

CHAPTER III  
THE GIVEN

OUR first step must be to disentangle the given from the later developments of knowledge, to take stock of the given as our starting-point. It must not be forgotten, however, that *the* given is itself an abstraction, an end-result of thought which cannot, therefore, be a beginning. For it is a concept generalized from the various givens of different individuals. It is in the same position as that independent and impersonal experience which we saw in the last chapter to be abstracted from the individual experiences of us all. The true starting-point, of course, is not *the* given, but *my* given. Each mind being self-enclosed must begin its philosophical journey from its own given.

As has already been pointed out, there is no certainty even that the givens of two different minds are similar. How do we know that the sensation of red colour is the same in any two minds? We have no guarantee that it is so. Your red colour, instead of being similar to mine, may possibly resemble what I should call a toothache. Or our sensations may even be wholly incommensurable. Your sensations may be such that I cannot even conceive them. They may be such that if I could somehow come to feel them they would be to me completely new experiences, unlike anything known to me before.

That we speak familiarly to each other of our sensations proves nothing to the contrary. The fact that when we both look at a tree we agree that it is green does not prove that your green is the same as my green. It proves that the formal relations among my sensations correspond to the formal relations among your sensations. Agreement of relations, unaccompanied by agreement of content, is sufficient to make communication possible. A simple illustration will make this clear. Suppose you tap out a message to me in sounds in the Morse code, and I understand it. It does not follow from this that sound to me is

the same as sound to you. For I should equally have understood the message if I had received it in light signals in Morse. And there is therefore nothing to prove that what I felt was not a sensation which you would call light, or in other words that my sound is not like your light and vice versa; or that the content of my sensation-series in Morse is not wholly unlike anything in your experience.

To speak as yet of *the* given, then, assuming that there is one given for us all, is to go ahead much too fast. It jumps at least two steps. The first is the step to the belief that our givens are similar. The second is the step constituted by the abstract concept based on this similarity as common quality of the many givens. We have to begin at the beginning. And the beginning for me is *my* given.

It would be pedantic, however, to proceed from this point exclusively in the first person singular. And I shall not hesitate to speak, as is ordinarily done, of *the* given; just as we, who no longer believe in the daily revolution of the sun round the earth, still speak of the sunrise. The reader will bear in mind that this is no more than a convenience of speech, and that the actual starting-point which we are discussing in this chapter is the particular given of a particular individual, i.e. what each of us will call 'my' given. It will also be understood that in speaking of *the* given we are making no illicit assumptions regarding the similarity of our different givens, a question which we shall have to discuss later.

The word given presents an ambiguity which we must first of all clear up. It may mean either the metaphysical given or the logical given. The former is the given as conceived by Kant, who supposed that the matter of the object is 'given' from the outside, from the side of the thing-in-itself, while the form is contributed by mind. This meaning rests upon and implies the dualism of mind and object. In this sense given means something which is metaphysically different from mind, essentially non-mental, literally 'given' to the mind as a present from an outside source.

Here, in our present study, we must clear our minds of

any such metaphysical presuppositions and theories. Not that it is our business to declare them false or in any way to adjudicate on them. We are not concerned with that. They may, for all we know, be either false or true. All we have to say about them here is that they are no proper *starting-point* for philosophy; that they are not involved in our conception of the given; and that if our method of beginning with the given caused us unwarily to entangle ourselves in any such assumptions, we should inevitably suffer the fate of Descartes, whose very first steps from his beginning were fallacious.

The given for us does not imply any metaphysical theory as to its own status. We are to consider, not the metaphysical given of Kant, but the logical given. By the logical given is meant anything that is necessarily taken as given or granted, as logically ultimate and indisputable, in an argument; that which we cannot doubt because we cannot go behind it; that which possesses primitive and absolute certainty, and which is therefore the necessary logical beginning of argument.

