctrine of incompleteness provides (nor am I sure what would provide it). Or, to put the point the other way around (since at the moment we are trying to understand the doctrine of incompleteness), the claim that it accounts for the 'holding together' of concept expression and proper name, does not appear to clarify the doctrine.

The obscurity attaching to this notion is very important, because it plays a primary part in Frege's account. It is the completeness of one and the incompleteness of the other which distinguishes the two components of Frege's analysis. In the absence of any other feature to distinguish proper name (or object) from concept expression (or concept), the doctrine of completeness and incompleteness will have to serve as a criterion for the analysis into proper name (object) and concept expression (concept). So an attempt at understanding the doctrine is crucial right at the start of any examination of Frege's theory.

1.4 Attempts at understanding and clarification begin most naturally at the linguistic level for, intuitively, Frege seems to be on strong ground here. If we analyse (1) into components "Brutus" and "was defeated in battle" it is undoubted that the former looks to be complete whilst the latter looks to be incomplete. It is tempting to follow Frege and to emphasise the incompleteness of the latter expression by the use of a notation signifying that it contains a gap to be filled, e.g., "... was defeated in battle" or "( ) was defeated in battle". But this is not going to take us very far. It is hard, for instance, to see how this could provide a ground on which the analysis could be carried over into universal or existential propositions where our intuitions notoriously provide a wavering and uncertain guide. Further, and perhaps more importantly, the procedure seems arbitrary. We have to be able to say
why we should analyse the sentence in this way (and not, for example, into the components "Brutus was defeated" and "in battle") and so far we have been provided with no reason.

Frege does offer certain grammatical or linguistic criteria for his analysis, but it is dubious whether he places much importance on these. One is the claim that the sign for negation goes with the concept expression and not with the proper name. This, if conceived as a thesis about the position of the explicit sign for negation in a sentence, is trivial: the position of, say, the English word "not" in a sentence tells us very little about the analysis of propositions, or, for that matter, about negation. The important and interesting thesis that a (singular) proposition is negated by denying that its predicate applies to the subject (or, in Frege’s terminology, by asserting that an object does not fall under a concept) follows from a certain analysis of propositions; it cannot, therefore, be used as a criterion — and certainly not a grammatical criterion — for that analysis.

Amongst other grammatical criteria which Frege mentions are the claim that concept expressions take the plural construction while proper names do not, that some proper names (definite descriptions) take the definite article while concept expressions do not, and that concept expressions can appear in constructions following "all", "any", "some", etc., whilst proper names do not. I do not propose to discuss these in any detail. It is apparent that they are not watertight, that we can point to exceptions to

3. "On Concept and Object", GB, p. 48; "Further Explanations of Sense and Denotation" (Translated by M.T. Furth, and appearing as an appendix to his unpublished Ph.D. thesis On Concept and Object: Frege and a Problem of Universals (University of California, Berkeley, 1964)), p. 271
4. A fact which Frege recognises; see "Negation", GB, p. 125.
and conflicts between them. Even where they seem to apply unproblematically, an analysis such as Frege's does not follow automatically or mechanically; some interpretation, even if only at a minimal level, will usually be necessary. To employ these criteria we need some knowledge of what they are supposed to be criteria of; in the absence of such knowledge we are in no position to make the interpretation or rule out exceptions. The grammatical features to which Frege draws attention are merely clues which might suggest a certain analysis; they are not criteria on which an analysis might be based.

This is in keeping with most of Frege's thought. Certainly, he sometimes seems to exaggerate the importance of linguistic considerations by appearing to give an account of the completeness of objects and the incompleteness of concepts in terms of the linguistic completeness of proper names and incompleteness of concept expressions. But these passages are inconsistent with the general tenor of his thought which was that too close an attention to language is liable to lead the logician astray, that "languages are unreliable on logical questions" and "ordinary linguistic usage ... is generally too vague and ambiguous for the purposes of logic". It is not surprising, therefore, that even when he appears to rest most weight on the grammatical concomitants of his analysis, he makes no attempt to develop a theory to explain the concomitance or to describe the way in which they might throw light on the doctrine of completeness and incompleteness. And as they stand, they are of little help.

1.5 Another way of attempting clarification of the notions of completeness and incompleteness is via the doctrine of sense and reference. As is obvious from what I have said, I take it that

6. "Negation", GB, p. 126
11. This doctrine applies to concept expressions as well as to proper names\(^8\); I also take it to be an important one and that some understanding of it is a prerequisite of any attempt to make sense of Frege's analysis.\(^9\)

When we say that an expression has both sense and reference, it is tempting to construe the having of sense and the having of reference as two independent properties of the expression. But this would be wrong. Frege wanted to say that an expression has a reference (or fails to have a reference) by virtue of something's (or nothing's) satisfying the sense of the expression. He writes that the sense is that "wherein the mode of presentation of an object is contained"; that "to the sign there corresponds a definite sense and to that in turn a definite reference".\(^10\) A linguistic sign refers to an object (or to a concept) mediately via the sense, and not directly. Frege does not allow the possibility that an expression might have a reference but lack a sense; such a claim is, analytically, ruled out by the introduction of the notion of sense as (roughly) that by which reference is made.\(^11\)

That reference be achieved Frege held to be crucially important: "The thought loses value for us as soon as we recognise that the reference of one of its parts is missing"\(^12\); oddly, however, he never seems to have concerned himself with the way or ways in which reference is made, all of which are covered, but not explained, by the deceptively simple term "sense". He only discusses the notion at any length (at least in those of his works available in English) when he is concerned with intensional contexts.

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10. "On Sense and Reference", GB, p. 58. My emphasis in both cases.
11. It is this which I tried to capture earlier with the expression "mode of naming".
where the truth value of a proposition is not independent of the manner in which something is referred to, and which seem, therefore, to defy Leibniz's law relating to the substitution of co-referential expressions salve veritate - a law which Frege took to define the relation of identity.\textsuperscript{13}

1.6 It is important to notice that Frege took this law to hold not only for expressions which refer to objects but also for expressions which refer to concepts. Just as two proper names "a" and "b" are inter-substitutable salve veritate in extensional contexts if and only if a is b, two concept expressions "F" and "G" are similarly inter-substitutable if and only if all and only Fs are G. The truth of the identity "a=b" shows that the two proper names refer to the same object; the truth of the universal "All and only Fs are G" shows that the two concept expressions refer to the same concept.

This extensionalist view of concepts is obscured by the fact that Frege held that the identity relation, strictly, could only held between objects and not between concepts\textsuperscript{14} but that it is his view is made clear in his review of Husserl's \textit{Philosophie der Arithmetik} where he writes that "coincidence in extension is a necessary and sufficient condition for the occurrence between concepts of the relation corresponding to identity between objects"\textsuperscript{15}, and his endorsement - only qualified by worries concerning the use of the word "same" - of the thesis that "what two concept words refer to is the same if and only if the associated extensions coincide."\textsuperscript{16} It seems to me plausible to suggest that it is partly through overlooking this very important feature of Frege's thought that philosophers have been led to deny the application of

\textsuperscript{13} Foundations of Arithmetic, p.76
\textsuperscript{14} ibid, p.77 note 2.
\textsuperscript{15} GB, p.50
\textsuperscript{16} "Further Explanations of Sense and Denotation", pp.275-276.

In citing this passage, and others translated by Furth, I have changed "denotes" (and cognates) to "refers to" (and cognates).
the sense/reference doctrine to concept expressions. Once it is seen that a concept is an extensional item and that, for example, the two expressions "is a rational animal" and "is a featherless biped" refer to the same concept, it is clear that the distinction between two such expressions must be located in the realm of sense.

Unfortunately, this does not remove the immediate problem. That concepts are extensional items - that they are like the extensions of concept expressions except that they are incomplete - does not throw any light on the notion of incompleteness. We know one of the characteristics of concept expressions, but not the one we are after.

In fact, Frege disqualifies himself from giving any content to the notion of incompleteness: concepts are logically simple items and thus defy analysis; more importantly, concepts cannot strictly be talked about at all. Of this latter puzzle, which has been touched on in the preceding paragraphs, more presently.

Frege does give a comparatively clear account at one point of the conditions under which a concept expression can be said to refer to a concept. Unfortunately, this account is clear just because the notion of a concept - and with it, the notion of incompleteness - has dropped out of consideration. He writes:

A name of a first-level function of one argument has a reference ... if the proper name that results from this function name by its argument place's being filled by a proper name always has a reference if the name substituted refers to something.

That is to say, a concept expression can be said to have a

18. The Basic Laws of Arithmetic: Exposition of the System, translated by M.T. Furth (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p.84. This passage introduces views of Frege which I have ignored: that concepts form a sub-class of items called functions; that the relationship of proper name to concept is that of argument to function; and that complete sentences are (Fregean) proper names, and have as their reference a truth value.
reference if (and only if) when it is combined with a proper name, the resultant sentence has a truth-value. This eliminates talk of concepts as incomplete items, but at the cost of making the notion of a concept expression's having a reference parasitic on the proper name's having a reference, and the reference, i.e. the truth-value, of the sentence. We understand the former only insofar as we understand the latter. The concept itself drops out of consideration; the notion of incompleteness as attaching to concepts and on which the analysis is grounded drops out of consideration with it.

1.8 Frege, struggling to convey the content of the completeness/incompleteness doctrine, sometimes spoke as if the incompleteness at the level of sense were the intuitively clearer notion:

The word "unsaturated" and "predicative" seem to fit better with the sense [of a concept-expression] than with the reference; but nevertheless something must correspond to this in the case of the reference and I know no better word. 19

But further discussion of this point is prevented, at least in a strictly Fregean context, by Frege's failure to give an account of the notion of sense such that the notion of an 'unsaturated sense' is significant. Sense is introduced as 'that by which reference is made'; on any plausible interpretation of this an expression with an incomplete sense will thereby fail of reference. And this is not Frege's intention since we are assured that concept expressions do (usually) have a reference. 20

Admittedly, Frege sometimes spoke as if sense meant something more than merely 'that by which reference is made', but it is hard to see how anything more can be allowed to him. 'Meaning' is a possible candidate, but (a) it is as obscure as the term it would replace, and (b) it does not even begin to overcome the immediate problem. Concept expressions have a meaning just as much as, if not more so than, proper names. How then is their meaning incomplete...

20. A concept expression fails of reference if and only if it is not perfectly determinate for any object whatsoever whether or not it fails under the concept. A term which is radically 'open textured' (in Waismann's sense) would be liable to fail of reference in this way.
whilst that of proper names is complete? In the absence of a clear answer to this question, the notion of an incomplete meaning attaching to concept expressions must remain as opaque as the notion of incompleteness attaching to concepts and to their linguistic counterparts.

1.9 Unfortunately, opacity is not the major flaw in Frege's account. If it were one would be duty bound to pursue the point further. Frege was not a philosopher who wilfully sought obscurity, and the difficulty in giving a content to the doctrine of completeness and incompleteness may well be a consequence of the depth of the insight which Frege was trying to express. And I certainly do not want to rule out at this stage the possibility of such a deep insight. Rather, I wish to suggest that the obscurity disqualifies the doctrine from functioning as a criterion for Frege's account; that insofar as it provides the ground of the analysis its obscurity transfers directly onto the status of the analysis itself. Further, I will now argue that in the form in which Frege advances the doctrine it is not just obscure, it is paradoxical and self-refuting. The doctrine of completeness and incompleteness, as advanced by Frege, is incoherent.

The difficulty I will point to is a well known one and was indeed recognised by Frege. His theory that concept-expressions are (essentially) incomplete whilst proper names are (essentially) complete implies, and is meant to imply, an absolute distinction between proper names and concept expressions; pari passu, the theory implies, and is meant to imply, an absolute distinction between the non-linguistic correlates of proper name and concept expression, the object and the concept. But it seems that we can refer to a concept, i.e. that item which is usually referred to by a concept expression, by a Fregean proper name. And Frege must rule this out as impossible.

Take, for example, the sentence "Frege is obscure". The grammatical predicate of this sentence refers, according to Frege,
to the concept **being obscure**. Can we not then say that the concept **being obscure** is a concept? Or, if we wish to be more precise, can we not say "the concept referred to by the words 'is obscure' in the sentence 'Frege is obscure' is a concept"? It appears that we cannot, because, instead of saying something trivially true (as, e.g. "The city of Berlin is a city" is trivially true) we have said something false. For any filling, the expression "The concept φ" in the sentence "The concept φ is a concept" will refer to an object i.e. the expression is a Fregean proper name, and a sentence of this form will always be false. What is true is "The concept φ is not a concept", and this seems paradoxical.

Frege, when confronted with this difficulty, argued that a similar seemingly paradoxical result can be derived from an uncontroversial grammatical starting point:

A similar thing happens when we regard the sentence "This rose is red": The grammatical predicate "is red" belongs to the subject "this rose". Here the words "The grammatical predicate 'is red'" are not a grammatical predicate but a subject. By the very act of explicitly calling it a predicate, we deprive it of this property.21

But this does not help. Of course the whole expression "The grammatical predicate 'is red'" is not functioning as a grammatical predicate; it is rather a device for referring to a grammatical predicate. And similarly, in the sentence "'Is red' is a grammatical predicate" the expression 'Is red' is not functioning as a grammatical predicate but rather as the name of a grammatical predicate. But both sentences say something true; they refer to a grammatical predicate and say of it that it is a grammatical predicate. Any suggestion of oddity is dissolved by an appeal to the distinction between use and mention: in "The rose is red" we are using a grammatical predicate; in "'Is red' is a grammatical predicate" we are mentioning one, and there is nothing puzzling

about this. In the case of concepts however, Frege is introducing a class of items which can be used but not mentioned, and this is very odd indeed.

This might only be intuitively paradoxical (we might come to accept that "The concept $\emptyset$ is a concept" is false) but for the fact that Frege in order to introduce his analysis has to make use of just that form of sentence which he has to rule out as false. In order to characterise concepts (as incomplete, 'unsaturated', etc.) he does make use of, and indeed cannot avoid making use of, just that mode of expression which, on the very theory which he is introducing, must be eschewed. Frege is setting up a two item analysis of propositions; in order to introduce the two items and to distinguish them he has to mention them both. And what can be mentioned can be made the referent of a subject expression (of a Fregean proper name). There is no way Frege can get around this.

1.10 That a theory cannot be introduced except by the use of propositions which, on the theory's own criteria, turn out to be false is sufficient for the rejection of the theory as self-refuting. Frege tried to dismiss the difficulty as a mere "awkwardness of language" and claimed that the necessity to refer to a concept by a proper name "is only founded in the nature of our language and thus [sic] is not genuinely logical." Here he is being disingenuous. The difficulty is not a mere contingency arising in a particular language (e.g., German or English), but would arise

22. See "Function and Concept", GB, passim; "On Concept and Object", GB, passim; particularly the admission in the latter article that "It was there [i.e., in "Function and Concept"] scarcely possible to avoid the expression 'the function f(x)', although there the difficulty arose that what the expression stands for is not a function." (p.47 footnote. My emphasis.)

23. "On Concept and Object", GB, p.46. Here he is replying to a criticism by a contemporary German mathematician, Benno Kerry.

in any language with anything remotely like a subject/predicate structure, and hence in any language susceptible to Frege's analysis.\textsuperscript{25}

1.11 The doctrine of completeness and incompleteness is, then, incoherent; as it is an essential component of the Fregean analysis of propositions, that analysis collapses with it. It will be as well as this stage to see what lessons can be salvaged from the wreckage.

Frege's analysis involves five important theses:

(1) There is an absolute distinction between subject item and predicate item, i.e. between proper name/object and concept expression/concept.

(2) Both proper names and concept expressions are names i.e., there is (or ought to be) for each a corresponding non-linguistic item.

(3) The relationship between a name (proper name or concept expression) and that which is named (object or concept) is mediated by the sense of the name. Roughly, a name refers to an item by virtue of that item satisfying the sense of the name.

(4) The absolute distinction between subject item (involving the proper name, the sense of the proper name, and the object named) and the predicate item (the concept expression, its sense, and the concept) is to be articulated in terms of the former's being complete and the latter's being incomplete.

(5) That one item in the analysis is complete and the other incomplete accounts for their 'coming together' as a single unit.

\textsuperscript{25} I have not discussed any of the attempts to rescue Frege from this paradox. Those of which I know do not seem to take cognizance of the point that Frege has to use expressions like "the concept\textsuperscript{'} in the paradox generating way. Nor is the trouble to be overcome by offering Frege alternative modes of expression. As an example of both these points, see P.T. Geach in Anscombe and Geach: Three Philosophers, pp 155-156.
Thesis (1) is programmatic. By this I mean that there are (as far as I know) no good arguments for it independent of actually offering an analysis which bears it out. The onus is on anyone who asserts (1) to produce an account which demonstrates it. It is, I think, presupposed by the enterprise of the subject/predicate analysis of propositions.

Theses (2) and (3) are, very roughly, semantical theses; they concern how the two items in the Fregean analysis 'relate to the world.' Both semantical properties which Frege distinguished (having sense and having reference) apply equally to both items in the analysis. This has the consequence that the distinction claimed in thesis (1) cannot be articulated in terms of theses (2) and (3). Frege thus has recourse to thesis (4), the doctrine of completeness and incompleteness, which he applies to theses (2) and (3) in order to establish a distinction between the two items of the analysis.

What I wish to suggest at this point is that we should reject theses (2) and (3) and attempt to locate a (roughly, once again) semantical distinction between the two items; and that if we can make this move we will be freed from the obscurity and incoherence of thesis (4). This does not necessarily mean a total rejection of the doctrine of completeness and incompleteness. It may well be that an analysis based on a different starting point might enable some positive content to be given to the doctrine, and perhaps free it from the obscurity and paradox in which in Frege's exposition it is inextricably involved.26 Indeed it might even turn out that the doctrine is relevant to claim (5) - though it is clear we will have to achieve more precision as to the nature of the problem.

My point of departure is then theses (2) and (3). I will

26. I suppose the main point is that the doctrine has a certain intuitive 'rightness' which makes one reluctant to reject it completely. But our intuitions are very fallible, especially in this field.
argue that there is no good reason to construe predicate expressions as having references and that there is good reason to give an account of subject expressions in terms of the notion of reference. My thesis will be that predicate expressions have a sense but in no natural sense a reference (which means that it is necessary to free the notion of sense from that of 'mode of naming'); and that an elucidation of the role and function of those expressions which are employed referentially yields a viable characterisation of logical subjects.

1.12 The view that predicate expressions are names is usually associated with the problem of universals. Universals are postulated as the objects named by certain expressions in order to explain how these expressions have a meaning. I think that this is a mistake and that the two views are distinct. It is true that linguistic signs have a meaning and it is possible (though dubious) that this locution commits us to the existence of 'meanings' conceived in some Platonist sense; but it does not commit us to the view that the expressions are the names of 'meanings' or of universals (or of 'that-whatever-it-may-be-that-gives-them-meaning'). If they do it is by virtue of the meaning (presumably a property of the word) that they name it. However ontologically committed we are by the use of the term "meaning", we are not committed to construing the expressions as names. The problem of universals, arising as it does from considerations of meaning, is strictly irrelevant to the question under consideration.

Frege's view that concept expressions are names is based on different considerations. (Insofar as the notion of meaning is considered by Frege it is located in the realm of sense, not that of reference.) He does not, as far as I can see, provide an argument for the view, but the motivation lying behind it is fairly
obvious. He seems to have moved in the following way: Just as two proper names of the same object are inter-substitutable salve veritate in all (extensional) contexts, so too are concept expressions of the same extension intersubstitutable. Since the relationship of proper name to object is that of linguistic expression to reference, it is plausible to suggest that the relationship of concept expression to its extension is also that of linguistic expression to reference. Frege does not succumb to this temptation: "One can easily come to pass off the extension of a concept for the reference of the concept expression; but in so doing one would overlook the fact that the extensions of concepts are objects." Such a view would imply that a sentence is a mere conjunction of two proper names, one the name of an object, and the other the name of the extension of a concept (also an object on Frege's view). It overlooks the requirement that one component be 'unsaturated'. Frege's way out is to say that the reference of a concept expression is something like the extension of a concept. It has the same criteria of identity (though, of course, we can not strictly talk about identity between concepts), but it is unlike in that it is incomplete, 'unsaturated'.

27. He does argue for the view that complete sentences are names (of truth-values), and he assumes, plausibly enough, that one part of the sentence - the proper name - is a name. This might have suggested that what is named by the proper name is one component of what is named by the whole sentence; the other component being that which is named by the other component of the sentence - the concept expression. But this leads to the silly view that an object, say Caesar, is part of the True and also part of the False, since the name "Caesar" appears in both true and false sentences. And in the case of expressions for functions such as "the capital of ..." which are completed with a proper name, say "Germany" in a way exactly similar to the completion of concept expressions with proper names, the view would have the consequence that Germany (the reference of the proper name) is 'part' of Berlin (the reference of the completed expression). And this is absurd.

29. ibid, p.268.
This is an attempt on Frege's part to have his cake and eat it. If concepts and their extensions have the same criteria of identity, and the only way in which they can be distinguished from extensions is by appeal to the obscure and paradoxical notion of incompleteness, then one might as well identify them.

Of course, we must be allowed to treat predicates extensionally, but there is no good reason why we should be driven into Frege's position in order to do so. We can say that there is a class, an extension, corresponding to every genuine predicate, but this does not commit us to the view that a predicate names its corresponding class (or names anything for that matter). A predicate may be said to determine a class - i.e., the class consisting of all and only those items of which the predicate is true.\(^{30}\) Of course, just saying this is not sufficient to establish that the relationship between a predicate and its corresponding class is different to that holding between a subject expression and the item to which it refers. But it is not clear that a distinction needs to be established. There is a prima facie difference between the relationships and there seems to be no good reason available why the prima facie difference should be overthrown. Certainly, the difference may need to be made explicit, but this must await a satisfactory account of the relationship between subject expression and object, i.e., of the notion of reference. And the existence of a prima facie distinction is all that is required at this stage of the argument.

Frege, then, provides no good reason why we should accept the thesis that predicate expressions are names, albeit funny sorts of names, and I know of no good argument for the view. I will, therefore, proceed without more ado to the second and more contentious part of my programme.

\(^{30}\) This formulation almost certainly requires modification in order to cope with Russell's paradox.
CHAPTER II

DEFINITE DESCRIPTIONS

2.1 In order to say of some specific item that it has or lacks a certain characteristic, I must be able to specify that item and that item only in order to ascribe or deny that characteristic to it. In what follows I will be concerned with various ways in which we specify objects and with the various dimensions of possible failure which attend these different ways.

2.2 Every object whatsoever is a candidate for being talked about. (What else could an object be?) I must, therefore, if I am successfully to specify one particular object, distinguish it from all its fellows. At first sight there seem to be three different ways in which we do this.

(1) I may offer a description which is (or is believed to be) true of the item I wish to talk about and of no other, and say of what satisfies that description that it has the characteristic which I wish to ascribe to the object which I wish to talk about.

Sentences which exemplify this mode of individuation are commonly of the pattern "The F is G", where "the F" is a descriptive expression which is taken to individuate one and only one object. Such expressions are usually referred to as definite descriptions.

(2) If the item has a proper name I may employ it to say of the bearer of the name that it has the characteristic in question.

(3) If the item stands in a certain relationship to me and my audience I may be able to refer to it indexically - that is, I may indicate its location (not necessarily spatial location) in relationship to us (speaker and audience). The most obvious example of this is demonstrative reference. If the item occurs in a common perceptual environment I may be able to pick it out for an audience by means of a gesture (or
something analogous) and the use of an appropriate indexical expression (e.g. "this" or "that") and say of what I have thus picked out that it has the characteristic in question.

These are three ways of individuating an object. I will usually refer to (1) as individuation by description, to (2) as proper name reference, and to (3) as indexical reference. My appropriation of the word "reference" for (2) and (3) and not for (1) foreshadows the adoption of a certain account of definite descriptions which is not applicable to proper names or indexical expressions. But this will come later.

2.3 It is necessary to say something of the use of the word "reference". I take it to be a quasi-technical term in philosophy, it use related to but not the same as that current in non-philosophical discourse (much as the philosopher's use of the word "proposition" is related to but not the same as the non-philosopher's). I also take it that referring is something people do, but for which words are (usually) employed. The central case is where a speaker has some item in mind and uses some linguistic device in order to direct his audience's attention to that item. Reference will fail if the linguistic device which he employs fails to pick out any item or fails to pick out one unique item. Reference will succeed, though the communication of what the speaker has in mind will fail, if the expression used picks out one unique item but it is not the item which the speaker wished to pick out. I take it to be possible (and indeed to often occur) that a speaker refers to something, and, in the sense in which I will use the phrase, be talking about something, which he does not want to refer to or talk about. In other words, I take it that what a speaker is referring to in a particular speech situation is primarily a function of what he says and not of what he intends. (I have, therefore, no qualms about attributing reference to expressions, although I concede that such a use is - ultimately - a derivative one.) I do not deny that there are other uses of the word "reference" current in philosophy.
The above account is, I think, the one which fits most easily into the Frege-Russell tradition, though I don't offer this as a defence or justification. Indeed, I don't think that defence or justification is necessary.

2.4 There is a limitation on proper name reference and indexical reference which is not characteristic of individuation by description. Reference by the use of a proper name is limited to those items which possess a proper name; many items to which we wish to refer have not been so dignified. The scope of indexical reference is limited to those items which can be related in certain ways to a situation common to those involved in the speech situation. Our use of a proper name to refer to an item is contingent on that item's having been of sufficient interest in the past for a proper name to have been bestowed on it. Our being in a position to make use of indexical reference is contingent on the accident of where we and our audience happen to be at the time.

By contrast, individuation by description seems to have an objectivity, a generality of application, lacking in the other two cases. By means of an individuating description we are able (or seem to be able) to specify an object which has not attracted sufficient interest in the past to warrant the bestowal of a proper name and which is not in the present located in a position so as to be accessible to indexical reference. Further, when we do individuate an item by describing it, our specification will be comprehensible to those who do not know that it is the bearer of a certain proper name and who are not in or familiar with our present situation and thus cannot locate an item which is individuated by reference to that situation. Individuation by description is independent of background knowledge in a way that proper name reference and indexical reference is not; it is thus more readily communicable to a wider audience.
These considerations might tempt us to undertake the programme of eliminating or doing without proper name and indexical reference in favour of descriptive individuation. In what follows I hope to show, inter alia, the futility of such a programme.

I will for the present be concerned with individuation by description. My starting point will be the account of such individuation contained in Russell's theory of descriptions.

2. 5 Frege thought that an expression which referred to an object (i.e. a Fregean 'proper name') did so via its sense. Since it is plausible to equate the sense of an expression with its descriptive content, this can be read as the claim that an expression may be used to refer to an item if and only if that item and no other satisfies the descriptive content of that expression. Thus Frege seems to have assimilated all modes of reference to what I have called individuation by description. He does not offer much in the way of argument for this position. When he does mention proper names he simply assumes that they have a descriptive content he is more concerned with the puzzle of discovering what that descriptive content is. 1 And when he discusses indexical expressions 2 he is concerned primarily with problems concerned with propositional identity and not with an account of their mode of reference. This latter omission is unfortunate, in that even a brief consideration of demonstrative reference would have made it apparent that some modification of his doctrine of sense and reference was necessary.3

2. 6 If Frege assimilated proper name reference to descriptive individuation without sufficient consideration of the possible

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3. According to Frege, sameness of sense guarantees sameness of reference. But it seems clear that the word "I" had the same sense whoever uses it; but the reference will not be the same whoever uses it. For this point see L. Linsky: Referring (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967), pp.36-37.
(indeed the superficially obvious) differences between them, and largely ignored demonstrative reference altogether, the same cannot be said of Russell. The difficulty with Russell does not consist in there being a dearth of matter offered in support of the various (and changing) views which he offered on these subjects; rather it lies in extracting from this considerations which actually are relevant to the points at issue. I will, in the following pages and elsewhere when concerned with Russell, present a parsimonious, pruned down Russell. I will largely ignore his views about epistemology, his theories of meaning, and the metaphysical system of logical atomism of which these are a part. This is, I think, justified in that my primary interest is not in the theories of Bertrand Russell but in theories which Bertrand Russell happened to hold. If it is felt (as indeed I sometimes feel myself) that this parsimony does less that full justice to the views considered, I can only say in defence that it is almost always possible to find, even in the parsimonious Russell here presented, relevant and powerful support for the views he advanced.

2.7 Consider the following:
(1) The president of France has a long nose.
(2) De Gaulle has a long nose.

If we were to follow Frege's analysis we would hold that the logical subject of (1) is the expression "the president of France" and that the logical subject of (2) is the name "de Gaulle"; further, we would hold that both expressions have a sense and, by virtue of their sense, a reference - in this case the same reference. Let us assume, however, that Frege is wrong and that proper names do not have a sense. This assumption immediately casts doubt on the correctness of the Fregean analysis. The expressions "the president of France" and "de Gaulle" now appear to be dissimilar in a logically relevant and important respect and a perspicuous analysis should reflect this dissimilarity.
Russell's theory of descriptions may be introduced as a mechanism by which sentences may be translated in such a way that the difference between expressions which individuate an object by describing it and no other, and expressions which refer in some other way, is made explicit. According to the theory of descriptions no expression which has a sense, i.e. a descriptive content, functions as the logical subject of those propositions in which it occurs. Propositions such as (1) are not, according to the theory, logically of the subject-predicate form; rather they turn out on analysis to be equivalent to a compound proposition the components of which are not singular propositions at all but general (existential or universal) propositions.

The conjunctive proposition which Russell would have advanced as the equivalent and perspicuous rendering of (1) is the following:

(3) (There is at least one president of France) & (There is at most one president of France) & (Whatever is the president of France is bald).

In general, where an individuating description "the F" appears in a sentence of the form "The F is G", such a sentence may be reformulated as

(There is at least one F) & (There is at most one F) & (Whatever is F is G)

or, employing the notation of predicate calculus with identity, as

\((\exists x)Fx \& (x)(y)(\neg(Fx \& Fy) \rightarrow x = y) \& (x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)\)

or, more concisely, as

\((\exists x)\neg\neg Fx \& (y)(Fy \rightarrow x = y) \& Gx\)

Why should we accept this analysis? Russell himself conceded that it must appear at first sight "a somewhat incredible interpretation" but argued that it or something like it was necessary to cope with certain problems pervading alternative
accounts. "A logical theory," he writes may be tested by its capacity for dealing with puzzles, and it is a wholesome plan, in thinking about logic, to stock the mind with as many puzzles as possible since these serve much the same purpose as is served by experiments in physical science. 4

And Russell accordingly lists three puzzles to which the theory of descriptions provides an answer.

2.8 The first concerns the substitution of co-referential singular terms in intensional contexts:

If a is identical with b, whatever is true of one is true of the other, and either may be substituted for the other in any proposition without altering the truth or falsehood of that proposition. Now George IV wished to know whether Scott was the author of Waverley; and in fact Scott was the author of Waverley. Hence we may substitute Scott for the author of 'Waverley', and thereby prove that George IV wished to know whether Scott was Scott. Yet an interest in the law of identity can hardly be attributed to the first gentleman of Europe. 5

I will not go into the details of Russell's attempted solution of this problem. Whether or not the theory of descriptions is relevant to the problems concerning substitutability in intensional contexts, it is clear that it is not the whole story. What seems to be required is a distinction between those contexts where the substitution of co-referential singular terms is legitimate and those where it is not, and Russell does not provide this.

2.9 Russell's second puzzle concerns negation:

By the law of excluded middle, either 'A is B' or 'A is not B' must be true. Hence either 'the present King of France is bald' or 'the present King of France is not bald' must be true. Yet if we enumerate the things that are bald, and then the things that are not bald, we should not find

the present King of France in either list. Hegelians, who love a synthesis, will probably conclude that he wears a wig.\[^\text{6}\]

Russell assumes that it is false that the present King of France is bald; his problem is thus to explain how it seems not to be true that the present King of France is not bald. He solves this puzzle by claiming that the latter sentence is ambiguous. It could mean that there is just one present King of France and he is not bald, in which case it is false; but it could also be taken to mean that there is not just one present King of France who is bald, in which case it is true. To put the point more generally: Russell's claim is that a proposition of the form 'The F is G' is true if and only if the conjunctive proposition 'There is an F & There is at most one F & Whatever is F is G' is true; it is false if any one of the conjuncts of the latter proposition is false. And it is just the existence of these different ways in which 'The F is G' may be false which is blurred by this formulation and by the assumption that its contradictory is unambiguously expressed by 'The F is not G', and which is displayed by Russell's analysis.

I take Russell's account of this to be perfectly satisfactory. The puzzle, such as it is, arises simply because of our tendency to take 'The F is not G' as the contradictory of 'The F is G' and then to read it in such a way that both could be false. The puzzle could be avoided simply by insisting (and why should we not?) that contradictories should be expressed by 'external' negation; i.e. that the contradictory of 'The F is G' is the simple and unambiguous 'It is not the case that the F is G.'

Perhaps this is the point to make brief mention of the controversy between Strawson and Russell on the role and analysis

\[^\text{6}: \text{Ibid.}, \text{p.}48\]
of definite descriptions. According to Strawson, one of Russell's mistakes is to treat the proposition expressed by "The present King of France is bald" as false where a correct theory must take into account the fact that we normally treat such a proposition as being neither true nor false, i.e. as lacking a truth-value. But it is difficult to see what precisely hangs upon this dispute or what would count as settling it. Strawson points to a 'tendency' to withhold the attribution of a truth-value to a proposition of the form 'The F is G' when there is no F (or where there is more than one F), a tendency which he 'canonises' in his doctrine of presupposition. But it is at best only a tendency; there are, as Strawson concedes, exceptions to it. And if we must reflect this tendency in our analyses, we are committed to a three valued logic (a fact which Strawson does not seem fully to appreciate) with all its attendant complications, and I think it is reasonable to suppose that we should avoid this if at all possible. Russell is committed to treating such propositions as false and thus to going against the alleged tendency, but the gain in simplicity of theory is immense. And it has yet to be shown that any pernicious consequences follow from this move.

7. See particularly P.F. Strawson: "On Referring" (Mind, Vol.59 (1950), pp.320-344; reprinted in A. Flew (ed): Essays in Conceptual Analysis (London; Macmillan, 1956). In what follows I take up only one of the points at issue between Russell and Strawson. In fact, I think that many of Strawson's criticisms of Russell are justified and that Russell's presentation is in many ways confused. I hope that my presentation is free of the worst of these confusions. There is already such an immense literature on the issues between Strawson and Russell that perhaps my brevity on the subject will be excused. I ignore Strawson's positive contribution - the theory of presupposing - in the belief that the doctrine is not as it stands a coherent one. On this point, see Graham Nerlich: "Presupposition and Entailment" (American Philosophical Quarterly, Vol.2 (1965), pp.33-42).

Russell's third puzzle is the most obscure but perhaps the most important of the three:

Consider the proposition 'A differs from B'. If this is true there is a difference between A and B, which fact may be expressed in the form 'the difference between A and B subsists'. But if it is false that A differs from B, then there is no difference between A and B, which fact may be expressed in the form 'the difference between A and B does not subsist'. But how can a non-entity be the subject of a proposition? 'I think, therefore I am' is no more evident than 'I am the subject of a proposition, therefore I am'; provided 'I am' is taken to assert subsistence or being, not existence. Hence, it would appear, it must always be self-contradictory to deny the being of anything; but we have seen in connexion with Meinong that to admit being also sometimes leads to contradictions. Thus if A and B do not differ, to suppose either that there is, or that there is not, such an object as 'the difference between A and B' seems equally impossible.9

Fortunately, the development of what I take to be the rational core of the above argument does not require the resurrection of the distinction which Russell employs between subsistence and existence (a distinction which Russell himself dropped at a later stage).

As a first step in the development of that 'rational core' let us make the following (large) assumption: If a proposition 'A is F' is (i) significant and (ii) genuinely of the subject-predicate form, then we cannot employ the expression "A" to raise doubts concerning the existence of the item referred to by "A".

Given this assumption it immediately follows that propositions of the form "A does not exist" are not, logically, of the subject-predicate form, since it explicitly denies the existence of A. It also follows that any (contingent) proposition of the form "A exists" is not of the subject-predicate

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form, since it allows for the possibility that A does not exist.

This line of reasoning can be extended further. There are many propositions which appear to have the form "A is P" but where we can entertain a doubt concerning the existence of A without thereby concluding that the proposition is not significant. That we can do this shows that "A is P" is not of the subject-predicate form; it is therefore incumbent on us to produce an analysis which shows how its grammatical subject-predicate form is misleading. In other words, we cannot both assert that "A" is the logical subject of "A is P" and at the same time allow that propositions like "A does not exist" are possibly true; to do so would contradict the assumption made two paragraphs back.

Russell explicitly drew these conclusions; indeed they provided for him a test for judging whether or not a proposition was of the subject-predicate form:

Whenever the grammatical subject of a proposition can be supposed not to exist without rendering the proposition meaningless, it is plain that the grammatical subject is not a proper name, i.e. not a name directly representing some object. Thus, in all such cases, the proposition must be capable of being so analysed that what was the grammatical subject shall have disappeared.

In "On Denoting" Russell thought that the main category of expressions which appeared to be the subjects of the propositions in which they occurred, but which in fact were not, were definite descriptions, i.e. expressions of the form "the so and so". Indeed, he suggests that we can tell by the grammatical form of certain expressions and, presumably, of the propositions in which they occur, what logical analysis they should be given.

11. "On Denoting", LK, p.41. This is most probably a hangover from his earlier view that "grammar seems...to bring us much nearer to a correct logic than the current opinions of philosophers."
But even here he is compelled to admit exceptions: "Apollo" and "Hamlet", expressions which are grammatically proper names, do not have a reference, and cannot therefore be treated as the logical subjects of propositions in which they occur but must be analysed as (disguised) descriptions. And he was soon to decide that there was no good reason to treat any proper names as being anything but disguised definite descriptions. So he was led to conclude that the only 'logically proper names', i.e. expressions fit to be considered the logical subjects of those propositions in which they occurred, were a certain class of indexical expressions. And if we admit the assumption with which this reasoning began, we can at least feel the pull toward the same sort of conclusion.

But why should we admit the assumption? It is certainly not prima facie obvious, and the oddity of the conclusions which can be drawn from it seem to suggest that it should be rejected out of hand. Russell's own reasoning on its behalf rests very heavily on an even more dubious claim, which is (roughly) that the meaning of a 'logically proper name' is that item to which it refers. If we allow this, we must allow that where we have a logical subject but no corresponding item to which it refers, then that expression is meaningless and the proposition of which it is a proper part is meaningless also; and conversely we must allow that where a proposition is meaningful despite the fact that to a certain expression in it there exists no corresponding item, then that expression is not a logically proper name, i.e. it is not the logical subject of that proposition, and, if there are no other candidates, then that proposition is not of the subject-predicate form. But there seems no good reason to accept, and there seem to be very good reasons why we should reject, the claim

12. ibid., p. 54
that the meaning of a logical subject is that item to which it refers, which provides the basis for this chain of reasoning.

2.11 It is not my intention to defend Russell's claim concerning the meaning of logically proper names; I do not think a defence is possible. Nevertheless there is some reason to maintain the claim that the item referred to by the subject-expression of a proposition which is genuinely of the subject-predicate form must exist. These reasons do not depend on any of Russell's more dubious theories which are now of only historical interest; they do however depend on an acceptance of a large part of Russell's logic and of a certain interpretation of it. But Russell's logic is still with us, and the relevant interpretation is both familiar and widely accepted, and a provisional acceptance of these is perhaps not too much to ask.

In developing this argument I will use what is grammatically a proper name. I could as easily have used a definite description. I use a proper name in order to illustrate something of the pressure on Russell to extend the scope of the theory of descriptions to cover proper names.

Any development of predicate logic will contain, either as an axiom or a quick derivation, the following thesis:

(1) \( Fa \supset (\exists x)Fx \)

This licenses the move generally known as 'existential generalisation'. It appears at first sight harmless enough. It licenses the inference from, e.g., "Senator Gorton is Prime Minister of Australia" to "There is a Prime-Minister of Australia." Let us however take as an instance of 'Fa' a proposition with a subject term which refers to something which does not exist (e.g. to Santa Claus) and a predicate which is true of that non-existent item and is not true of anything which exists (e.g. "lives at the North Pole" which is, as it happens, true of and only true of Santa Claus). Thus we are in a position to assert
(2) Santa Claus lives at the North Pole

which is, ex hypothesis, true. But by existential generalisation

(1) we can move from this to the following false proposition:

(3) There is something which lives at the North Pole.