Perhaps we might successfully hit off the difference between the metaphysical and the logical givens by saying that the former is given in the sense of 'presented' or 'gifted'; while the latter is given in the sense of 'granted in argument'. A gift or present is something not originally mine, but handed over to me from the outside. And this idea is stressed in the metaphysical given, while it is entirely irrelevant to the logical given.

A little later on we shall find ourselves in agreement with Kant to the extent that we shall assert that the given is passive, while the mind's dealing with it is active. But this is a subsequent empirical observation which is in no sense implied in our conception of the given as such. It is not part of, or implied in, the definition of the given. We are not as yet concerned with it. As for Kant's view that the given is given from the outside, from the external thing-in-itself, any such idea is quite foreign to our philosophy. For us, on the contrary, the externality of the given is not something aboriginally 'there', on which the

mind works, but something which is itself constructed by mind. This will appear in the sequel.

The most obvious given elements of experience consist in images or presentations. My awareness of red is an ultimate indisputable fact. I may *interpret* it as a red flower or as a danger signal or in various other ways. I may *explain* it on idealistic or on materialistic theories. These interpretations and these explanations, because they go beyond the given, may all be erroneous. They depend on inferences which may be mistakenly drawn. But the given element itself, the bare awareness of red, is a fact about which there can be no mistake or dispute. It is a true datum or beginning.

Presentations may or may not arise specifically from the senses. The sensation of red colour may be received through the eye, or it may be part of a dream image or hallucination. It is important to understand that the images of hallucination and dream are just as much part of the given as are sense presentations. There does not, in fact, appear to be any *intrinsic* difference between a dream image and what we afterwards learn to call an image of physical reality. Any suggestion that we can distinguish the dream image by its being paler, less vivid, or less clear, is quite illusory. The difference is *extrinsic*, residing in the relations of the image with contiguous experience. We classify one image as real the other as unreal according to the nature of these extrinsic relations. This classification involves concepts, and is therefore not given. Hence under the general heading of presentations or images I include (1) all sense presentations, colours, sounds, odours, tastes, smells, muscular sensations, &c.; (2) all images of hallucination, dream, illusion, or memory, which have the same immediate or given character as sense presentations.

By presentations we are not, of course, to understand 'objects', whether objects in dream or in reality. The inkpot before me is not a presentation. It is a complex of presentations, concepts, and ideal constructions. We do not arrive at objects until a much later stage in our philo-

sophizing. Objects are not given. We are at present at the very beginning of our thinking, and have got no further than colour patches, disconnected sounds, and the like.

It will serve to illustrate the extreme meagreness of the given if we consider in a little detail what any one of the senses actually gives us. We will choose for this purpose the sense of sight, because sight undoubtedly supplies normal people with more of the raw material of knowledge than any other sense. It is the least meagre source of the given. And it is also the sense which is most easily observed and understood by most of us.

What we actually see, then, is nothing except moving and changing patches of colour. It is disputed whether or not these colour patches are flat and two-dimensional, so that the third or depth dimension has afterwards to be discovered or constructed. Since Berkeley's time the most common opinion has been that sight by itself gives only a flat plane. Some more recent writers, however, have attempted to prove otherwise. They think that depth is immediately given. This attempt has been, in my opinion, without success, and I shall adopt the opinion of Berkeley on this matter. But I do not wish to interrupt the discussion of the given at this point by a controversial argument, and I shall therefore postpone the full discussion of the question till we reach the chapter on space and time. For the present I shall assume as true the opinion that the visual given is flat and without depth.

There being no depth, the colour patches do not lie at a distance from us out in space, but appear to lie right up against the eyes. Strictly speaking this is inaccurate because it implies that the mind distinguishes what is close up against the eyes from what is far away, i.e. that it has a sense of depth. What is really intended, however, is that the mind at this stage has no sense of depth at all. It is aware of the colour patches, but is not aware that they lie at any distance, either small or great, out in space.

The mind *constructs* depth and distance. And long practice and experience enable us to read them into what

we see, so that they appear as if they were given. But if we leave aside these results of mental elaboration, we find that all sight actually presents us with is a world like a picture, flat without depth.