It appears that we have derived a false conclusion from a true

premise, and any logic which allows such a derivation is in deep
trouble.

This argument may not appear completely convincing. One

might insist that the premise is false (by arguing, e.g., that

nothing lives at the North Pole, ergo, Santa does not live there)
in which case the unfortunate consequence of deriving a false

conclusion from a true premise does not ensue. Alternatively

one might argue that if we take the premise to be true we are

committed to allowing some sort of existence (subsistence perhaps)
to Santa Claus, so that the conclusion also turns out to be true.

But the argument can be tightened. It is another thesis

of Russell's logic that

(4) \( (x)(x = x) \).

As a substitution instance of this we may, it seems, assert

(5) Santa Claus = Santa Claus,

and what could be wrong with this? Whatever properties Santa

may lack it seems clear that he must have the property of being

identical with himself. But (1) and (3) permit us to infer

(6) \( \exists x(x = \text{Santa Claus}) \),

which is to say that Santa Claus exists, and this is false.

The case may be tightened still further. Some one might

say as a ground for rejecting (5) that Santa Claus does not exist.

This can be expressed as

(7) \( \neg(\exists x(x = \text{Santa Claus}) \). \)
Now while we may have some doubts about existence and non-existence being predicates, there are no formal barriers to prevent us from treating '(\exists x)(x = ...)' as an instance of 'F...', i.e. from treating it as a logical predicate. But if this is permissible (and it is) we can infer from (7) and (1) that

(8) (\exists y)(\exists x)(x = y)

which is obviously self-contradictory (and if it is not obvious we can be more specific: it is the contradictory of '(x)(\exists y)(y = x)' which is a theorem of Principia following unproblematically from (6) and (1) above).

To put the point generally: if we allow as the logical subjects of the propositions in which they occur expressions which fail of reference, then we are able to derive unacceptable conclusions. We are able to avoid these consequences if we can eliminate from subject positions definite descriptions such as "the present King of France" which do not individuate anything (and, of course, definite descriptions such as "the inhabitant of London" which do not individuate any one thing) and proper names such as "Santa Claus" which do not name anything. But this does not mean that we can leave in subject position such expressions as "the present Queen of England" and "Julius Caesar" which do individuate one and only one item. For it is surely a contingent matter that there is one and only one Queen of England and again a contingent matter that Julius Caesar existed. What we are dealing with is a question of analysis and questions of analysis cannot wait on the investigation of empirical fact.

2.12 In "On Denoting" Russell drew the conclusion that all definite descriptions must be eliminated from subject position by application of the theory of descriptions; he also noted that at least some proper names ("Hamlet" and "Apollo") are and must be susceptible to the same treatment. He was later to extend the scope of the theory of descriptions to cover all grammatical proper names. I think that he was wrong in doing this and will
argue so later. But it is important at this stage to see the prima facie plausibility of this move. If one admits that the appearance of some grammatically proper names can be analysed away by the theory of descriptions (or something like it) and also concedes that the only relevant difference between these proper names and others is the contingent fact that they lack a bearer, one is thereby committed to the same analysis (the theory of descriptions or something like it) to all proper names. And this is the conclusion which Russell drew (though he had many other reasons for drawing it as well as this one). But by drawing it he left himself with the linguistic devices of demonstrative reference as the only remaining candidates for the role of logical subjects. From amongst these he chose the words "this" and "that" and formulated the notorious thesis that these were the only genuine 'logically proper names'.

2.13 At the beginning of the development of this argument I said that it relied on a broad acceptance of Russell's logic and of a certain interpretation of it, and I should say something more about this now. I assume that we do - broadly - accept the predicate calculus (after all we use it) and further that if we do we must accept thesis (1) - the thesis of existential generalisation - which lies right at its foundations. But I do think that it is possible to reinterpret (1) in such a way that no inadmissible consequences follow. We could refuse to read the 'existential' quantifier as signifying existence. Thus we might interpret '(\exists x)Fx' not as "There exists something which Fs" but rather as "Some proposition of the form 'F..' is true" or "Some filling of the blank in 'F..' is such as to yield a true proposition." (This is something like Russell's reading; except he took it as giving an analysis of 'Fs exist.'). Existence might then be treated as an ordinary predicate which is true of some items (e.g. the present Queen of England, Julius Caesar) and not true of others (e.g. the present King of France, Santa Claus).
Given this interpretation we could not derive (at least, could not easily derive) unacceptable conclusions from acceptable and apparently true premises.

I mention this because it does seem to be a viable alternative to at least some of Russell's manoeuvres. But I will not pursue it. The interpretation of the 'existential' quantifier as an existence indicator is sufficiently widespread as to be considered orthodox and it carries with it certain advantages. (I think one thing which Quine has shown us is that it simplifies questions concerning what exists and what does not in a rather neat - perhaps too neat? - manner.) At any rate, I propose to accept it for the time being. And given this, it becomes incumbent on us to accept some such analysis as the theory of descriptions to overcome the above mentioned difficulties. But this is not to claim that the theory of descriptions carries with it no difficulties of its own. Indeed, as we have already seen, it pushes us towards Russell's theory of logically proper names and this is, to say the least, a worrying prospect. And perhaps something more should be said to elucidate the nature of this push, though from a rather different viewpoint to the one considered above.

2.14. Consider the following proposition:

(P) The man in the corner of the room is drunk

which I envisage as being asserted by me to a friend about some third person during the course of a party. According to the theory of descriptions it is analysable as (roughly):

(P') There is just one man in the corner of the room and he is drunk.

This seems satisfactory until we notice that there yet remain further definite descriptions to be eliminated. So we continue the analysis:

(P'') There is just one corner of the room and in it there is just one man and he is drunk.
and even further to:

(P''') There is just one room and in it there is just one corner and in it there is just one man and he is drunk.

But it is clear as soon as we have gone from (P') to (P'') that something has gone wrong. Whatever ground we had for accepting (P') as an analysis of (P) collapses when we attempt to progress from (P') to (P''). And unless we find a good reason to suppose that there is a relevant difference between the role of the phrase "the man in the corner of the room" in (P) and the role of the phrase "the corner of the room" in (P') then it is clear that we must reject the theory of descriptions analysis of (P) since we must reject such an analysis of (P').

In fact, there is a distinction, but it is not one which is explicit in the grammatical form either of (P) or of (P').

In the circumstances envisaged, I have individuated a certain man by locating him in a certain area, and this is, in an extended but philosophically acceptable sense, individuation by description. If the theory of descriptions does apply to descriptive individuation we would expect it to apply to this. However, in order for my individuation of the person to be successful, I must have successfully individuated the place in which he is located, and this is the function which is partially carried out by the use of the expression "in the corner of the room."

But it is only partially carried out by this expression. If it were fully carried out then we would expect the descriptive content of this expression to bear the burden of individuating the relevant area, and we can, I think, take the failure of analyses (P'') and (P''') to indicate that it does not do this.

This leaves several possibilities. One is that the relevant area has previously been singled out in some way or other, and that my use of the phrase "the corner of the room" is to be taken as standing in place of whatever phrase (perhaps a
fuller description) which was employed in that prior individuation. In other words, the descriptive phrase might be functioning very much like a relative pronoun. If this is the case, it is not surprising that an unthinkingly thorough application of the theory of descriptions to (P) produced the unacceptable analyses (P'') and (P'''). If the area was individuated by description then the theory of descriptions is applicable to (P), but only when that description which was previously employed is substituted for the incomplete "the corner of the room."

There is another more important and more likely possibility. I may have asserted (P) and not relied on any previous individuation to indicate which corner of which room I mean. In this case, if individuation is to be successful, it must be clear from the circumstances in which I make the remark which corner of which room, and thus which man I am referring to. It will in fact be fairly clear which room I mean. Unless there is a specific indication to the contrary, I will be taken - and correctly taken - to be referring to the room which I am in when I make the remark. This indicates that the particle "the" in front of "room" - which we took as signalling a definite description - is really doing duty for a word like "this", and so is signalling a demonstrative reference. And the same point can be made about the phrase "the corner". If my reference is to be successful, there must be some feature of the circumstances in which I make the remark - most probably a feature of my behaviour in making the remark - which indicates to my audience which corner of the room I am referring to. (We often tend to think that a demonstrative reference must be accompanied by a dramatic pointing gesture, but of course this need not be so. All that is necessary in most cases is a glance, an inclination of the head, a slight movement of the body, or something of the sort.)

If this is a correct account then it is apparent that, in producing analyses (P'') and (P'''), we have been misled by
the grammatical appearance of (P). We would not have been misled if what I had said was

(P''') The man in that corner of this room is drunk which, in the circumstances envisaged, comes to much the same thing. There is now no temptation to apply the theory of descriptions to anything but the entire phrase "the man in that corner of this room"; the phrases "that corner" and "this room" are obviously not employed as descriptive individuating devices, rather they indicate that a demonstrative reference has been made. And the theory of descriptions does not apply, nor is meant to apply, to the linguistic signals of demonstrative reference.

This sort of case is important. It indicates that the range of indexical reference is wider than appears at first sight; correlatively, it indicates that the range of individuation by description, and thus the scope of the theory of descriptions, is narrower than has often been thought. In fact the mode of individuation which we most naturally employ in ordinary discourse seems to be partially descriptive and partially indexical, though the indexical element is not very often as near the surface as it is in the example just considered.

2.15 Consider the following case. I say to an acquaintance:

(Q) The old man with grey hair is my tutor.

The circumstances are such that we cannot interpret this along the lines of (P) as employing an implicit demonstrative reference - that is to say, the old man in question is not in our immediate vicinity and is thus not accessible to ostension. Nor is it the case that the old man has previously in the conversation been singled out in some way and I am simply making use of an individuation which has already been made.

Now it is certainly not the case, nor do I in asserting (Q) believe it to be the case, that there exists one and only one old
man with grey hair. In other words, the individuating description which I have offered does not uniquely individuate one thing. Such a situation is very common. It is very rare indeed for someone to state something of the form 'The F is G', where the expression 'the F' is used as an individuating description, and it be the case, or be believed to be the case, that there is one and only one thing which is F. This presents a problem: How, if more than one thing is F, can I rely on the expression 'the F' to individuate the one thing which I wish to talk about?

The problem becomes crucial when we consider the Russellian analysis of (Q):

(Q') There is just one old man with grey hair and he is my tutor.

Someone might well be prepared to assert (Q) and expect his audience to understand just whom he is talking about (i.e. expect his audience to 'get his reference'), but not be prepared to assert (Q'), indeed would hold that (Q') was simply false.

I will argue that this does not force us to reject Russell's analysis of propositions employing definite descriptions any more than the failure of (P'') and (P''') as analyses of (P) forced us to give up Russell's analysis. Just as these failures forced us to recognise an indexical element in (P), the failure of (Q') forces us to recognise an indexical element implicit in (Q). This element is, however, rather more difficult to bring to the surface.

It is fairly clear that I can use an expression like "the old man with grey hair" in certain circumstances to individuate one individual, but that in other circumstances I cannot, and it is also clear that these circumstances relate to the nature of my audience. I could not assert (Q) to anyone at all, and expect them to get my reference, but there are some people whom I would expect, and be justified in expecting, that they would understand whom I was talking about.
What then are the conditions which I assume to be satisfied when I assert \( (Q) \) and expect the person to whom I am talking to understand whom I am talking about? Presumably, I take it for granted that he has certain knowledge at his disposal and will employ it in the understanding of what I have said to him. I will not take it for granted that he knows or knows about only one grey haired old man and will take me to be referring to that one - this would be to take too much for granted. But I will assume that he will not count, as a candidate for being the individual I am talking about, a grey haired old man that he knows of but is aware that I do not know of. I will assume this just as he will assume by my use of the expression "the old man with grey hair" that I am not talking about a grey haired old man of whom I know but he does not.

In other words, both of us will assume a common body of information (of the 'knowledge of' sort) and an awareness on both our parts of what that common body of information is (within certain rough limits). In ideal circumstances the position will be that I know of a certain number of men, and that my hearer knows or knows of a certain number of men; there will be an overlap in our knowledge and we will both be roughly aware of the extent and membership of that overlap; and finally, in that overlapping range there will be one and only one old man with grey hair.

The satisfaction of these conditions would be sufficient for the communication of the reference. They are not however necessary. I might assert \( (Q) \) and expect my hearer to understand precisely whom I am talking about in the full knowledge that there is more than one old man with grey hair amongst those people whom we both know or know of. In general, the definite descriptions we employ to individuate an item are not nearly detailed enough or idiosyncratic enough to apply to just one individual even amongst those individuals of whom we and our audience have common knowledge. Thus, I might assert \( (Q) \) and expect my hearer to understand whom I am talking about, and yet it be the case that
amongst our common acquaintanceship there be several old men with grey hair (it would be odd if there weren't).

So we need to say something more about the circumstances required for the successful communication of a reference, though it is rather difficult to specify the further condition necessary. Intuitively, it seems that it must have something to do with the likelihood of a given individual having the attribute (e.g. of being my tutor) which is predicated. In other words it, seems as if I would expect my hearer to choose the most likely candidate from the old men with grey hair whom we both know or know of, to be my tutor. Thus, if we both know of two such men, one of whom is a grocer and the other of whom we have seen around the university, I must expect him to take me to be talking about the one we have seen around the university. If in fact it is the less likely candidate who is the one I mean (the grocer has a part-time job tutoring at the university), or if there are two or more equally likely candidates, then I must expect failure in my attempt to communicate whom I mean. In such cases, further descriptive specification should be given.

My hearer cannot, however, rule out candidates just because he knows that the characterisation does not apply to them, in the above case, for example, just because he knows that a given old man with grey hair is not my tutor. He cannot or ought not do this because what I say may be false and the old man whom I am trying to individuate may not be my tutor. But while he cannot rely on what I am saying being true, he is forced, I think, to rely on what I say being likely or probable. This does not mean, of course, that I cannot say of someone totally improbable that he is my tutor; what it does mean is that I must expect my hearer to choose the most probable of the competing candidates, so that I will, in such a case, have to give a fairly precise specification of just whom I mean, in order to ensure that my hearer understands whom I am talking about.
This is, of course, imprecise, but I suspect that the imprecision springs from the nature of the thing and cannot be avoided, especially in a fairly general account. Nor am I completely confident that the two conditions which I have specified - concerning a field of common knowledge and the likelihood of candidates from within that field being the item which is being talked about - are the conditions or all the conditions which are assumed in the communication of a reference. What I am confident of is that some such conditions obtain. When we say to an audience something of the form 'The F is G' it is simply not the case that everything whatsoever is a candidate to be that item we are talking about. Our communication does not fail just because there is more than one thing which is F; but it does fail if there is in a certain restricted field more than one thing which is F. And a first but not I think a final step in the specification of this field must take into account what is assumed in the particular situation to be common knowledge between speaker and audience.

If my account has been correct to this stage, then we could make explicit some of the assumptions which I have made in asserting (Q) in the following reformulation:

\[(Q')\] Amongst people who you and I both know or know of and about whom I might plausibly be taken to be talking, there is just one old man with grey hair and he is my tutor.

And there is no reason to suppose that this is not amenable to treatment by the theory of descriptions; indeed it is stated in terms of the theory of descriptions analysis. What has had to be made explicit is a certain restriction on what I might be talking about; once this is made, the Russelian analysis seems perfectly satisfactory.¹³

¹³. There are of course problems about rendering these restrictions formally but these are not my concern at the moment.
Earlier I remarked that we needed to uncover the indexical element implicit in (Q) - an indexical element which is implicit in many cases of what seems to be cases of individuation by description - and I think (Q') does this. The range, within which the item is individuated by description, is specified in terms of those involved in the speech-situation, in the above case (Q'') by reference to you and to me (us). They are not of course specified in terms of their being in some physical (e.g. spatial) relation with the 'I' and the 'you' of the speech situation, but rather in terms of their being (assumed to be) known of by the 'I' and the 'you' of the speech situation. But in the important respects the situations are parallel. Just as when I spatially locate an object by reference to someone I am talking to (e.g. "the table on your left") I may have to change the description I employ when I am talking to someone else differently located (e.g. "the table on your right"), so when I locate an object by reference to the knowledge I assume the person I am talking to to have ("the old man with grey hair") I may well have to alter the description when I am talking to someone else with different information at his disposal (e.g. "the chap who gave the talk on the radio last night"). As in all cases of indexical reference the means of saying something are geared to the people involved and/or their situations, and when the people or their situations change the means employed for saying something may well have to change also.

Only in some cases is complete individuation by description (and description only) possible. I may, for example, individuate the number 2 as the number whose square is equal to its being added to itself. But such cases look and are exceptional. It can easily be shown that for physical objects at least a guarantee of successful individuation can only be obtained if the description employed is given an indexical basis. For however long a description we give of a certain (and in our mind absolutely
specific) physical object we can never be certain that there is not somewhere in existence a numerically distinct physical object which is nonetheless qualitatively identical and thus fits the same description. Nor can we improve the situation by introducing predicates which specify its spatial relationships with other descriptively individuated physical objects, for we can never rule out the possibility of the existence elsewhere of a set of qualitatively identical physical objects standing in exactly similar spatial relationships. But if my individuation is ultimately related to me (or to us or even to you) then we can obtain a guarantee of individuation.\textsuperscript{14} Whatever surprises the further regions of space hold in store they do not and could not contain another me (or another us or even another you).

2.19 The account which I have given so far allows for certain complications and I should say something of these. Let us return to my assertion of (Q). I will now assume that the individual about whom I want to talk is not old (but looks it), is not grey haired (but wears a wig), and is not even a man (but a female transvestite). On the analysis I have suggested, (Q'), what I have said is false; and yet there are certain circumstances under which I might have asserted (Q), succeeded in individuating that individual I wanted to individuate, and said something true about him (her).

Such circumstances would include the case when both I and my hearer believed falsely that the individual in question was an old man with grey hair; the case where one of us knew the truth and was aware of the other's false belief; and might even include the case where we both knew the truth (though in this last case a certain irony might be manifested in the way in which I assert (Q) which should perhaps be reflected by the use of 'scare quotes' in the written transcription of (Q)).

\textsuperscript{14} The argument is Strawson's (but not just his). See Individuals (London: Methuen, 1959), p.20.
It is, I think, easy to see once the role of shared knowledge in the communication of a reference is appreciated how false beliefs might play the same role. And often the fact that the beliefs are false will not be considered very important, at least not as important as the fact we want to communicate about the individual. In certain circumstances it won't matter to those involved in the speech situation that the individual they are talking about does not have those characteristics in virtue of which (or in virtue of their belief in which) they are talking about. But we can insist, I think, that what is said under these circumstances is strictly false. In the circumstances envisaged (q) is false and on no analysis should it turn out to be true. It is false because it entails what is false, that my tutor is old, male, and has grey hair, while the truth is that the individual who is my tutor is young, female and does not have grey hair.

2.20 A slightly different case arises when I employ a false description in order to say that it is false. Thus I might say:

The old man with grey hair is not an old man with grey hair at all.

Once again, we can note that 'scare quotes' around the definite description seem to be required for the intelligibility of what is said. This is, of course, merely a pointed way of saying that a certain belief of one's audience is false. In this case the analysis has to introduce the notion of belief if it is to capture the intelligible content of what is said:

Amongst people whom you and I both know or know of and about whom I might plausibly be taken to be talking, there is just one whom you believe to be an old man with grey hair and he is not really an old man with grey hair at all.

The fact which is used to individuate the individual whom I am
talking about is the fact that my hearer has a certain (false) belief about him; I have employed that fact in order to say that the belief is false. And there is nothing particularly puzzling about this. 15

2.21 I think that I have said enough to show that individuation by description is underneath rather a complicated business - or rather that a correct account of it will need to be a complicated one. What I have suggested so far is that most cases of individuation by description are cases of individuation within a certain field, and that this field is demarcated, at least in the first instance, by reference to considerations relating to those people involved in the communication situation. That this is so common is not just an unfortunate accident; it is usually only by relating those items about which we want to talk to us that we can obtain a guarantee that we have individuated just that item about which we want to talk. And this suggests that indexical reference - i.e. reference which relates to the situation of those involved in the process of communication - has an importance, a logical ultimacy, which is reflected, in an obscure, perhaps distorted, way by Russell's requirement of a theory of 'logically proper names.'

One of the consequences of all this is that the theory of descriptions has a far narrower range of application than has often been thought (and was certainly thought by Russell). Propositions which at first sight seem to be susceptible to a straightforward

15. I do not claim that every utterance of something of the form 'The F is not an F' has to be or even can be interpreted in this way. Quite often what looks like a descriptive phrase has something of the status of a proper name; in such cases it is quite possible to use that phrase to deny of the item which it is used to refer to that it has the characteristic commonly signified by that descriptive phrase. Voltaire's epigram concerning the Holy Roman Empire is a well known example of this.
application of the theory turn out to contain an implicit demonstrative
element (cf. (P)) or to rely on an implicit demarcation of the field
in which the description does (purport to) individuate an item in
terms of considerations which are ultimately indexical (cf. (Q)).
But within its limitations (which are just the limitations of
individuation by description) the theory has not been impugned.
Insofar as it provides an analytic mechanism by which propositions
with what appear to be subject terms with a descriptive content
(a sense) may be transformed into more complex propositions in which
the individuating role is performed by quantification and prediction,
it allows us, indeed forces us, to reject certain candidates for
the role of logical subjects of those propositions in which they
occur. And of the remaining candidates it is clear that the
linguistic vehicles of indexical reference must be very strong
contenders.

2.22 Basically my account of the individuating role of definite
descriptions has followed Russell's. Keith Donnellan has argued
in a recent paper\[16\] that Russell overlooked the fact that definite
descriptions have two (at least) functions - what he calls the
'attributive' and the 'referential' uses - and that his account only
covers one of these. If Donnellan is right against Russell, he
is also right against the modified Russellian account which I have
been putting forward, so I will briefly examine some of Donnellan's
arguments.

Donnellan's distinction is (roughly) between the use of an
expression 'the F' to say of whatever is the F that it is G, and
the use of such an expression to say of a specific object which the
speaker has in mind that it is G. He illustrates this distinction
by reference to different possible uses of the sentence "Smith's
murderer is insane." If, on coming across Smith's battered body,

I say "Smith's murderer is insane" intending that my hearer take me as saying that whoever murdered Smith must be insane, then I have used the definite description "Smith's murderer" attributively. If however, knowing (or believing, or believing that my hearer believes or,...) that Jones is Smith's murderer, I say, meaning to refer to Jones and no one else ('having Jones in mind'), "Smith's murderer is insane", then I have used the definite description referentially. In the first case the description "Smith's murderer" occurs essentially; I am saying of whoever murdered Smith that he is insane. In the second case, the description is merely a device which I happened to use (I could have used others) to draw my hearer's attention to Jones. 17

Donnellan suggests that Russell provides an account of the attributive use of definite descriptions but that he failed to recognise the existence of the referential use.

Russell does provide an account of the attributive use of definite descriptions but not with the theory of descriptions; he would have held that it was covered by his account of universal propositions. Donnellan's attributive use of a definite description will, in most cases, simply be to make the statement that whatever is F is G, and this Russell would have rendered by the quantified formula '(x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)'. To use Donnellan's own example: If I say "Smith's murderer is insane" meaning that whoever murdered Smith must be insane, I will not feel that my utterance has failed in some way if it turns out that two or more people murdered Smith, though what I have said will be false if one of them turns out not to have been insane. (Of course, I will not hold that what I have said was true if Smith had no murderer, but this is another story.) Sometimes the description used in such a case will be such that it could be true of at most one individual. Thus I might say, looking

17. For these points, see ibid., pp. 285-286.
at a particularly obnoxious child, "Tommy's mother must be very patient." What I have said could be true of only one person, but this is a feature of the term employed in the description and not a feature of the use of the description.

Donnellan's remarks on the 'referential' use of definite descriptions are, however, of more importance. There are, he claims, no explicit grammatical criteria by which to distinguish this from the attributive use; the distinction lies not in what is said but rather in the intention with which it is said. In using a definite description referentially one has in mind the specific item one wants to talk about; the description one uses is merely a tool for directing one's audience's attention towards that specific item. Because of this one will not be particularly concerned if the description does not fit or does not uniquely fit the item one wants to talk about, as long as it in some way (which Donnellan does not try to elucidate) succeeds in directing the audience's attention towards the right object. "In the referential use," he writes,

there is a right thing to be picked out by the audience and its being the right thing is not simply a function of its fitting the description. But Donnellan overestimates the role of intention in the communication of a reference. The point of my using a description to individuate an object which I have in mind, the 'right thing', is the fact that its being in my mind, while it might be an individuating fact about the object, does not individuate the object for anyone (not even me). I have to supply a description which is, as it were, accessible to my audience, and it is via the description which I use that my

18. ibid., p. 297.
19. ibid., p. 304.
audience will be able to pick out just that object which I have in mind. But because I have to use such a description, I have to introduce the possibility of my making a mistake and employing a description which individuates the wrong thing, or perhaps does not individuate anything. It is true that in certain circumstances, some of which I have outlined, I may use the wrong description and yet it be the case that my audience grasp the 'right' thing. But these cases are secondary and are to be explained in terms of the primary case where my audience grasps what I am talking about because the description which I use fits one and only one object (within a certain limited range) and it is this object which I have in mind. It is because my audience does not have access to what I have in mind, and thus to what I intend to refer to except via what I say, that they must take me to be referring to that item (whatever it is) which satisfies the description which I employ. The onus is then on me to ensure that the item which I have in mind is the item which uniquely satisfies the description I use.

It is as if Donnellan takes a first person view of the situation while Russell looks at it from a third person angle. If I say something of the form 'The F is G' I may well feel that it is a relatively unimportant fact about the item I want to talk about that it is F; to my audience however this is the only guide to what it is that I am talking about. That I could have used other descriptions and that I do not regard its being F as an essential or even an important fact about the item I wish to talk about, is small comfort to them since they only have access to what I say, not to what I know. They must take me, and I must expect them to take me, to be talking about whatever it is which is uniquely F. And from this viewpoint - surely the preferred one - a Russelian account seems perfectly satisfactory.
3. 1 At the beginning of the last chapter I noted a limitation on the use of proper name reference: not all the items which we wish to talk about possess proper names. However proper names play a more important referential role than the bare statement of this limitation suggests, for it is, in general, the items which bulk large in our existence and which we need to talk about most often which have been assigned proper names. In practice, therefore, proper names crop up pretty regularly when the need for some specific reference is present. Even where the item to which we want to refer does not itself have a proper name, we very often locate it by means of its relationship with some other item which does possess a proper name. Further, the limitation in the scope of proper name reference looks, if we take an appropriately distant point of view, to be a pretty contingent matter, and one which we could partially overcome by assigning a proper name to every item we came across just in case the need should arise to refer to that item. Whether any advantages would accrue from such a cumbersome procedure, or whether it is of any theoretical interest to contemplate it as a possibility are questions we can for the moment withhold judgement on.

My major concern in this chapter is to answer the question: What is it about proper names which fits them for their role as referential devices? We could express this more briefly but less perspicuously: How do proper names achieve reference?

3. 2 The first account that I wish to consider is that provided by John Stuart Mill and also, I suppose, by a common sense view of the matter. It is the theory that proper names are mere marks which, in some sense or other, attach directly to an object. They are 'mere marks' rather than meaningful signs in a language because they do not convey any information about those items to
which they attach; specifically, they do not describe that which
they name (and, a fortiori, they do not apply to an item by virtue
of its satisfying a description conveyed by the name). Proper
names of individuals are, according to Mill, "Simply marks which
enable those individuals to be made subjects of discourse." 1

Mill does not offer much in the way of argument for this view; he most probably felt that it was too obviously correct
to require argument. And there is good reason for this feeling.
If proper names have a meaning then it ought to be legitimate to
ask in any given case what that meaning is, and with most proper
names this question does not seem to have a clear answer.
However Mill does make one claim which provides something of an
argument for his view. He argues that a proper name will apply
to that object which it names whatever changes the object under-
goes, and thus that the application of the name is "not dependent
on the continuance of any attribute of the object." 2

This point does carry some weight. A description ceases
to apply to an object, and thus cannot be used to specify the
object, if the object ceases to have the attribute signified by
the description; and there seems to be nothing obviously analogous
to this for proper names. But the point is not as it stands a
conclusive one. Certainly a descriptive phrase "the \( \emptyset \) " ceases
to apply to an object when it ceases to be \( \emptyset \); but the descriptive
phrase "the \( \emptyset \) at time \( t \)" will apply to an object whatever changes
it undergoes so long as it was, is, or will be \( \emptyset \) at time \( t \).
Furthermore it is not absolutely clear that a proper name will
continue to apply if the object which it names undergoes certain
drastic changes. The name "Major Bull" applies to that heap of
metal which is my car; it will not, I think, apply to the
scattered collection of metal which my car will eventually become.

1952), Book I, Chapter II, Section 5; p.20
I will return to these points later when I have assembled some equipment to deal with them. It is sufficient to note at this point that Mill has not provided a conclusive argument in favour of his account of proper names, and that it must rest therefore on its intuitive plausibility. And, of course, if all things were equal this would be quite sufficient. As usual, however, all things are not equal. There are certain well known objections to Mill's account.

3. 3 The first puzzle which Mill's theory has to face is provided by the appearance of proper names in contingent and informative identity propositions (e.g. "Cicero is Tully", "Ramon is 'Che' Guevara", which are both true; and "Van Eyck is Martin Bormann", which is apparently false).

If Mill is right, and proper names are simply marks which enable individuals to be made subjects of discourse, it is difficult to see how one could locate a difference in function between two co-referential proper names sufficient to explain how they can be conjoined in an informative identity proposition. Just as two synonymous expressions will perform exactly the same descriptive function, two co-referential proper names will perform exactly the same referential function. How then do we locate the difference between the informative "Ramon is 'Che' Guevara" and the trivial "Ramon is Ramon"? 3

The second problem concerns the appearance of proper names in existential propositions. Mill's theory asserts that proper names do not have a descriptive content and implies that they could not have any other use besides a referential one. These claims, when taken together with the fact that we can use proper names to make existence claims (e.g. we may decide that Homer did not exist), are incompatible with most received accounts of the

nature of existential propositions, which hold (roughly) that a significant assertion of existence at least entails that a certain description is instantiated, and that the expression for what is asserted to exist or not to exist is not (on pain of begging the existence question) to be construed as a referring expression.

The third problem is closely related to the second. Sometimes a proper name is used referentially (and not, e.g., in an existence claim) and it fails of reference; there is, as a matter of fact, no item corresponding to the name. Any theory of proper names must be equipped to explain such occasional failures and Mill's theory does not seem so equipped. In his account, proper names are presented on the model of marks attaching to objects; but this model fails when there is no object for the mark to attach to.

That the theory does not explain failure of reference is simply the converse of the fact that it does not explain reference. It simply asserts that a proper name is related to an object ('attached to' is pure metaphor), but does not explain what this relationship is and how it comes about. We already know that proper names are usually correlated with objects; what we want to know, and what Mill does not tell us, is an explanation of this correlation. It is only when we have such an explanation that we will be in a position to explain those cases where the correlation breaks down.

A theory which does provide such an explanation, and at the same time does not give rise to the puzzles which face Mill's account, is that which asserts that proper names do have a sense, and it is this theory which I will examine now. It holds that there is some description associated with every proper name and that a name applies to an object if and only if the description associated with the name picks out that object.
It is for a start worth noting just how simply this account solves the three puzzles listed above. That "Ramon is 'Che' Guevara" is contingent and informative is explained by its being analysed as equivalent to or entailing something like "The leader of the Bolivian guerillas is the author of Guerilla Warfare"; "Homer existed" is construed as meaning that there was in fact just one man who wrote both the Odyssey and the Iliad; and failure of reference is explained as arising from the failure of just one item to satisfy the description associated with the name which is used. But it is also worth noting that these solutions are perhaps a little too simple. Some identity propositions involving proper names do appear to be trivial (e.g. "Scott is Sir Walter") in a way intuitively different from the triviality consequent upon conjoining two synonymous definite descriptions (which is how it would be explained on this theory). Further, the appearance of some proper names in existential propositions has an oddity which a translation in terms of descriptive content lacks, and this provides some reason for being dubious about the adequacy of the translation. And finally it can be noted that on at least some occasions the failure of what appears to be a proper name to have a bearer impugns its status as a name (we cease to use it), whereas the failure of a description to pick out one and only one item does not bear on its status as a description.

But this is all by way of preliminary skirmishing. The theory that every proper name has a sense is, in one form or another, very much alive, and it deserves detailed examination.

3.5 I think that it is clear that some proper names do have a descriptive content. I take it that the proper name "God" is analytically equivalent to (something like) "the perfect being who created the world." The name will apply to whatever it is (if there is anything) which satisfies that description. A crude version of the theory that proper names have a sense might involve the claim that all proper names could be treated on this model.
It is fairly clear that the crude version is false. For the vast majority of proper names there is no reasonably determinate description associated with the name such that users of the name would agree that the name applied to whatever satisfied that description. Certainly we use the proper name "Bertrand Russell" to refer to the man who wrote "On Denoting", but this we take to be a contingent fact about Russell, and not analytically tied to his name. Nor would we criticise someone who did not know that Russell wrote "On Denoting" for failing to grasp the sense of the name; we would simply point out the deficiency in his knowledge concerning the bearer of the name.

There is just one candidate description which might be thought to be part of the sense of every proper name, namely the description signifying that an individual bears the name. Thus, it might be argued that "the man called 'Bismarck'" is the sense or part of the sense of the name "Bismarck". But this view fails because it is not analytic that Bismarck was called "Bismarck" but a purely contingent fact, and also because being called by a certain name is a fact which may be (and usually is) true of many individuals, and thus cannot be used to identify just one of them.

3. 6 There seem to be two ways in which a philosopher who wanted to maintain the thesis that proper names have a sense might proceed at this point. He might continue to maintain that proper names have a sense but deny that they have a determinate, specific sense. All proper names do have a sense, he might claim, but it is a

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4. This view is somewhat half-heartedly suggested by Russell; see "On Knowledge by Description and Knowledge by Acquaintance", (Reprinted in Mysticism and Logic, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1953) pp.208-209. It is more systematically argued for by Reginald Jackson; see "The Distinction between Connotative and Non-Connotative Names" (Mind, Vol. 42 (1933), pp.444-472), especially pp.459-460. Jackson tries to take account of the second objection in a way rather like my treatment of definite descriptions. I do not think this attempt works but it would be too much of a side track to argue this in full. The first objection is, at any rate, quite decisive.
mistake to suppose that we can always articulate that sense in
the way that we can in the case of the proper name "God". Or
he might give up the claim that a given proper name has a sense
but assert instead that there must be some description associated
(in the offing, as it were) with every correct use of a proper
name.

That these are different theories (though not as chalk
and cheese) is clear from the following considerations. The
claim that the sense attaches to the proper name (the 'type') is
the claim that there is, amongst the users of the name, an explicitly
or implicitly agreed upon set of characteristics the possession
of which by an object governs the application of the name to that
object. The claim that the sense attaches to the use of the
proper name (the 'token') is the claim that anyone who uses the
proper name must have some independent means (e.g. an individuating
set of facts) of identifying the bearer of the name, and it is
this 'independent means' which constitutes the sense of the name.
On the first account, if two people use the same proper name
correctly, then that they are referring to the same thing (or both
failing to refer) follows logically. On the second account it
will be a contingent fact that two uses of the same name pick out
the same object (i.e. it will be dependent on the factual question
of whether the same item satisfies the different senses attaching
to their different uses of the name).

It is sometimes difficult to decide which view philosophers
who have written on this subject wish to subscribe to. Russell
(who does not of course use the term "sense") locates the
descriptive content of a name in the description which is, 'in the
mind' of the person using the proper name5, so it is fairly clear

5. Russell: "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description", Mysticism and Logic, p. 204
that he is committed to the second version. Searle seems to be proposing the first version of the view, though some remarks about 'the use of a proper name' make one a bit dubious. 6 And Strawson seems to commit himself to both. 7 At any rate, both versions of the theory are well worth discussing.

3.7 The first view appears at its most plausible in the case of names of well known people - preferably long dead. Indeed, I am inclined to think it gives a very nearly correct account of such proper names. Take, for example, the case which Searle concentrates on:

Suppose we ask the users of a proper name, say "Aristotle", to state what they regard as essential and established facts about him. Their answers would constitute a set of descriptions, many elements of which would be identifying descriptions and the totality of which would be an identifying description. For example, Aristotle was a Greek; a philosopher; the tutor of Alexander the Great; the author of the Nicomachean Ethics, the Metaphysics, and the de Interpretatione; and the founder of the school of the Lyceum at Athens. Although no particular single one of these descriptions is analytically tied to the name "Aristotle", some indefinite subset of these descriptions is. A classical scholar might discover that Aristotle never tutored Alexander or that he did not write the Metaphysics; but if a classical scholar claimed to discover that Aristotle wrote none of the works attributed to him, and was not even a philosopher, but was in fact an obscure Venetian fishmonger of the late Renaissance, then the "discovery" would become a bad joke. The original set of statements

about Aristotle constitute the descriptive backing of the name in virtue of which and only in virtue of which we can teach and use the name. It makes sense to deny some of the members of the set of descriptions of the bearer of the name, but to deny all of them is to strip away the preconditions for using the name at all. 

...This is another way of saying that the disjunction of these descriptions is analytically tied to the name "Aristotle" — which is a quasi-—affirmative answer to the question "Do proper names have a sense?".

I have quoted this passage at length because it is important and — as far as the name "Aristotle" is concerned — partially correct. Let us, however, take another example. Suppose that we were to ask the users of the proper name "Ross Poole" for what they regard as 'essential and established facts' about him. The answers would not exhibit that pleasing unity which is a feature of the answers about Aristotle; in many cases the only feature which unifies the various descriptions which would be offered by different users of the name, would be the fact that they turn out to be true of the one person. What would turn out to constitute the sense of the name "Ross Poole" is the disjunctive set of an enormous body of facts about me which would, if chronologically ordered, make up a history of my life.

This result is not just counter-intuitive. If we insist on the notion of sense as that which governs the application of the name, it is clear that such a huge and amorphous body of information could not constitute the sense of the name "Ross Poole". This becomes clear if we return to the "Aristotle" case. Here there is a fairly select body of information, a high proportion of which one can reasonably expect most users of the name to possess; we can reasonably expect this because it is just this body of information which causes the man to be remembered and his name to

remain in use. It is normally by reference to just these facts that the name is introduced and taught. It is because of this that these facts constitute a reasonable common body of knowledge, and thus may serve as criteria to govern the application of the name. But there is no analogous body of information which is shared by all or even most users of the name "Ross Poole"; there is no reasonable select body of facts by reference to which the name is introduced. The identifying facts which some users of the name may know about me will be quite different to the identifying facts which other users of the name may know. Information (i.e. being told that certain facts were false) which might cause one user of the name hesitation about continuing to use the name would leave another user completely unperturbed. Of course, what one name user knows, and what another knows, and what a third knows, etc., can be combined in a long disjunction, but this provides only an artificial unity where none in fact exists. The point is that there is no set of individuating facts which functions as a common criterion (the word "common" is of course pleonastic) for the application of the name; and this shows that this version of the theory that every proper name has a sense is false.

3. 8 Let us now turn to the second version of the theory - the view that every correct use of a proper name must be associated (in some way or other) with a description or set of descriptions which identifies the bearer of the name. It is maintained on this theory that the user of the proper name must know ("in some not too exacting sense of the word" is Strawson's charming phrase) an identifying fact about the bearer of the name, and this identifying fact may be said to constitute the sense attaching to that use of the name.

This account makes it somewhat mysterious how different uses of a name hang together as different uses of the same name. We would intuitively, I think, hold that different uses of the one name even by different people embody the same mode of reference; on this account this feeling is false, and what ties different uses of the same name together will very often be the merely contingent fact that it is the same particular which is being referred to by these different uses.

The theory requires at least some modification to deal with the fact that I may use a proper name, be able to identify the bearer of the name (e.g. if perceptually confronted with him), and yet not know (in any sense of the word) an individuating fact about the bearer of the name. Such a situation would arise if I were to use two different proper names, not be able to provide a description which differentiated the two bearers, but would if the occasion arose be able to say which was which. So we will have to include in the sense which attaches to some uses of proper names not only facts about the bearer of the name but also certain abilities possessed by the user of the name. And this means that the notion of sense is beginning to stretch disconcertingly.