It will be evident that the given of sight includes both extension-spread and duration-spread. But this is very far from saying that it includes space and time. It will be well to make this distinction clear. In the first place the extension-spread which is part of the given is two-dimensional only. It only exists, moreover, within the visual field of our colour patches. It does not extend away indefinitely beyond the immediately presented experience. It is bounded by what we see at the moment. Infinite or indefinitely continued space is a later construction.

It is also most important to notice that empty space is not given. Empty space cannot be sensed. It is a mental construction. It involves three dimensions, and it also involves the extension of space beyond the colour field. If it be suggested that a two-dimensional empty space can be sensed as that which intervenes between two colours on the flat surface of the given, the suggestion will be negated by a moment's thought. What intervenes between two colours is invariably another colour. Up against the wall of my study are two tables several feet apart. The sophisticated mind believes that there is empty space between the two tables. But all that can actually be *seen* between them is the colour of the wall behind them. And the colour of the wall is not *seen* as behind them, but as lying in the same flat plane as that in which they lie. Between the stars we see the blue-black colour of the sky. Black colour is no doubt the mere absence of light. But it appears in consciousness as a positive colour sensation. The space between the stars is not seen as empty space, but as a flat blue-black surface.

Spatial *shape*, so far as it is two-dimensional, i.e. outline, is given. For the colour patches have outline. But the extension-spread of the given has absolutely no geometry. The elaboration of geometry is a long subsequent operation of the abstracting mind. Even our description of

extension-spread as two-dimensional is inaccurate. For its two dimensions are the result of sophistication. They belong to our *view* of the given, not to the given itself. The given has nothing more than undefined spread. This spread is in all directions on the flat surface. The conception of two directions at right angles to one another, serving as co-ordinates for measurements, is the result of later analysis and thought. And the same is true of all geometrical conceptions.

The colour patches change. They move from side to side. They pass out of the field of vision altogether. They flicker, fade, grow brighter or darker, appear and disappear, increase or decrease in size. These changes we afterwards interpret as due to various causes. We think that the movement of the patches from left to right, and then their disappearance outside the edge of the field of vision, is due to our turning our heads round. Or we explain the decrease in size of the patch as due to its receding from us into the distance. Or we think that the change in outline of one of the patches is due to some other object intervening between us and it, and cutting part of it off from view. But all these explanations belong to the stage of sophisticated thought. They are not given. For we have before us not objects, but only the colour patches. None of these explanations of the changes of the colour patches could possibly occur to the aboriginal mind moving exclusively on the level of the given (supposing that such a mind could exist). To such a mind there could be no such thing as a head to be turned round. For there would be no objects. Our bodies are not given to us *as* bodies. They are merely part of the kaleidoscope of colours which we sense. And they are not, except after considerable experience of movement, specially connected with ourselves. My hand lies on the table in front of me. No grounds are *given* for supposing that this pinkish colour patch, which I afterwards come to interpret as my hand, is part of me. Afterwards, for a variety of reasons later to be examined, I come to regard it as specially attached to me, as part of 'my' body. But this is

a result of thought and experience. It is not a beginning, not a given. The hand is originally merely an indifferent part of the colour world which floats chaotically around me. It might as well be regarded as part of the table on which it lies. Nor again could the aboriginal mind explain the decrease in the size of a colour patch as due to its receding from him. For the idea of depth, or spatial distance along the line of vision, has as yet no existence.

The movements and changes of the colour patches make it clear that the given has duration-spread, and that the relation of 'before and after' is given. This duration-spread stands to the developed conception of time in much the same relation as the rudimentary extension-spread of the colour patches stands to the developed conception of space. Duration-spread is not the 'even flow' of Newton, any more than extension-spread is the space of Euclid. Duration-spread is not infinite and endless. There is no empty time, and no future time, in the given. The future is clearly an expectation which arises only as a result of reflection on the present and the past.