A more important objection — in fact, a crucial one — is provided by the fact that we can use a proper name and yet truthfully deny knowledge of any individuating facts about the bearer of the name and also deny the ability to perceptually identify the bearer of the name. We can use the name but, in neither of these senses, can we identify its bearer. "Who is John Doe?" I might ask on hearing the name; my hearer might answer by telling me some identifying facts about John Doe, or he might tell me something about John Doe which is not uniquely true of him, or he might not answer at all. I have used the name to ask for the information which on this theory I must already have if I am correctly to use the name. Or I might
have met John Doe at a party; talk about him as, e.g., being one of the people at the party, but not recall any specific facts about him (I met several people at the party); and certainly not be sure that I would recognise him again. Does my use of the name hang under a cloud until someone (a psychoanalyst perhaps) has established that I really do, underneath, know some specific fact about him, or I have shown that I really can pick him out (of a line up of possible candidates?). These consequences are just silly. 10

Of course, it is immensely useful to know some identifying facts about the bearer of a proper name one is using, and also useful to be able to perceptually pick him out if necessary. But it is certainly not a necessary condition for the correct use of the name. Having a good memory for names but a bad one for faces and facts does not disqualify one from using the names which one remembers.

So the slide from talking of the sense as attaching to the proper name to talking of it as attaching to the use of the proper name does not make the view that all proper names have a sense any more plausible. I will now try to develop an alternative account which does justice to some of the insights involved in the formulation of this account and provides an answer to the puzzles which led to its formulation.

3.9 One preliminary note: I pointed out that the theory that proper names have a determinate sense fits some proper names: "God" was the example I considered, but "Apollo", "Homer" and a few others could be handled by this account. Searle's theory that

10. These situations are not just exceptional ones. We do quite often (and I imagine that people in public life do very often) use proper names of people whom we recall meeting but not in circumstances which individuate just one person, do not know any identifying facts about the person, and would not be sure of recognising again.
proper names have a sense, but not a determinate, specific sense, tallies reasonably well with our feeling concerning the names of the great, famous, and long dead. Neither account, however, seems to fit our ordinary, everyday use of proper names - the names of our friends and acquaintances, those whom we hear about in gossip, read about in the minor items in the newspapers, and so on. And I think, though I know of no good way of showing this, that it is the latter use of proper names which should be our starting point, and that the names of the great, famous and long dead are atypical. At any rate, I intend to make these latter cases my starting point, and give an account of these in terms of which the former sort of name is atypical. Then I will try to show how this atypicality comes about.

3.10 So I will take as a starting point the proper names of the familiar, the everyday and the commonplace. I will offer an account designed to cover and explain our use of these names, and then suggest ways in which it might be extended to cover the names of the great and famous. And there is, I think, an immediately obvious fact about these proper names which is not mentioned by any of the accounts which I have so far discussed (with the honourable exception of Mill): these proper names have been assigned to or bestowed on those items which they name. This fact deserves some attention.

3.11 I will not be concerned with the various forms which the bestowal of a name may take. It is tempting to think of it as an act like the christening of a baby or the naming of a ship: someone who is authorised to bestow names performs the appropriate act ("I hereby name you . . .") in the appropriate circumstances, and the item is thereby named. But not all bestowals are formal acts of this sort: people often name their boats or their children without bothering with a ceremony. Even where a formal ceremony does take place, it is usually only of ritual significance: babies and boats have usually acquired their names long before the
appropriate dignitary performs the ceremony. What is usually the case is that someone decides that a certain item (ship, baby, or what have you) will bear a certain name, and this decision is respected, i.e., people do use that name to refer to that item. And there are various conventions as to who is in a position to decide on the name of a given item: parents are usually allowed the right to name their children, owners the right to name their ships, and explorers the right to name the mountain which they have discovered. But these rights can be and often are overridden in ways which are too familiar to need recounting. And sometimes a name may be said to have been bestowed on an item without anyone consciously deciding that that name should apply to that object; the acquisition of a nick-name is often like this. An expression is applied to someone in virtue of some characteristic he has or is alleged to have, and it acquires in its use the status of a proper name.

These latter cases are, I think, exceptional. An expression acquires the status of a proper name, which is to say that it is used like a proper name, i.e., as if it had been bestowed on the item to which it is used to refer as the name of that item. I suggest in other words that we take the decision to endow an item with a given name as a primary element in the bestowal of a proper name, and take the fact that it is actually used to refer to that item (or is not so used) as a test of the success of the bestowal. This is to say that in the primary case an item acquires a name (a) by the decision that a certain name should apply to that item, and (b) by the acceptance of that name as the name of that item; and to allow as a secondary case that an expression may come to be accepted as a name without its being consciously decided that it should operate as a name of the object to which it is used to refer.
3.12 I think that this provides sufficient material to suggest a tentative answer to the question "What is it about proper names which fits them for their role as referential devices?" We may say that an expression fills this role simply because it has been assigned to an item in order that it may be used to refer to that item; and that its having been assigned to fill this role is what makes an expression a proper name.

It is perhaps not clear how much explanatory value this tentative answer has. As it stands, it looks blatantly circular. It states, in effect, that we use a proper name in order to refer to an item because it has been assigned to that item in order to make this use possible, and it might be thought that this information does not carry us very far. There are two things to be said about this. First, the tentative answer does not have much explanatory value because there is, in fact, very little to be explained. There is nothing very mysterious about our use of proper names. We have the institution of proper names in order to give us a way of specifying objects over and above the ways provided by the mechanisms of indexical reference and individuation by description. The facts which constitute the institution (and this is deliberately over simple) are that we assign a name to an object and thereafter use the name to refer to that object. What obscures the issue, creates the mystery, and shows that this account is oversimple, is the fact that many proper names do not seem to fit this model, and it is by taking such proper names as their starting point that philosophers have overlooked the fact that the model exists.

The second thing which needs to be said concerns the apparent circularity of my tentative answer. The appearance of circularity arises from the fact that the notion of reference is used both in that which needs to be explained (proper name reference) and that which is put forward as an explanation (the bestowal of the name - conceived as that which makes proper name
reference possible. Now if my tentative answer was put forward as an explication of the notion of reference, then it would be circular and quite useless. But of course it is not, nor is intended to be, an explication of the notion of reference; rather it is an account of certain characteristics of an expression which enable it to be used as a vehicle of reference, and this is quite different. I take it for granted that we know (roughly) what it is to refer to something; it is to use some expression to pick out an item in order to talk about that item (see above 2.3). The question at issue concerns proper name reference, that is, how it comes about that proper names can perform this function. And to say in answer to this question that proper names have been assigned to those items which they can be used to refer to is not circular. When we use a proper name we do not assert that it has been bestowed on that item which it names; rather, we make use of the fact that it has been bestowed in order to say something about that on which it has been bestowed. Just as the gesture with which we locate an item in a case of demonstrative reference is not 'part' of what we say, but is something we make use of in order to say something, so too, the bestowal of a proper name is not 'part' of what we say when we use a proper name, but rather is something on which we rely when we use a proper name.

3.13 So far, what I have said is clearly just an expansion on Mill's position. As such, it requires one important modification. Mill assumed that a name applies to that which it names whatever changes it undergoes. I have already noted some difficulties concerning this assumption, but it is certainly a highly compelling one. Surely, part of the point of assigning a name to an object is to provide a way of referring to that object which will be unaffected by changes which the thing may undergo. But what Mill overlooked is the fact that, in order to be able to talk about the same thing undergoing change, we need to introduce a term which indicates the kind of thing in question and which provides a criterion for sameness through change. He was right in insisting
that the name applies to the individual which endures through change, but he did not appreciate the requirement of a criterion for what is to count as the same individual enduring through change, and without which we cannot differentiate endurance through change from becoming something else.

Certain changes which an object undergoes will not count against its being the same thing. My car, for example, may gain a few dents, a new bumper bar, a fresh coat of paint, and yet remain the same car. Other changes, however, will be such that they will count against that which the object has become being the same as that which it was. My car will eventually be broken up for scrap; the collection of scrap metal will not be the same car as my car now, for the collection of scrap metal will not be a car, though certainly the collection of metal is the same collection of metal as that of which my car is now composed. Let us assume that I assign the name "Major Bull" to my car; those changes (e.g. of bumper bar) which do not count against its remaining the same car will, ipso facto, not count against the continued application of the name. When, however, the car is broken up for scrap, I can only say of the collection of metal which it has become that it was Major Bull; I cannot, except sardonically, say that it is Major Bull. But I might, somewhat eccentrically, have assigned the name to just that collection of metal of which my car is now composed. In this case, the acquisition of a new bumper bar will count against its being the same collection of metal, and therefore count against the continued application of the name. But the dismantling of the car will not count against what remains being the same collection of metal as that to which the name was assigned, and in this case I could say of the collection of metal that it is Major Bull.

In the first case, the name "Major Bull" is tied to the term "car". It applies to something which is a car, and it is
that item's being a car which provides a criterion of identity through change. In the second case, the name is tied to the term "collection of metal"; it applies to that which is a collection of metal (rather than to that which is composed of that collection of metal) and this also provides a criterion for identity through change, though a different criterion of identity to that provided by the term "car". It is only when we introduce such a term - one which indicates a kind of thing and which provides a criterion of identity for that kind of thing which it covers - that we can make judgments concerning sameness and difference through change. And this indicates that Mill's theory is, in the simple form in which he advanced it, wrong. To understand the application of a name to the individual which endures through change - something on which Mill rightly insisted - we must understand the proper name as going with a general term which provides a criterion of sameness through change. 11

3.14 This is to say that for every proper name there must be an associated general term which indicates the kind of item named and which provides a criterion of identity for that which is named. I will follow current practice and refer to such general terms as sortal terms. 12 This is of course an affirmative answer to the question "Do proper names have a sense?" But this does not involve giving up that part of Mill's view which insisted that proper names are not associated with an individuating description. On the view which I am advancing there is for every proper name a necessary proposition of the form 'N is F' where 'F' is a sortal term; the view which I reject is that there is for

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11. The issues raised in the preceding three paragraphs are far too complex to be dealt with in such a brief space. I deal with some of the issues raised in the next chapter.

every proper name a necessary proposition of the form 'N is the $\emptyset$'
where 'the $\emptyset$' is a non-trivial individuating description. (By
saying "non-trivial" I wish to rule out such 'individuating
descriptions' as "the same F as N".) Philosophers who have
maintained the second thesis have done so in order to explain how
a given proper name latches onto that particular thing which it
names. On my theory, this is explained by reference to the fact
that the name has been bestowed on that item which it names, not
by claiming that the name is associated with a description which
individuates that item.\footnote{13}

In insisting that every proper name must be understood as
going with a sortal general term, I do not claim that we, on
seeing or hearing a name, automatically catch on to what the
appropriate sortal term is; what I am claiming, rather, is that
we must, in order to understand a proposition employing a proper
name, understand the appropriate general term. This implies that
when we come across a proper name and do not know what sort of
thing it is a name of, we simply do not understand what is said.
In point of fact this situation is quite rare; in most cases, the
surrounding context - linguistic or otherwise - conveys the
necessary information.

One objection to this account would be to claim that it
will always be an essentially arbitrary decision as to what general
term we take to be associated with a particular proper name. Is,
for example, the appropriate sortal for the name "Fido" the general
term "dog" or the general term "animal"? And how do we go about
deciding such a question? I think that a reasonable answer to
this question is that in such cases we choose the more specific of
the competing sortals, though with the rider that the sortal must

\footnote{13. The view of proper names which I am advocating is substantially
similar to that of Geach; see, for example, his Mental acts
pp. 69-71, and Reference and Generality (Ithaca, New York:
Cornell University Press, 1962), especially Ch.2. My use of
the notion of bestowal to characterise those expressions which
are proper names may be seen as playing roughly the same role
as Geach's 'act of naming' - a notion which I find rather
mysterious.}
cover the 'life-span' of the item in question, i.e. we choose the most specific sortal term of those which encompass the period over which the name applies. And a rough guide to this will be provided by the way in which the name is actually used - which is exactly what we would expect. So in the above case, we would choose the sortal "dog" rather than the sortal "animal". This procedure seems, in most cases, to produce an intuitively acceptable answer, and if it requires a rationale (i.e. an explanation of why this procedure produces the right answer), we might point to the fact that the more specific the sortal, the more determinate the criteria of identity, and thus that it is simply more convenient for us (i.e. the users of the proper name) to operate with the more specific sortal term.

But there are difficulties consequent upon the adoption of this rule of procedure. We can well imagine, it might be argued, that Fido turn into an elephant, and still be Fido. And indeed, if we tell an appropriate (fairy) story, such a possibility does seem to be intelligible. This suggests that the sortal "dog" is too specific; one is tempted to introduce "animal" in order to encompass the envisaged change. But even this turns out to be too specific: we might further imagine that Fido turn into a block of stone (after all, fairy-tale princes do, why not fairy-tale dogs?); if the story was plausibly told, and if the stone turned back into a dog, we might well be prepared to say of the block of stone that it is Fido. And there just does not seem to be a sortal, which we could plausibly designate as that tied to the name "Fido", wide enough to cover this sort of change.

It would be nice to have at hand a simple reply to this objection, but there is none available: the issues raised are far too deep and complex to admit of neat rebuttal. But it is important to note that the problems raised by this objection are quite general ones, and do not arise just from the account of
proper names which I have been proposing. Any account of sameness through change must sooner or later deal with the question of sameness through substantial change or sameness through 'becoming'. I think that we understand (roughly) what it is for a thing of kind $F$ to change in some way and yet remain the same $F$; after all, we successfully operate with this notion all the time. What we don't understand easily is the (usually hypothetical) case of a thing of kind $F$ becoming a thing of kind $G$, and yet in some sense remaining the same thing (but the same what?). What I say on this must necessarily be somewhat sketchy and programmatic.

3.16 For a start it is worth noting that the telling of a prima facie intelligible story ("Fido turned into an elephant, then into a block of stone, then back into a dog again") does not of itself show that what is envisaged in the story is logically or conceptually possible. Science fiction does not establish the logical possibility of time-travel. Superficial intelligibility may mask internal incoherence. A further point: a story does not have to be understood in the terms in which it is told. One might insist, for example, that we can interpret the story about Fido, and perhaps can only understand that story, insofar as we take it to concern a dog which assumes different appearances or guises ("Fido assumed the appearance of an elephant, then of a block of stone, and then resumed his normal appearance") rather than of a dog undergoing substantial change. This sort of interpretation does appear to be demanded by many of the traditional metamorphosis stories, e.g. by Apuleius' *Golden Ass*. Here, the thoughts and behaviour of the 'ass' must be understood as the thoughts and behaviour of a man who has, against his will, assumed the appearance of an ass. (The lascivious noblewoman of the story was not after all guilty of bestiality.)

I think that this interpretation will generally be available to us in the fairy-tale cases we might have to deal with;
but this is not to say that it will always be available. In other words, I take it to be a possibility that an item N be individuated under the sortal "F" - a sortal which we take to encompass the life span of the item N; that circumstances arise such that N ceases to be an F, and yet where we do not want to say that N has ceased to be; but rather than N has become a G. Such a situation would arise for someone who thought that tadpoles lived and died as tadpoles, when he discovered that tadpoles become frogs; it could arise for us as the consequence of some unpleasant scientific experimentation. What is clear is that in these cases we will rely on strong evidence of physical continuity, and ultimately on a belief in the existence of some scientific explanation of the phenomenon. This latter is important (it is this which marks the difference between fairy-tale 'turning into' and real life becoming): it is when we see the change as something grounded in the being of the item before the change, a potentiality which is at least capable of scientific explanation (i.e. of being related to certain of its 'actual' characteristics), then do we feel happiest about claiming that there is an identity between that which survived, and that which underwent the change.14.

When we make such an identity claim we do not do so on the criteria of identity which we had associated with the item before we knew about this sort of change; we extend those criteria in order to cope with the change. We may even introduce a new sortal term to make explicit the difference; more commonly we retain the old one, but understand it differently. We have discovered that in certain circumstances an F may become a G; we now know more about what it is to be an F (and also to be a G); and this understanding will be reflected in our employment of the

14. It might be suggested that we need the notion of 'same stuff' to cope with the phenomenon of substantial change; there is, however, no obvious sense in which that which exists subsequent to a change must be the 'same stuff' as that which existed prior to it. In fact, one would expect the contrary.
sortal term "F" (and the sortal term "G").

That sortal concepts should have this capacity for change in the criteria of identity which they carry should not surprise us. We simply must be prepared under certain circumstances to overhaul our conception of what constitutes being a thing of a certain kind and of what counts as being the same thing of a certain kind. Scientific discovery may force us to recognise empirical relationships between kinds and potentialities for change which things of a certain kind have, of which we had hitherto been ignorant. We cannot, therefore, insist dogmatically that certain changes are impossible; what we can insist is that the change be accountable for in terms of what we know or suppose to be true of the item before the change.

So I do not think that the mere possibility of certain drastic changes in the item which bears a given name is itself sufficient to refute the thesis that the sortal term tied to that name is that term which encompasses the anticipated life-span of the item. Rather, we must take into account a certain openness in the criteria of identity carried by that term, i.e. the possibility that such a drastic change might force us to overhaul the criteria of identity carried by that term. But this is not to say that the criteria of identity can or should be overhauled in order to deal with the mere possibility of a substantial change (e.g. by someone's telling a fairy story): to do so would rule out the possibility of there being any specific criteria of identity at all.

3.17 It is time to return to the main thread of the argument. The account of proper names which I have offered so far does not cover, nor is intended to cover, any but those proper names which I have assumed to be the central and paradigm cases - the names of friends and acquaintances, of objects with which we are familiar, the names which will never figure in history books. I now want to say something about the cases which this account
If we take the whole range of (grammatical) proper names, we have, I think, a spectrum of cases, with the names which I have tried to cover with my account at one end, and names like "God" and "Homer" at the other. As should be clear from what I have already said, I take these latter names to be replaceable by definite descriptions. The name "God" means the most perfect possible being, and applies to whatever is the most perfect possible being; it is grammatically, but not logically, a proper name. No one has ever met God, and it is not therefore possible that the name could have been bestowed upon him. Rather, God is introduced to us by means of a fairly narrow set of descriptions and continues to be associated with that set of descriptions; it is therefore plausible to suggest that the name is tied to just that set of descriptions.

The vast range of intermediate cases can be approached from a consideration of the familiar ones. The people (things) we meet and are introduced to by name may be introduced to us under the guise of a definite description, but they may not. The people we hear about are presented under a description, but even then we do not learn the name as tied to that description. If we did, we would have to allow that the name that we had learned is a different name to that which was originally assigned to that person, since the description tied to that name would be different. Rather, because we understand the institution of proper names, we understand the name as a device for referring to an item whatever descriptions happen to become or have been true of it. However, it does seem to be the case that the further the bearer of a name is removed from us, the more important the descriptions which happen to be true of him become. Partly this is because the way in which the name is introduced to us becomes more and more closely tied to what are taken to be centrally important facts about its bearer - those facts which
cause him to be remembered and brought to our attention. Perhaps too, it is because the facts become more important than the item which, as it were, underlies the facts. We become increasingly interested in whatever it was that did X, Y and Z, rather than in the item which happened to do X, Y and Z. But whatever the reason is, it does seem to be the case that as the bearer of a name recedes into the past, then that name becomes increasingly associated with the descriptions which we take to be true of the bearer of the name. Which is to say that the name becomes increasingly like an individuating set of descriptions.

Interestingly, however, we can on occasion sever the connection between such a name and the individuating set of descriptions it has become associated with. I might, for example, entertain the possibility that Aristotle had died in early childhood in order to speculate on the course which philosophy would then have taken. Such speculation is perhaps idle and futile; it does, however, appear to be intelligible. In speculating thus, I am employing "Aristotle" as if it were one of my paradigm proper names, i.e. I am relying on (the supposition of) its having been bestowed upon some determinate man independently of the specific identifying descriptions which happen to be (or to become) true of that man. I might have moved in the opposite direction. (I here begin to treat the objections which I raised earlier in the chapter to Mill's theory of proper names - objections which appear to apply equally to the version which I have proposed.) I might, for example, claim or suppose that Aristotle did not exist. In this case, I am relying on the

15. Thus, Searle's theory of proper names does not even quite fit those cases in terms of which it is introduced. A 'name' which Searle's account does fit (exactly) is "Jack the Ripper". A moment's consideration will show just how far this expression differs from our ordinary proper names.
descriptive information which has become associated with the name, and am claiming or supposing that no one item satisfies these descriptions; I am thus severing the connection between this name and my paradigms. In raising the existential question, I am, inter alia, impugning the status of "Aristotle" as a name. We can do this when (but not quite only when) the name has come to be generally associated with a reasonably determinate set of descriptions, that is, when the name has begun to stray close to the borderline between names and descriptions. In such a borderline situation, we may, as it were, pull the name in either of two directions: we may raise a question concerning the existence of its bearer, and thus treat the 'name' as a description; or we may raise the question concerning the application of the descriptions (which are associated with the name) to the bearer of the name, thus treating it as if it were a central case proper name. Normally, of course, our use of such a name locates it exactly where it belongs - on the borderline.

3.19 This account implies that those proper names which I have taken to be central cannot significantly occur in existential propositions. I think that this is almost but not quite, correct. It certainly tallies with the fact that such proper names do not commonly occur in existential propositions and also with the oddity of most examples which come to mind. There are however some cases which ought to be mentioned. Let us assume that "Nosmo King" is an example of one of my paradigm proper names. I might say "If Nosmo King did not exist, the world would be a poorer place" or "If Nosmo King did not exist, there would be one less person in the world." Clearly these are quite intelligible propositions, and thus their antecedent existential propositions must be significant.

My reply to these cases is that they seem to make use of a sense of 'exists' which does not require that its subject have a descriptive content. This, of course, looks terribly ad hoc. I
can only try to lessen this appearance by appealing to certain parallel cases where it is quite clear that the subject expression does not have a descriptive content (at least, no more descriptive content than the name "Nosmo King"). Thus, I might say "If this typewriter did not exist, the world would be a poorer place" or "If this typewriter did not exist, there would be one typewriter less in the world". It seems to me that both these pairs of cases make use of a sense of 'exists' which is not covered by the ordinary analysis (deriving from Frege and Russell) which I have been assuming in this chapter. I think that this suggestion has some intuitive plausibility, and on this (in the absence of any more solid foundation) I must rely. 16

3.20 On the account which I have offered, a linguistic expression acquires the status of a proper name by being bestowed on an item. This has the consequence that there can be no 'vacuous' proper names. This is counter-intuitive if we take the class of proper names to be coextensive with the grammatical category of proper names, but that this is a mistake is shown by the behaviour of such grammatical proper names as "God" and "Homer". It also has the consequence that we may use an expression under the impression that it is a proper name, and yet be mistaken. Once again, I don't think that this is very worrying. If the expression has some more or less determinate descriptive content, then what we say in using it will be significant but (assuming the correctness of the Russellian account) false. If the expression lacks a descriptive content, e.g. if a 'name' without a bearer has been introduced into some

16. One suggestion: it seems to me that the second proposition of each pair may be analytically true. This suggests that the second sense of 'exists' is such that the negation of a proposition employing it entails that if all other things are equal the universe contains exactly one less item of that kind than it in fact does. But I am not yet sure of where to move from this.
list for the purposes of a joke, then I am inclined to think that what is said with the use of that expression is not significant, i.e. it lacks a truth value; it will be in principle impossible to say of what (in any sense of the word) something has been said. 17

This sort of view might be criticized for making a question of analysis, i.e. a question as to the logical status of a certain expression, contingent on a question of fact. This criticism has some point: it certainly is a matter of fact whether or not a given expression has been assigned to an object as the name of that object. Nonetheless, it just is this fact which gives the expression the status of a proper name (or, if the expression has not been bestowed, disallows it from being a proper name); and thus we may well have to make what is in a sense an empirical investigation in order to determine whether a given expression is a proper name. And this simply shows, what we might have expected anyway, that there is no hard and fast borderline between matters of analysis and matters of fact.

3.21 This brings me to the batch of problems concerning identity. Where two proper names have acquired descriptive associations it is not difficult to see how they might be conjoined in an informative identity proposition; nor is it difficult to see how a proper name which has no accretion of descriptive information may be conjoined with a proper name which has acquired such an accretion to yield an informative identity proposition. And where two proper names have much the same descriptive content, they may be conjoined so as to yield an analytic identity. The more interesting case will be that in which two proper names which have not acquired a descriptive content are used to assert an identity.

17. Very roughly, there are two ways in which one might answer the question "What are you talking about?": one would involve giving a description, and the other using some ostensive device. Neither way is available in the case where a 'proper name' (a) has no descriptive content, and (b) has no bearer.
claim - a case which, it is worth noting, is fairly rare, but may nonetheless arise (if only in a philosophical example). Clearly the notion of analyticity is out of place here (I have assumed, perhaps wrongly, that it has a place in other contexts) - the 'meaning' that such proper names have (i.e. the sortal term with which they will be associated) could not be sufficient to yield a proposition which is 'true by virtue of meaning alone'. Still, the information which such an identity proposition would convey could only, presumably, concern the use of expressions - in this case, that two proper names have the same use - so there is a notion analogous to that of analyticity which does seem to be applicable to these cases. (One might draw the parallel in this way: "Nosmo King is Charlie Brown" stands to "The same person is called both 'Nosmo King' and 'Charlie Brown'" in much the same relationship as "A brother is a male sibling" stand to "The expressions 'brother' and 'male sibling' are synonymous.")

If one were to turn from (or drop completely) the notion of analyticity in favour of a conception of necessity, in which a necessary proposition is conceived as one which could not but be true, or as one which is true in all possible worlds, one might well hold that, in this sense, true identity propositions involving non-descriptive proper names are necessary. After all, if NK is CB, how could it be that NK not be CB? To suppose that NK and CB be different people is to suppose that they not be themselves, and this is impossible. I do not at the moment wish to advocate this particular conception of necessity; I introduce it because (a) it does give a sense to the thesis that certain identity propositions involving (paradigm) proper names are necessary, and (b) it disassociates the question of the modality of an identity proposition from other questions, e.g. concerning the 'informativeness' of the proposition, whether or not it is trivial, with which this question has often been confused.
3.22. The main point I want to make is that it is the notion of identity and the question of the modality of identity propositions which are difficult, not the occurrence of proper names in identities. Of course, there are difficulties in construing "Cicero is Tully" and "Nosmo King is Charlie Brown", and of course there are problems as to whether either or both or neither of these express necessary propositions. These difficulties arise through the obscurity of the notions of identity and necessity, not, I think, because of specific problems concerning proper names. And a similar remark could have been made concerning the occurrence of proper names in existential propositions: it is the topic of existence which is difficult, not that of proper names. Of course, there are complications about proper names - there is a range of cases which have to be considered. However, these complications can be accommodated in the framework of an account which is basically that of unreflective common sense. If we take as our starting point the idea that we assign proper names to things simply to give us a way of talking about them, we can, I think, account for the complications - perhaps not simply in terms of this paradigm, but certainly in terms of explicable deviations from it.
4.1 In the preceding chapter I have made use of the thesis that meaningful assertions or denials of identity require reference to a criterion of identity and this thesis warrants fairly careful examination. As far as possible I will try to discuss it in a way which is independent of the issues which I have so far discussed. A convenient peg for my discussion is provided by the claim - made for example by Geach - that the requirement of a criterion of identity should be made explicit in our formulation of identity propositions; that we simply cannot understand the bare assertion of "a is the same as b" (where "a" and "b" are referring expressions) except as elliptical for "a is the same as b" (where "F" is the term providing the relevant criterion of identity). On this view the formula 'a = b' is at best misleading and at worst nonsense; a more perspicuous representation of identity propositions would be 'a = _F b'.

4.2 An initial worry is provided by the notion of a criterion but this I must skim over rather quickly. My employment of the term is, I think, covered by the following formulations:

The criterion for a phenomenon (thing, event, etc.) P will be the circumstance or set of circumstances C such that the existence or occurrence of P consists in or is constituted by C.

The 'phenomena' in which I am interested are identities. Thus:

The criterion of identity for _Øs is that circumstance or set of circumstances which constitutes identity for _Øs.

And further:

What circumstances count as the criterion of

1. Geach: Reference & Generality, p.39. This book will be cited as RG.
identity for $\emptyset$ is discovered not by empirical investigation but by understanding and analysing the concept $\emptyset$.

An example might make this clearer: It is often claimed that spatio-temporal continuity is a criterion of identity for physical objects. This I interpret as the claim that identity for physical objects consists in spatio-temporal continuity; that spatio-temporal continuity is not one circumstance which stands in some relation to another distinct circumstance, namely physical identity, but rather that it is that circumstance which constitutes physical identity. And further, we come to understand that this is the circumstance which constitutes physical identity by our understanding and analysis of what it is to be a physical object.

Criteria of identity hold a privileged position vis-a-vis those other circumstances (evidence for identity, 'symptoms' of identity) which might provide a ground or basis for judgements of identity. When the criterial conditions are not available to us (as often they are not) we must perforce rely on other circumstances in judging as to an identity. Such a reliance may be well-founded but it involves a step from the evidence to the judgement and it is thus susceptible to overthrow by the failure of the criterial conditions to bear out the judgement. If, on the other hand, one can ensure that the criterial conditions are satisfied, then there is no further step to make in order to arrive at the judgement of identity. One dimension of possible failure which pervades judgements based on evidence is not present in the case of judgements based on criteria.

One would like, for clarity's sake if nothing else, to be able to say that there is no dimension of possible failure present in these cases. This, however, would commit one to the view that a criterial condition is always logically sufficient for that of which it is a criterion, and there seems to be good reason to be
dubious about this. For one thing, it is clear that those philosophers who appeal to the notion of a criterion (e.g. Malcolm, Strawson) have something less than a logically sufficient condition in mind. For another, it is a disputed question whether we can always formulate logically sufficient (but not trivially tautologous) conditions for all empirical phenomena (or for the application of all empirical concepts). To put this in my terminology; it is not clear whether for every phenomenon \( \emptyset \) we can state the constitutive characteristics of \( \emptyset \) in such a way that they could not, when taken together with some other feature, constitute something else (Waismann's 'cat' is a good example to bear in mind). It seems that the best that we can do is state that criteria are standardly logically sufficient for that of which they are criteria, and this claim must remain obscure until more work has been done on the logic of standard and deviant cases.\(^2\)

But this is not the place to attempt to develop a theory of criteria. What I have said is schematic and incomplete and leaves the rough edges of the conception still rough; it will, however, serve my purposes.

4.3 I will once again use the expression "sortal term" to do duty for those concepts which cover and supply criteria of identity for things. I will not for the moment be concerned with criteria of identity for stuffs and thus not with stuff-words. Prima facie, but only prima facie, evidence for an expressions being a sortal term will be the acceptability of its functioning in

expressions like "is the same --- as". Conclusive evidence would be that it does carry criteria of identity for those items which it covers (which would also establish that these 'items' were items in a philosophically important sense). Conclusive counter evidence would consist in establishing that a certain term does not or could not carry criteria of identity.

4. 4 It is obvious that some different terms, if they carry criteria of identity at all, carry different criteria of identity. Consider the following cases:

The stone that I tripped over today is the same one that I moved yesterday.

I will meet you at the same time tomorrow.

I will meet you at the same place tomorrow.

He gives the same lecture at every university he visits.

It is hard to believe that the same symphony could be given such different interpretations.

Ramon and 'Che' Guevara turned out to be the same person.

All great tragedies have the same theme.

(It might be objected that not all these are examples of 'strict', 'numerical' identity. However they all are or contain identity propositions, and if strict, numerical identity is something over and above mere identity, then it is not my concern at the moment.)

It is clear that the criteria of identity for stones will be very different to the criteria of identity for symphonies; similarly for persons and lectures, themes and times, and so on for almost any pair of the above random selection. It is this which gives weight to the argument that we must reject the formulation 'a = b' as expressing a representative form of all these identities. It would be argued that it is at best mis-
leading in that the identity sign will be systematically ambiguous depending on which sortal term provided the relevant criterion of identity; at worst it will simply be meaningless: if we interpret the identity sign as being unequivocal this would imply that we can assert, e.g., identity of stones in the same sense as we can assert identity of symphonies, and the existence of such radically different criteria rules this out as nonsense. Rather, identities should be represented on the pattern \( a =_F b \) with a place provided for the sortal term which provides the relevant criterion of identity.

4. 5 One way to upset this line of reasoning would be to deny the strong connection which is assumed to hold between meaning and criteria (as, for example, Hare denied the connection between meaning and criteria for the word "good"). One might thus concede the existence of different criteria of identity without thereby having to admit that expressions for identity, like "is the same as", are either systematically ambiguous or incomplete. We can, it might be argued, understand the expression "is the same as" in the proposition "a is the same as b" without knowing what sort of thing a and b are and, a fortiori, without knowing the relevant criteria of identity. A test of our understanding is provided not by our knowledge of the relevant criteria of identity but by our grasp of what David Wiggins calls "the formal principles which define the traditional concept of identity" - namely Leibniz's Law (hereafter LL) and the principles of transitivity, reflexivity and symmetry.³

At this point we have reached a 'failure of comprehension' impasse. The dispute is over the admissability of the formula

'a = b' as an adequate representation of identity propositions. One proponent of the dispute claims that it is unintelligible as it stands (i.e. except as interpreted as short for 'a =\_F b'); the other claims to have no difficulty in understanding it.

4. 6 In order not to get involved in this particular game I will side-track for a moment and concentrate on a further point at issue between the disputants: their attitude to one of the traditional 'formal principles' of identity, namely LL. This is usually formulated as follows:

\[(a = b) \Rightarrow (\emptyset)(\emptyset a = \emptyset b)\]

and may be reformulated, employing the suggested 'relativistic' formulation of identity, as:

\[(a =_F b) \Rightarrow (\emptyset)(\emptyset a = \emptyset b)\]

(I use "F", "G", etc. for sortal terms only; "\emptyset", "\emptyset_F", etc. as unrestricted predicate variables.)

For a start it is worth noting, as Wiggins does, how seemingly uncontrovertible LL is: "How if a is b could there be something true of the object a which was untrue of the object b? After all, they are the same object." (But those whom Wiggins is arguing against would object to his formulation. They would argue that the term "object" does not carry a criterion of identity (i.e. is not a sortal term) and thus that this statement of the intuitive case for LL is not well-formed.)

Wiggins also provides other reasons (i.e. other than intuitive ones) for the acceptance of LL: (i) that it alone of the other 'formal principles' seems to mark off what is peculiar to identity; (ii) that there are no genuine counter-examples; and (iii) that it legitimises a form of argument that we cannot easily abandon. Of these reasons, (ii) is, if correct, by far

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4. DW, p.5.
the most compelling. If there were any genuine counter-examples to LL, (i) and (iii), even taken together with our intuitive feeling that LL must be right, would not suffice to sustain it (though they might persuade to put off as long as possible the day when we recognise apparent counter-examples to LL as genuine counter-examples).

4.7 Are there any genuine counter-examples? Geach, in arguing for the claim that the term which provides the criterion for an identity should find a place in the statement of the identity, uses arguments which imply that there could be counter-examples to LL. He allows, for example, "that different official personalities may be one and the same man." While this particular example is not a very compelling one, it is clear what Geach is driving at. He takes it to be a possibility that two terms be conjoined in a true identity proposition under one criterion of identity and yet yield a false identity proposition when conjoined under a different criterion of identity. That is to say he claims that it is possible that we might have a true proposition of the following form:

$$(RT) \quad (a \neq_G b) \land Ga \land (a \neq_F b)$$

(The second conjunct is necessary in order to rule out the trivial

5. I ignore here the cases which have caused most concern in the literature - modal and intensional predicates - as being irrelevant to the matter at hand.

6. RG, p.157. While Geach's position on identity is the position which is being considered in this chapter, I do not explicitly consider his arguments for it. This is partly because those contained in RG have, I think, been adequately dealt with elsewhere (see Quine's review of RG (Philosophical Review Vol. 73 (1964), pp. 100-104), p.102, and Helen Morris Cartwright: "Heraclitus and the Bath Water" (Philosophical Review Vol.74 (1965), pp.466-485)); and partly because a later argument (see Geach: "Identity" (Review of Metaphysics Vol. 21 (1967-68), pp. 3-12)) came to my attention too late for a consideration of it to be assimilated into this chapter.
case where neither a nor b is a G; e.g. "Cicero is the same man as Tully but is not the same elephant as Tully").

Now it is clear that if there are propositions of the form RT then the claim that we must represent identities in such a way that the relevant criterion of identity is made explicit has been established. And it is also clear (and can easily be demonstrated if it is not\(^7\)) that the existence of propositions of this form is incompatible with the truth of LL. So it looks as if we have to choose between the 'relativity thesis' and LL; and if it turns out there are no plausible examples of RT then presumably the overwhelmingly plausible and immensely useful LL will win the day. So it seems that one should begin by considering whether there are in fact any plausible instances of RT.

4. 8 This formulation of the dispute is, however, misleading. The point of view which underlies the proposal of 'a =\(_T\) b' as an analysis of identity propositions is not one which clashes with LL, at least not with LL in the sense in which it is intuitively 'seemingly uncontroversible' - it may well clash with certain formulations of it. I will argue that in order to understand LL as a formal principle of identity, and in order to explain the apparent counter-examples to it, we do need to make explicit the role of criteria in the formulation of identity judgements. The basis issue between LL and the view that claims for identity demand a criterion of identity and that different identities may well have to be considered under different criteria is not a question of incompatibility but of priority.

I will try to cast some light on this claim now. Wiggins claims that "LL and its contrapositive give a

\(^7\) As Wiggins does, DW, pp.3-4.
sufficient criterion of difference but none of identity." This claim is puzzling. It suggests that there is an asymmetry between criteria of difference and criteria of identity in that we can formulate a completely general principle which provides a criterion of difference while there is no parallel general principle which provides a criterion of identity. In other words while different sorts of things, e.g. lectures, stones, themes, will have different criteria of identity, everything will share the same criterion of difference.

One could imagine a philosopher seizing on this and arguing that we have no need of criteria of identity. We have criteria of difference, which is to say that we have a basis on which we can judge that two items are not the same, and this provides an indirect basis on which we can judge as to identity. We can simply treat every identity claim as an hypothesis which becomes more and more strongly confirmed as it successfully resists refutation by the application of the principle expressing the criterion of difference. We thus have no requirement of an independent criterion of identity; together with the other formal principles - contains all that we need to know about identity since it enables us to establish difference and failure to establish difference provides, indirectly, a ground for judgements of identity.

Let us consider in the light of this the following two identity claims (both of which happen to be false):

(1) I (Ross Poole) am the same person as a certain child, Bobo, living in N.S.W. twenty years ago.

(2) I (Ross Poole) am the same person as a certain adult, Robert Smith, living in N.S.W. at the moment.

One might 'refute' (1) by pointing out that there were things true

8. DW, p.34; see also Note 47, p.73.
of Bobo which are not true of me. This, it seems, puts us in a position to state a proposition of the form \( \varnothing a \land \varnothing b \) and this, with the aid of \( \mathbb{L} \), is sufficient for the falsity of \( a = b \). But of course we have misstated our facts. If this were sufficient to refute (1), it would also be sufficient to refute any claims for identity through change. We have ignored the fact that Bobo had these characteristics in 1948 and I lack them in 1968, and there is no incompatibility between the facts as thus formulated and the claim that I am identical with Bobo. What we have is a proposition of the form \( \varnothing (a \land b) \) and this, with the aid of \( \mathbb{L} \), is sufficient for the falsity of \( a = b \). So (1) remains unrefuted.

What we need to refute (1) is a proposition of the form \( \varnothing (a \land b) \) and prima facie such a proposition does not seem difficult to obtain. What we might do is establish that Bobo throughout 1948 displayed a keen interest in model aeroplanes while I displayed no such interest or that in 1968 I am interested in puzzles about identity whilst Bobo is not. And in fact we can quite easily establish either or both of these two facts. But in order to do so, or at least in order to do so in such a way that they have a bearing on (1), we have to be able to establish that Ross-Poole-of-1968 is the same person as Ross-Poole-of-1948 or that Bobo-of-1948 is the same person as Bobo-of-1968.