Enough has been said to indicate the general character of the given of sight. Similar accounts might be written for the other senses. From hearing we receive a medley of sound patches. They have no extension-spread, but they have duration-spread, and exhibit such temporal relations as 'before and after' and 'between'.

Touch is, of course, a most important sense in the development of spatial concepts. Passing one's hand over a flat surface gives rise to both tactile duration-spread and extension-spread. The genuineness of the extension has been doubted. It has been thought that the extensional parts must be successive, or in other words that tactile space must be simply time. But recent psychology of the blind shows that this is a mistake.

The formal relations to which extension- and duration-spread give rise, such as 'between', 'before and after', &c., are given. All the elementary and primitive spatial and temporal relations are given.

Thus it would be a mistake to suppose that presenta-



tions and images make up the whole of the given. It also includes relations of various kinds. The most important are (1) relations of position in the extension-spread, such as 'to the left of', 'between', and the like; (2) relations of position in the duration-spread, such as 'before and after'; and (3) the profoundly important relations of *resemblance* and its opposite. But this does not profess to be a complete list of given relations.

It is sometimes supposed that all relations are in some special sense the work of thought and cannot, therefore, be given. The given is in that case conceived as the bare and utterly formless matter of sensation. Form is supposed to be contributed by mind, and includes relations. This is the Kantian standpoint. It may or may not be legitimate. But I only mention it here in order, by excluding it from our discussion as irrelevant, to avoid confusion in our thinking. To introduce it here as an objection to our view that some relations are given would be to confuse the metaphysical with the logical given, and completely to fog the issue. Relations may, for all I know to the contrary, be the creation of a cosmic and transcendental mind. In that case they are doubtless not part of the metaphysical given, i.e. of that which is supposed to be contributed from outside the mind by the thing itself. But they are still part of the logical given with which we are here concerned. For they are still ultimate primordial facts of our experience which we cannot get behind and which stand logically at the beginning of all inquiry as premisses. The same distinction must be made, not only for relations, but also for space and time, and even for presentations themselves. Even if we were to admit with Kant that space and time are the work of mind, and so not metaphysically given, yet extension-spread and duration-spread are none the less logically ultimate in our experience, and belong to the logical given. Again, colour patches and images generally have been held by some philosophers, such as Berkeley, to be subjective 'ideas'. But those who hold this view need not deny that such presentations are logical givens. Thus in general the various phases of the idealist-

realist controversy do not concern us in our present discussion, and can be left out of account as having no bearing upon our statement that some relations are given.

It will be noted that I say only *some* relations. For it is not asserted that all relations are given. Some are undoubtedly mental constructions or the results of such constructions. Such, for example, is the relation of substance and accident, the construction of which we shall discuss on a later page.

If two colour patches in the given are both red, then the relation of resemblance between them is also given. So is the relation of unlikeness between a red and a green, or in general any relations of likeness and unlikeness. It is sometimes said that resemblance is dependent upon the comparison of two presentations, and that comparison involves a comparing mind. But this only means that in order to *notice* the resemblance a mind is necessary. And the same is true of the bare presentations themselves. In order to become aware of the resemblance a comparing mind is no doubt necessary. In order to become aware of red colour a perceiving mind is necessary. No doubt only minds can be aware either of presentations or resemblance relations. But the relation, like the presentation, is given.

We have spoken so far only of that kind of given which later becomes the basis of our knowledge of the external world. This consists of sense presentations, what we may call physical relations, &c. It must not be overlooked, however, that we possess knowledge of the internal world of the self, and that this knowledge must also take its start in a given of some kind. The greater part of our knowledge, whether in history, science, art, or any other branch, is concerned with the external world. The immense preponderance of human knowledge looks outward. All the sciences, except psychology, the most junior of them all, have portions of the external world for subject-matter. I suppose that at least ninety-nine out of every hundred articles in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* deal

with things in the external world. Only a few scattered psychological or philosophical articles deal with mind.