How would we establish either of these? If we proceed as recommended we must treat each identity claim as an hypothesis and look for incompatible predicates. And of course we will not find any. But in this respect it is hard to see how the (true) claim that Poole-in-1948 is the same as Poole-in-1968 is in any better position than the (false) claim that Bobo-in-1948 is the same as Poole-in-1968. Certainly we can find predicates which apply to Bobo-in-1948 which are incompatible with predicates which apply to Poole (at any time), e.g. "is not the same person as Poole", but in order to be in a
position to apply these predicates we must already have settled the identity question. What would conclusively establish the first identity claim and refute the second would be to establish that Poole-in-1968 is physically and psychologically continuous with Poole-in-1948, and discontinuous with Bobo-in-1948. If we could establish this we would be in a position to ascribe predicates to Poole which are incompatible with predicates of Bobo. But this would be because we have established the identity and difference in question. We have established the presence in one case and the absence in the other of the criterial conditions which constitute identity for persons.

We could sum up the argument in the following way:
Identity through change presents the problem for a proponent of LL in that any change will be a change in predicates and this is prima facie incompatible with LL. LL can be maintained by introducing temporal qualifications into the predicates, but this renders it utterly useless as a criterion (though its status as a formal principle is not impugned) because we are never in a position to ascribe these predicates until we have settled the question of identity. And in settling the question of the identity what is relevant is not the formal and general principle LL, but the particular criterion relevant to the particular identity.

Nor does LL fare much better if employed as a basis for the refutation of (2). By hypothesis, Robert Smith is in N.S.W., and I am in the United Kingdom; further, we know that N.S.W. and U.K. are two spatially discontinuous regions. But this by itself does not refute the identity claim. We cannot eke out of this information two predicates which are incompatible in the sense that they could not be true of one and the same thing. Being at two places at the one time can be true, for example, of one and the same flu epidemic, and presumably could be true of
one and the same God. Of course, they are incompatible for persons since persons can't (logically) be in two spatially discontinuous regions at the same time, and given that the identity claim is between persons, they are sufficient to refute it. But by introducing the term "person" we have gone beyond LL and based our judgement of difference on the criteria relevant to identity and difference for persons. It is only given these that we are entitled to move from the above information to the claim either that Smith is not in the United Kingdom or that Poole is not in N.S.W. both of which are, when taken together with LL, formally incompatible with the truth of (2).

I do not intend by these examples to throw doubt on LL considered as a formal principle (though we still have to consider the alleged exceptions to it). Rather they are intended to demonstrate that we do not and could not simply employ LL as a criterion even in order to make judgements of difference. Our judgement as to whether two items are the same or different must always be made on the basis of what sort of thing the two items are (or are judged to be); it is only in working on this foundation that we can marshal the information relevant to the identity. The crucial role is filled by the criteria of identity; LL applies (if it applies) as a formal principle to the judgements of identity which are made on the basis of such criteria.

4. 9 It is, I think, partly this insight which lies behind the proposal of \( a \neq b \) as an analysis of identity propositions. But an insight is not an argument. It remains possible to accept all the foregoing and still claim that \( a = b \) is a sufficient analysis of identity propositions simply by insisting on the possibility of a separation of criteria and meaning.

It is now time to turn to actual arguments, specifically those which claim that propositions of the form RT are possible and thus that LL is false. In considering these arguments my aim is to show (a) that they do not force us to abandon LL - though
they may cause us to re-assess it, and (b) that the insight into the importance of criteria of identity in making judgements of identity is wrongly expressed by the proposal of \(a =_F b\) as a correct analysis of identity propositions.

4.10 The rationale behind the argument which I have in mind runs as follows:

Any object of reference will fall under many different sortal terms. Some of these sortal terms will be such that there will be no conflict between their criteria of identity. But there may well be sortal terms true of one and the same object which carry different and potentially conflicting criteria of identity. That is to say that it could be the case that an item \(a\) be an \(F\) and that, on the criteria of identity carried by the term "\(F\)", it be the same \(F\) as \(b\), and that \(a\) also be a \(G\) and, on the criteria of identity carried by "\(G\)", not be the same \(G\) as \(b\). (This might arise where \(b\) is not a \(G\) at all, or where \(b\) is a \(G\) but a different \(G\) from \(a\). The cases which I will be concerned with will be of the latter kind.)

I will consider two examples which purport to carry this line of reasoning through.

(A) Consider what appears at the beginning of each of the following two lines:

\[
\text{PORTER} \quad /\!/ \text{English noun: one who carries luggage.}
\text{PORTER} \quad /\!/ \text{French verb: to carry}
\]

I will refer to what appears at the beginning of the first line as 'a' and to what appears at the beginning of the second line as 'b'.

Many different sortals will be true of \(a\) and \(b\); two which I will be concerned with are the sortal term "morph" and the sortal term "phone" (both of which I may have invented).

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10. For a detailed examination of a much wider range of cases see DW, pp. 5-26.
A morph is a syntactic shape consisting of letters; the criterion of identity for morphs will consist in their having the same letters in the same order. A phone, on the other hand, is a vocable, that which can be voiced; the criterion of identity for phones will be sameness of sound when voiced. (I ignore the question of criteria of identity for sounds, letters and orders.)

If all this is correct it seems that we can assert the following:

\[(a \text{ is the same morph as } b) \land (a \text{ is a phone } \land b \text{ is a phone}) \land (a \text{ is not the same phone as } b)\]

which appears to be an instance of RT and if it is such violates LL.

(B) Consider the period between midnight last night and midnight tonight. I will refer to this period as 'a'. Consider also the period beginning 168 hours from midnight last night and ending 168 hours from midnight tonight. I will refer to this period as 'b'.

Now, a is a day of the week, namely Wednesday; and b is a day of the week, namely Wednesday. But a is also a day of the month, namely the 20th and b is a day of the month, namely the 27th.

If all this is correct we can it seems assert the following:

\[(a \text{ is the same day of the week as } b) \land (a \text{ is a day of the month } \land b \text{ is a day of the month}) \land (a \text{ is not the same day of the month as } b)\]

which appears to be an instance of RT and if it is such violates LL.

4.11 One obvious manoeuvre for a proponent of LL to make (which I will state in terms of the morph(phone case) is simply to deny that it is one and the same thing which is both a morph and a phone. This is the claim which led to the clash with LL and that it has this consequence might be taken as showing that the claim must be rejected. What is the case is rather that it is
one thing a' which is a phone and another a'' which is a morph, and from this no pernicious consequences follow. Now in a sense this move is perfectly legitimate. It might be objected that it leads to a proliferation of 'things' - that we now have two items a' and a'' whereas before we had one - but this objection is peripheral to the present issue and might well be thought a minor matter compared with the consequences of ditching LL. And the manoeuvre does provide the proponent of the 'relativity thesis' with the interesting puzzle of providing a criterion for the identity judgement contained in the claim that it is one and the same thing which is both a morph and a phone. 11

But the move is I think unperspicuous in case (A) since it sheds no light on the relationship between a' which is a phone and a'' which is a morph, and looks totally un plausible in case (B) where we don't have two obvious candidates - one for being a day of the week and another for being a day of the month. At any rate, there is a more promising move available.

4.12 This second move would take the form of arguing that while quite often sentences of the form 'a is the same F as b' do express an identity between a and b, they may also be used to express something else, namely an equivalence relation between a and b, and that it is only when we wrongly interpret an equivalence relation holding between a and b as an identity that we can generate apparent counter-examples to LL. Sentences of this form which do express genuine identities will not generate any such counter-examples.

An obvious instance of this mistake would be the following: P₁ is a person and P₂ is a person and they are not the same person. However P₁ is the same build as P₂. So we may quickly conclude that

11. I return to this puzzle below, 4.16.
(P is the same build as P₂) & (P₁ is a person
& P₂ is a person) & (P₁ is not the same person as P₂)

which has the grammatical form of RT and as such looks as if it
would yield a counter-example to LL. But of course it does not.
The first conjunct does not assert an identity between P₁ and P₂;
rather it asserts an identity between P₁'s build and P₂'s build.
What does hold between P₁ and P₂ is an equivalence relation:
that they are identical in a certain respect. It is only when
we make the mistake of taking P₁ and P₂ as being conjoined in the
identity and apply LL to them that we obtain an apparent counter-
example to LL. When we correctly take the identity to hold
between aspects of P₁ and P₂ no counter-example is forthcoming.

We will find, the objector would continue, that every
candidate for being an instance of RT will only appear so because
we have misinterpreted the assertion of an equivalence relationship
between individuals, i.e. that they are the same in some respect,
as the assertion of an identity between those individuals.
(And he might go on to use LL as a criterion for judging whether
a sentence of the form "a is the same F as b" expresses an
identity or an equivalence relation between a and b by saying
that if when this sentence is construed as an identity between
a and b we can, in conjunction with other true propositions about
a and b, generate a counter-example to LL, then this shows that
it is not an identity between a and b which is asserted, but
rather an equivalence relation. But we will not allow him
this move. Since it is the truth of LL which is in question, an
appeal to it cannot be allowed to rule out a priori those cases
which seem to go against it.)

4.13 To assess this objection we must take a closer look both
at equivalence relations and identities. Our starting point is
that an equivalence relation holds between two items when they
are the same in some respect. Propositions expressing equivalence
relations between two items may be re-expressed as an explicit
identity holding between those aspects of the individuals in virtue of which the equivalence relation is asserted. Thus

(1) Tom is the same build as Jack

may be reformulated as

(2) Tom's build is the same as Jack's (build)

Propositions expressing identities cannot however be equivalently reformulated in terms of propositions expressing equivalence relations between the items conjoined in the identity. Thus, while

(3) Ramon is (the same person as) 'Che' Guevara

entails (assuming LL) that

(4) Ramon is the same in every respect as 'Che' Guevara

it is not entailed by it. To claim that (4) does entail (3) is to commit oneself to the claim that the principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles ( (\(\forall\))((a = b) \rightarrow (a = b)) ) is logically necessary, and on any intuitive reading of "in every respect" this claim is false.

It is tempting but mistaken to try to locate the difference between propositions like (1) and propositions like (3) in the sort of term which fills the gap in the expression "is the same — as." It is tempting because an examination of a rather longer list of examples than I have displayed would suggest that it is adjectives which are apt to fill this place in sentences expressing equivalence relations and that it is nouns which almost always fill the gap in sentences expressing identities. But this will not take us very far. The grammatical distinction between noun and adjective is not a very well marked one; even if it were, we would have to admit too many exceptions (e.g. (1) itself, where "build" is a noun, though what is expressed by (1) is an equivalence relation). But more important is the fact that the same term can occur in this
position in propositions of either sort. Indeed, if a term can occur in this position in a sentence expressing an equivalence relation it must be able to occur in that position in a sentence expressing an identity. And further, there seems to be a strong possibility that the converse of this is also true. For the first point: the expression "is the same build as" conjoins, in (1) above, "Tom" and "Jack" in an equivalence relation. In the following propositions it is used to express identities:

(5) Tom's is the same build as Jack's

and

(6) This is the same build as that

(5) Tom's is the same build as Jack's

(6) This is the same build as that

(where the demonstratives "this" and "that" are used to refer respectively to Tom's build and to Jack's build). And while it is rather hard to find an example to illustrate the converse point, that is, an example of a sentence where "is the same person as" is used to conjoin two terms in an equivalence relation, we can easily imagine the construction of a metaphysical system in which being a person is construed as an aspect of some underlying subject and in which such a use would be a real possibility.

In point of fact, the distinction between identity propositions and those expressing equivalence relations is quite obvious, and is implicit in what I have already said. Propositions expressing equivalence relations express the fact that two individuals are the same in some respect, where this respect is some property which both have; identity propositions on the other hand express the fact that two individuals are the same in respect of what they are. The distinction which is important is between being _F_ and having _Fness_ as a property. This cannot be drawn by recourse to the grammatical distinction between nouns and adjectives since what we regard as a thing which is _F_ in one context may in another be regarded as a property of some further thing which is _G_. When confronted with a proposition of the form
'a is the same F as b' we have, in order to determine exactly what relation is alleged to hold between a and b, to determine whether a and b are F or whether they have Fness as a property. If they are Fs, then what is expressed is an identity; if they are Gs, and being F is a property (or 'accident') of Gs, then what is expressed is an equivalence relation.

4.14 We can in the light of this deal fairly easily with cases (A) and (B).

(A) In setting up this case I intentionally left open exactly what sort of thing I was referring to. There are in fact several possibilities. I could, for example, have been referring to words - i.e. meaningful signs in a language. In this case, a and b would have been different words (different meanings, different languages) though they would have been the same morph (i.e. they have the same spelling). But then, being a morph must be construed as a property of words, and the proposition "a is the same morph as b" expresses an equivalence relation. Further, being a phone will express a property of words and the proposition "a is not the same phone as b" will express the denial of an equivalence relation.

Or I could have been referring to morphs, in which case being a word will be a property of a and b (more precisely, being a word will be a role which a and b fill) and being a phone will be a property of a and b. "a is the same morph as b" will express an identity, but "a is not the same phone as b" will merely express the denial of an equivalence relation.

On either of these interpretations, the proposition "(a is the same morph as b) & (a is a phone & b is a phone) & (a is not the same phone as b)" is not an instance of RT and does not provide a counter example to LL.
I think much the same sort of comment can be made about the second case. Here, the two items to which I referred were certain 24 hour stretches of time. Given this, we can I think say that being a day of the week and being a day of the month are properties of these stretches of time, and thus "is the same day of the week as b" will express an equivalence relation and "a is not the same day of the month as b" will express the denial of an equivalence relation. And of course the conjunction of these two propositions does not provide an instance of RT nor a counter example to LL.

But I might have set the example up in such a way that what I was referring to were days of the week. In this case, being a day of the month would have to be construed as a property of things which are days of the week. Or I could have set the case up in such a way that what I was referring to were days of the month, in which case being a day of the week would have to be construed as a property of things which are days of the month. In neither case would we get an instance of RT.

Now there might be some resistance to these interpretations. It seems odd to talk about days of the week as things which have as properties being days of the month; it seems odder when I also allow that the roles could be reversed such that the day of the month is the thing and being a day of the week a property of that thing.

On the first point: the use of the word "property" in this connection (saying that being a day of the month is a property of days of the week) is unusual, but only, I think, because when we talk of things and their properties we take our examples of things and properties more substantial items than days of the week and days of the month. There may be good reason for doing this; it may, e.g., be that material objects are more basic things than are days of the week. But this is not my concern. If we are prepared to allow a day of the week as a
thing (and I can see no reason why we shouldn't), then there is no barrier to treating its being a day of the month as a property, however odd the word "property" sounds in this context.

On the second point: the interchangeability of roles (saying that being a day of the week may be taken as a property of days of the month, or vice versa). I am not quite sure what to say about this. I admit that it seems odd. We have no pull, for example, towards saying that I am a property of my weight — indeed to say so seems absurd. But there are cases — and interesting ones — where we can go either way. A lump of bronze is moulded into a statue; we could say that the lump of bronze has the property (which is accidental relative to its being a lump of gold) of being a statue, or we could say that the statue has the property (which is accidental relative to its being a statue) of being bronze. Another case: have I the property of being a lump of flesh and bones; or has that lump of flesh and bones the property of being me? I don't think a clear answer is possible.

4.16 The notion of a 'property' does begin to look much too crass an instrument to bring to bear on these cases. One is tempted to describe the phenomenon as one in which two different sortals are competing for possession of the one thing. And, indeed, this is just what a proponent of the relativistic view of identity might say at this stage. Rather than get involved in the artificial talk about properties, where being a day of the month is a property of days of the week, he might argue that it is the one thing which is both a day of the week and a day of the month. But he cannot coherently do this. Embedded in this claim is an identity judgement — the judgement to the effect that it is one and the same thing which is both a day of the week and

12. It might be objected that "lump of flesh and bones" and "lump of bronze" are not sortal terms; I think that they are but for rather complicated reasons which I won't now go into. The objection can anyhow be overcome in a more complicated example — if necessary by my inventing the appropriate sortals.
a day of the month. On his own view he has to provide a criterion for this identity. The obvious term to fill out this identity is "stretch of time"; we then get "The same stretch of time is both a day of the week and a day of the month." But then it becomes quite obvious that the two periods in the example are different stretches of time, and the identity alleged to hold between them could only be identity in some respect or other, i.e. that they stand to each other in an equivalence relation and not an identity.

What is needed is an account of the relationship which holds between being a day of the week and being a day of the month, and between being a lump of bronze and being a statue, and being a lump of flesh and bones and being me. The relationship is not one of identity because there is no appropriate criterion of identity. I think it is such that we can always say that being one of them is a property of that thing which is the other, but just saying this is pretty uninformative. But apart from saying that it is uninformative, I have nothing more to say.

4.17 What is clear, however, is that the two cases I provided do not produce an instance of RT; they do not establish the falsity of LL, nor do they establish the claim that the term providing the criterion of identity should be made explicit in the statement of the identity in the way in proponents of the relativistic view (e.g. Geach) have claimed. But in order to establish this result we have constantly had recourse to appeal to what the items are which figure in the alleged identity. We have had, in order to distinguish identity propositions from propositions expressing equivalence relations, to distinguish what a thing is, from what is merely a property or aspect of that thing. And to state what a thing is is simply to introduce the term which provides the criterion of identity for that thing.

To put this point in another way: In order to decide whether what is expressed by "a is the same F as b" is an identity
or an equivalence relation between $a$ and $b$, we have had to find out what sort of thing is referred to by "$a" and "$b" and when we have answered this question we have, pari passu, introduced the relevant criterion of identity for $a$ and $b$. And surely this should be made explicit in the statement of the identity. But not as part of the identity sign. Since it is a feature of what is referred to by the terms conjoined in the identity, e.g. of "$a" and "$b", and it is a feature which we must understand if we are to understand what sort of proposition is expressed, its place lies with the terms "$a" and "$b" – not with the identity sign.

What I suggest, therefore, as a perspicuous rendering of identity propositions is:

$$a_F = b_F$$

where the term which provides the criterion of identity goes along with the referring expressions conjoined in the identity.

4.18 And this is the view (or something like the view) which Geach, if he were consistent, should have adopted. For Geach claims that proper names, which he takes to be paradigm referring expressions, carry as their 'nominal essence' a sortal term which provides the criterion of identity for that which bears the name. But if this is the case, there is no logical reason (though there may be stylistic reasons) for preferring "Cicero is the same man as Tully" to "Cicero is Tully". The former locution is simply pleonastic, just as, e.g., "The city of St. Petersburgh is the same city as the city of Leningrad" is pleonastic.

13. RG, p.43. He is also inclined towards the view that at least some referential uses of demonstratives "must be understood as though . . . attached adjectivally to some general term." I would have thought that he was committed to the view that all referring expressions must be understood as going with a general term providing the relevant criteria of identity.
The requirement for distinguishing between identity propositions and propositions expressing equivalence relations in terms of what sort of thing is referred to by the terms conjoined, bears out Geach's (and my own) view of proper names. But for just this reason it shows that Geach's view of identity is unnecessary.
5. 1 It should be clear at this stage that I take the topic of indexical reference to be of central importance to the questions discussed in this thesis. I have argued that for most cases individuation by description turns out to be individuation within a field which is marked out by considerations which are ultimately indexical. Further, I have suggested that this is not a mere accident - a contingency which we might, with a bit of care, avoid; rather it is the case that it is only when we ground our individuative mechanism on an indexical basis that we can obtain a guarantee of uniqueness of reference (which is not to say that we can thus obtain a guarantee of reference). And in my account of proper names, a primary part was played by the notion of the bestowal of a name, and it seems clear that such a bestowal must contain or be related in some way to an act of indexical (almost certainly demonstrative) reference.

5. 2 What then is indexical reference? For a start, we can note that it is speaker-relative reference. But it is more than this: it is also audience-relative reference. It occurs when the mode of reference to an object is geared to the situation in which the act of communication takes place - to a situation which is assumed to be common both to speaker and to audience. In the simplest case, that of demonstrative reference, a speaker assumes that there is a perceptual environment common to himself and those

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1. In what follows, I will not give any explicit consideration to tense, nor to the temporal index-words such as "now" and "then". It seems fairly clear that the tense of a verb is not a type of referential device, and I am inclined to think that this goes towards showing that the temporal index-words "now" and "then" are not (despite their superficial similarity to the pair "here" and "there") signs of indexical reference. But I do not want to rest too much weight on this view (which, at the very least, requires argument). So far as I can see, nothing I say in the following pages could not be applied to temporal index-words if they are conceived of as referential. Any more specific consideration would immediately give rise to problems far outside the scope of this thesis.
to whom he is talking, and he locates the object of reference within that common perceptual environment. We may assume that the method of location will consist in some sort of overt gesture, e.g. the speaker pointing to the object, but such is not always necessary. In more complicated cases, such as those discussed in Chapter II, the speaker assumes a common cognitive environment and uses a description to locate the object within that environment. And, of course, there are various degrees and kinds of complications between these two cases.

Quite often, a speaker will signal the fact of an indexical reference by using one of the explicit index words, e.g. the demonstratives "this" or "that", but this is not strictly necessary. As we have already noted, the absence of an index word in an utterance provides no guarantee of the absence of an element of situational, and thus indexical, dependence. Even when an index-word does occur, we must not overestimate its importance. It will signal an indexical reference, and (usually) indicate the type of indexical reference; sometimes it will even provide information as to the location of the object of reference relative to the speech situation. The burden of reference, however, will always fall on the circumstances which are assumed to be common knowledge of, or equally accessible to, the speaker and his audience. This is true even when the index-word used is one, like the personal indicator "I", which provides maximum information about the object of reference and its 'location' relative to the speech situation, and thus makes minimum demands on the audience. What will be assumed by anyone using this word is that the audience is in a position to know (even merely to see) who is speaking. This assumption may usually be satisfied for, in cases of spoken communication at least, the audience will be in a position to see who is speaking, and thus will simply have to use their eyes. The assumption may not, however, be satisfied if an utterance is overheard, or in some cases of written communication. Someone (an eavesdropper or casual reader) may understand what is said or
written and yet, because he fails to have the necessary background knowledge, fail to grasp the reference of what is said.

All this is simply to say that for every case of indexical reference there is a preferred audience at whom the communication is directed, namely that audience which shares (or is assumed to share) a common situation with the speaker. This common situation is utilised by, but not directly expressed in, the utterance. The existence of such a common situation constitutes the fact which makes indexical reference possible.

5.3 Remarks which make use of an indexical reference are thus tied to the particular situation in which they are made in a way which presents certain problems in their communication outside that situation to a wider audience. They lack a certain generality which is possessed by, say, the propositions of science and of the abstract disciplines. One does not, for example, on being informed of Newton's first law of motion have to undertake an enquiry into where, when, by whom and to whom, it was propounded. So it is not altogether surprising that those philosophers who take the propositions of scientific theory as their models, and logicians in general, should look with some suspicion at indexical reference, and to do their best to explain it away or even attempt to eliminate it altogether. I do not think that such programmes have to be taken very seriously; indeed, it is often rather difficult to understand what is claimed for them. Quine, for example, concedes that some successful acts of indexical (demonstrative) reference constitute a necessary stage in the teaching of a language, but then has no qualms about suggesting that when a more advanced level of discourse is reached, the ladder can be kicked away. I will not discuss this view; I do not understand how it can be a coherent one. There is, however, one procedure which Quine and others adopt
which is of some independent interest. 2

Let us once again concentrate on a simple case of demonstrative reference. I gesture towards a man in front of me, and say "That man beats his wife." In doing this, I have assumed a perceptual environment to be common to me and my audience and have exploited the demonstrative potentialities implicit in such a situation. My remark is not directed towards, and probably will not be grasped by, anyone outside that environment. There is, however, a related sentence whose import is not limited to such a select audience, namely that sentence which makes explicit as part of its content just those features of the environment which my original utterance, together with its accompanying gesture, has exploited. This sentence could be "The man directly in front of Poole (at such and such a time) beats his wife", a sentence which does not appear to contain an indexical element (apart from the time indicating particle). Such a replacement sentence - and one will be generally available for every case of indexical reference - has certain obvious advantages over the sentence which it replaces. However, given the limitations of individuation by description alone, such a replacement sentence must always contain a proper name, and thus the indexical reference in the original will only be eliminated in favour of proper name reference. It is, I think, hard to see the theoretical advantages which this move yields. An expression acquires the status of a proper name by means of (though perhaps indirectly) an act of indexical, probably demonstrative, reference - an integral and essential part of its being bestowed upon that item which it names. The institution of proper names owes its existence to, and is logically derivative of, that of indexical

2. Quine's chief worry, or at least the most overt one, is truth-value variation. This is simply one of the consequences of the situational dependence of indexical reference. See Quine's discussion in Word and Object (N.Y. & London: M.I.T. & J. Wiley & Sons, 1960), particularly pp. 226-228.
reference. And so, though we can eliminate, by means of a replacement sentence, any given indexical sentence - and that we can do so is very useful - this by no means provides a method for eliminating the fact of indexical reference; it merely sweeps it under the carpet.

5. 4 In most cases of indexical reference, it will be apparent what kind of thing is referred to. Sometimes, the index-word used will contain as part of its meaning a specification of the sort of object which it may properly be used to refer to (e.g. "here", "yonder", "she", "he"); sometimes an index word will be used adjectivally, i.e. in conjunction with a common noun which specifies the kind of object which it is, on that occasion of its use, used to refer to; and, in almost all other cases, the context (linguistic or otherwise) will provide the relevant specification. However, there are cases - notably some instances of demonstrative reference - which might appear to provide instances of reference without specification or characterisation of any kind. Cases of this sort seem to arise when a speaker simply points to an object and says "This is so and so." It is important to show that this appearance is misleading, and that the hopes which have been built on it - notably by Russell - are chimerical.

To refer to an object is to employ some device which locates or picks out that object for an audience. If a device which one uses picks out two or more objects equally (i.e. two or more objects are equally good candidates to be the object of reference), then reference will have failed, even if it so happens that the audience does, by chance, pick out only one of these. It is in this sense which pure ostension fails as a device of reference. A purely ostensive gesture, however explicit, cannot but be ambiguous as to what precisely is ostended; it cannot, for example, convey the conditions under which one would be prepared to say on another occasion whether
or not the same object was referred to. One might try to reject this point by appeal to the alleged necessary truth that no two objects can occupy the same space at the same time, and to the fact that an ostensive gesture can, in principle, be absolutely specific as to the spatial boundaries of the object ostended. Unfortunately, however, the principle appealed to is false. My car and its component parts both occupy the same space at the present time; they are both objects (in the relevant sense that they are both potential objects of reference); yet they are different objects in that they have different criteria of identity. The same point could be made, though perhaps more tendentiously, about the person that I am and the body which is mine. Or, consider the patch of light on the surface of a wall: how could the one ostensive gesture be anything but ambiguous as between the patch of light (which is at the moment on one part of the wall, and will presently be on another) and that particular part of the wall's surface (which is at the moment in the light, and will presently be in shadow)? Nor are these cases merely outlandish. For any case of 'pure ostension' one can generate an ambiguity (which will usually be of the 'thing vs. that-of-which-it-is-composed' sort).

5. 5 There are certain cases where 'pure ostension' is the only referential device possible. They arise when we are trying to teach someone that general term under which the object of reference is subsumed. Here, the possibility of ambiguity is real and important. Typically, we overcome it by repeated acts of ostension; the same object is ostended on different

3. For more detailed arguments against the principle that no two things can occupy the same space at the same time, see David Wiggins: "On Being at the Same Place at the Same Time" (Philosophical Review, Vol. 77 (1968), pp. 90-95). Wiggins suggests as an amendment the principle that no two things of the same kind can occupy exactly the same volume at exactly the same time. This looks more plausible, though cases of extreme schizophrenia might present a problem.
occasions, and different objects of the same kind are ostended on the same occasion. In this way the possibility of mistake is gradually eliminated, and at the same time, something of the criteria of identity and difference relevant to things of that kind are inculcated. 4 But this sort of 'reference' is an inductive, hit and miss procedure; it comes before, but must not be taken as a paradigm of, the 'grown-up', sophisticated procedure which constitutes the fully-fledged act of reference communication. In fact, we use pure ostension to teach what in reference proper we take for granted.

5. 6 What I have said so far is, perhaps, excessively general; it will, however, be sufficient for my present purposes. I want now to turn to something rather more specific within the same general area: Russell's theory of logically proper names. This doctrine has been the subject of some scorn and, in this day and age, is most probably presumed to be decently dead; I wish, however, to say a little towards its resurrection, though in a modified form.

Russell thought that logically proper names must have at least two characteristics:

(1) They must refer without describing;
(2) They cannot (logically) fail of reference.

I hope that I have said enough to show the hopelessness of insisting on the first characteristic, and I will not press the point any further. It is the second which is my present concern. It seems at first sight an incredible demand to make, and one quite impossible of fulfilment. How, it might be asked, could a linguistic item guarantee the existence of something (its referent) in the real world? And yet the considerations raised in Chapter 2 (2.10 - 2.13) make it look as if quite a lot depends on that demand.

4. See Quine: From a Logical Point of View (1st Edition, 1953; reprinted New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963), pp. 67-68, for a succinct account of the teaching of a proper name by repeated acts of ostension - a procedure which, as one might expect, bears a striking resemblance to the teaching of a general term by ostension.
5. 7  In fact, Russell, in an attempt to fulfil this demand, that is, in an attempt to find a guarantee of successful reference, came to locate the referential relationship, not as holding between linguistic expressions and items in the objective world (which was his view in the "On Denoting" period), but as holding between the mind and items pretty closely connected to the mind, namely sense-data. Whereas his initial interest had been the analysis of propositions, conceived as something like linguistic entities, this became an interest in the analysis of judgements, conceived of as at least partly mental. And one can appreciate the motivation behind the change; it is at least prima facie plausible to locate the incorrigible referential relationship he was seeking as holding between the mind and items pretty closely connected to the mind. It is as if he conceived his logically proper names not as words, but more as the mental acts of grasping a reference. And the referents of these logically proper names are sense-data, which are 'objective' items (though they exist only in 'private' space) of which the mind has immediate awareness. It is not part of Russell's thesis that the mind have incorrigible descriptive knowledge of sense-data; what is part of his thesis is that the mind be able to grasp the existence of a sense-datum incorrigibly (the act of grasping being, as it were, the mental analogue of "this"), in order that the sense-datum may be, truly or falsely, characterised.

Fortunately, it is not necessary to follow Russell in this direction, which does not appear to be a very promising one. It seems clear that he is involved in a theory of (logically) private

5. Russell's argument in "Knowledge by Acquaintance", Mysticism and Logic, pp.206-208, is pretty conclusive evidence of the correctness of this interpretation.

reference, i.e. of reference to items which I and I alone can have access, and there are certain well known (albeit somewhat obscure) objections to this. More importantly, it is hard to see how such a referential relation, if it is to be genuinely incorrigible, can be construed as anything but intentional, i.e. as not requiring the existence (in any ordinary sense) of that which is referred to. And if this is the case, then Russell's problem has not been solved.

However, as I say, these rather desperate expedients are not really necessary for our purposes, as the demands which Russell was trying to meet are stronger ones than those with which we have to cope. Our problem is the puzzle articulated in Chapter 2 - a puzzle which is created by the appearance of vacuous singular terms in significant (i.e. true or false) propositions; and this problem does not require for its solution the postulation of singular terms which guarantee the existence of their referents. What it does require is that we find certain singular terms which, if they fail of reference, render the proposition in which they occur devoid of significance (i.e. neither true nor false). If such can be found to play the role of logical subject expressions, then the problem of being able validly to derive false conclusions from true premises will not arise. Russell's demand for something stronger than this arose from considerations which were epistemological, and ultimately ontological - considerations which, as I have already noted (see above 2.6), are not my concern.

5.8 Can this weaker requirement be met? In other words, can we give an affirmative answer to the question "Are there any referential expressions ('logical subjects', 'logically proper names') such that their occurrence vacuously (i.e. when reference fails) renders the propositions in which they occur devoid of
I am inclined towards an affirmative answer to this question: to the view that certain proper names and indexical expressions are 'logically proper names' in this sense. Most of my reasons for this view are already on the table, but I will rehearse them briefly.

Let us take indexical expressions first. No one would, I think, dispute that a token sentence such as "This man is drunk", which appears (is uttered or written) in complete isolation from any context which could specify the object of reference, fails of significance. It will be quite impossible in such a case to say what or who is asserted to be drunk. From this it is a short step to the claim that the token sentence "This man is drunk" which is uttered together with an appropriate gesture, but in the circumstance that there is no man (or no one man) in the area demarcated by the gesture, fails of truth-value also. Precisely the same reason applies in this case: there is an incompleteness in the truth conditions which renders questions of truth and falsity futile. This sort of case may be contrasted with that presented by 'vacuous' definite descriptions; here the question "What is claimed to be so and so?" has a determinate answer, one which is provided by the description which is used. (The parallel answer for cases of successful demonstrative reference would be the physical location of the object of reference.) And, indeed, the difference between the two cases is intuitively obvious anyway. Whatever our initial feelings about the truth-value of "The present king of France is bald", we can insist that its denial, "It is not the case that the present king of France is bald", is true (and thus construe the original statement as false) without doing violence to our intuitions as to what is to count as true.

7. This passage would require rephrasing if one wished to insist that propositions are, by definition, either true or false; one would have to say that in such a case no proposition is expressed.
But this procedure is not available to us in the case of indexical reference failure. In the circumstances envisaged, where the utterance is accompanied by a demonstrative gesture but there is no one item of the appropriate sort picked out by that gesture, we would not wish to maintain that the sentence "It is not the case that this man is drunk" expressed a true proposition. To do so would be to run completely counter to our intuitive conception as to what is to count as true. And surely our intuitions are right here: we understand the "It is not the case that . . ." locution as a sign of propositional negation, but in this case we are given absolutely no idea as to what is being denied.

The case of vacuous 'proper names' has already been discussed (see above 3.21). If my account of proper names is correct, then it follows that there are, strictly, no vacuous proper names. An expression becomes a proper name by virtue of its being bestowed on an object (its bearer), and thus the status of an expression as a proper name guarantees the existence of its bearer. If an expression is used as a proper name, and it fails of reference, then that expression is simply not a proper name; if there is no alternative status available (if, e.g., it cannot be analysed, à la Russell, as a disguised description), then it is hard to see how the sentence, of which that expression is a component, can be a significant one.

We seem, therefore, to have good grounds for an affirmative answer to the question at issue. The considerations which I have adduced may not be completely decisive, but they do point towards the conclusion we want. At the very least, they provide solid backing for a decision to stipulate that certain grammatically well-formed sentence tokens be treated as non-significant, i.e. is not expressing true or false propositions. Such a decision no longer appears arbitrary and ad hoc, taken simply to rescue the logical apparatus in which the device of existential generalisation
plays such a crucial role; it has been provided with an independent rationale.

5.9 There are, however, problems in the vicinity which give me some cause for hesitation. These mostly concern the notion of existence, and they come to a head with the question of the status of propositions of the form "a exists" or "a does not exist", where "a" is a logically proper name (e.g. propositions such as "Nosmo King exists" or "This typewriter exists"). Russell tried to insist that such propositions are simply nonsensical, and there is some intuitive plausibility in this view. But, as I have already observed (see above 3.20), this view cannot be correct. Such propositions are rare and have an appearance of oddity, but they can and do appear in contexts, most notably in conditionals, in which they are clearly significant (e.g. "If I did not exist, the world would be a poorer place"). A more plausible view is that such propositions are, in some sense or other, necessary - the affirmative ones being necessarily true and the negative ones necessarily false, and this does tally better with, and may even be entailed by, the status of their subject expressions as logically proper names. Indeed, this is a view which Russell is committed to: if "a" is a logically proper name, then \((\exists x)(x = a)\) will follow by instantiation and existential generalisation, from the principle \((x)(x = x)\), and if the latter proposition is necessary, so too is the former. But it seems that this view cannot be quite right either. Apart from the qualms that we might have at allowing necessary affirmative existential propositions, the position seems incompatible with the intelligibility and contingency of propositions such as "This typewriter might not have existed" or "It is possible that this typewriter should not have existed" - propositions which would be necessarily false if

the embedded affirmative existential were necessarily true.9

Now I am inclined towards the view, this last point notwithstanding, that these singular existential propositions are in fact necessary, but this is a story - a long one - which I cannot go into here. As the position stands, it must be conceded that the existence of these puzzles does cast a shadow over what I have said concerning logically proper names: the account I have offered must at some stage pass the test of showing itself to be compatible with a correct account of these propositions. But at this point I must leave the question, as it is time to turn to some more general issues.

5.10 If the overall view of the subject/predicate distinction towards which I have been arguing in this thesis is a correct one, then one might give as the skeletal form of a singular subject/predicate proposition something like this:

\[(\ast F) \emptyset\]

where the bracketed "\(\ast F\)" stands in place of a referring expression (proper name or indexical expression), and "\(\emptyset\)" for the remainder of the proposition. "\(F\)" stands in place of the term which indicates the kind of object referred to, and the asterisk may be seen as filling in for a linguistic device indicating the mode of reference (much as the word "this" will, in ordinary language, indicate a demonstrative reference).

The major difference between this account and that advocated by Russell and presupposed by orthodox predicate calculus, is that it recognises the referential role of certain general terms, hence allows them to appear in subject position,

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9. This worry springs from G.E. Moore; see "Is Existence a Predicate?" in his *Philosophical Papers* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1959), pp. 124-126, though Moore's major concern is whether or not "This exists" is meaningless. Interestingly, Moore does not concern himself with the sentences "This might not exist" or "It is possible that this does not exist", which seem to be more directly related to "This exists" than the ones he does consider.
rather than simply treating them as predicates. This difference has, of course, some obvious metaphysical implications: I may be said to have adopted an Aristotelian, essentialist view of the subject/predicate distinction, and to have rejected Russell's Lockean conception of it. But there is still a lot of clarification to be done before one unhesitatingly draws these inferences. It is necessary, for example, to be much more precise as to the nature and status of these general terms (after all, they form a much larger and more heterogeneous collection than any traditional category of substance words), and to do this, it will be necessary to examine their role in other contexts besides those which I have been concerned with. The point here is that if one is not clear about how these terms function in various contexts, one is liable to offer too restrictive criteria for, and thus too narrow an account of, what it is to be a sortal general term.

5.11 One can easily provide examples of this, even using only the material which can be elicited from the fairly narrow field within which I have been working. My major concern has been with the explicitly referential use of these terms, and the characteristic of them of which I have made most use is that they 'divide off' their denotata both from each other and, in a rather different way, from items of different sorts. It is this which makes it possible to specify 'this F' as opposed to 'that F', and also as opposed to 'this G'. Frege tried to capture this feature when he spoke of "a concept which isolates what falls under it in a definite manner",¹⁰ and Quine in his discussion of "divided reference".¹¹ This is all right, so long as one does not take the notion of 'dividing off' too strictly. When one does, it is tempting to go on to specify as a necessary condition

¹⁰. Frege: The Foundations of Arithmetic, p. 66
for sortals' having this characteristic, that "If 'F' is a sortal predicate, no F has two parts which are Fs." This condition has some prima facie plausibility but it will not stand up to examination. We can and do specify (i.e. refer to items like 'that collection of Fs', 'this lump of coal', and even 'this place', even though not one of them satisfies the suggested condition. The last example casts some doubt on the claim, made e.g. by Strawson, that sortal terms provide a principle for counting; we can specify a place, and what is more, talk intelligibly about the 'same place' (although our identification and criteria of identity are ultimately derivative from other sortal terms) without thereby being able to count places. There is a connection between being able to say "the same F" and being able to count Fs, but it is not quite as clearcut as is often assumed.

The way to give an account of sortal terms is not to fasten one or two of their uses and extrapolate from these; it is to see how they do in fact operate in a wide variety of contexts. In this essay I have been concerned with the role of sortals in reference and in the closely connected field of identity; the next move would be an account of their role in general propositions, and a discussion of how this role should be reflected in a correct and perspicuous formulation of general propositions. And that this should be the next move is implicit in the nature of the whole enterprise of this thesis: as I noted in the introduction, one assumes the account that one offers of general propositions will be in some way or other derivative of that which one has offered for singular propositions. Whether or not an analysis is thus extensible provides, on this assumption, a test of its adequacy.

13. Strawson: Individuals, p.168
While I have a lot of ideas as to how the sort of analysis I have proposed in this thesis might be developed to cover general propositions, I will make no attempt to air them now. Rather, I will take it that this point - on the brink of a move from singular to general propositions - provides a convenient and not unnatural place to stop.
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