It is perhaps natural in these circumstances that a theory of knowledge should have a tendency to dwell on our knowledge of the external world more than on self-knowledge. Yet we cannot ignore the latter. Not only has it its legitimate place in knowledge, but, as we shall see, it is interwoven with knowledge of the external world in such a manner that the latter would be impossible without it. Knowledges of the outer and inner worlds are interdependent. We must therefore inquire what is the starting-point of self-knowledge, what is the given on which it is based.

It must be made clear at the outset that the ego, conceived as some kind of transcendental unity, is not given. As Hume long ago observed, when we look into ourselves we perceive volitions, emotions, ideas, and the like, but never the *I* which *has* them. It is no part of our intention in this chapter to discuss metaphysical theories of the nature of the self. But what we have to note regarding all such theories is that the knowledge which they purport to contain is always derivative, never given. These theories are philosophical constructions of the sophisticated mind. They are never pure reports of the given.

The internal given, then, does not include any pure ego. But it includes all the *acts* of what has been called the empirical mind. I become aware of myself by becoming aware of my activities such as thinking and feeling. And the sense of the *I* as distinguished from the not-*I* is based upon the perception of myself as active in contradistinction from the not-*I* as passive. The distinction between active and passive is the fundamental basis of the division of the world into internal and external, mind and matter.

Suppose there could exist a mind, wholly innocent of sophistication, aware only of the fleeting images and presentations in the world of the given. Suppose it shut off from communication with other minds and unaware of their existence. Could such a mind become aware of itself? and if so, how? Now in the first place, according to the

views here adopted, it could not be aware of the external world in the sense in which sophisticated knowledge is aware of it. It would see before it a phantasmagoria of moving colour patches. It would hear sounds and receive sensations from the other senses. It would not think that the colour patches continued existing when they disappeared from its own vision, or the sounds when they vanished from its hearing. It could have no possible reason to think so. It would therefore have no conception of a world independent of, and existing apart from, its own presentations. It would thus be living in a world of private dreams.

It might be argued that such a mind could not be aware of itself, since self-knowledge can only come into existence when the self is contrasted with the external world. But I do not think this view is correct. Knowledge of self does not depend on prior knowledge of the world as independent and external. On the contrary, as we shall see, knowledge of the world as independent and external depends immediately on our knowledge of other selves, and therefore ultimately on our knowledge of our own selves. And our self-knowledge depends on the contrast, not between mind and what is independent of mind, but between activity and passivity. Before me is the moving stream of colour patches, the private world of phantasms. The logically original act of consciousness is awareness of these, not of myself as a self. But what happens next? I am looking at a green patch. Growing tired of it I begin to look at the adjoining red patch. In doing so I have not only moved my eyes. I have also performed what must be regarded as my first conscious *act*. I have focused *attention* first on one thing, then on another. After this, perhaps, I notice the resemblance between a number of different red patches. I thereupon form the concept 'red'. This again is an activity, the activity of abstraction and conception. Next, I find that I dislike one presentation and desire another. Emotional and volitional activities come into being and are noticed.

It is these activities of the mind which form the given

on which all self-knowledge is based. And it is important to realize that they are ultimate unanalysable *data*, genuine starting-points, in the same sense as presentations. Just as the red colour before my eyes is an ultimate fact of consciousness, so the acts of mind, attention, conception, willing, &c., are ultimate facts of consciousness. The science of psychology, or any other possible knowledge of mind by itself, starts from these as a basis, as an ultimate premiss, just as all physical sciences start from the basis of physical sensations as their ultimate premisses.

When we regard the activities of mind as given, we are of course taking them as objects. The mind thinks. And it can also watch itself thinking. It is when it makes its actions the objects of its attention that they are apprehending as being 'there', as given.

As contrasted with its activity in conception, judgement, attention, volition, the mind is, in pure sense presentation, wholly passive. The green patch lies in front of me. It is *there*. Its being there is no act of mine. I do nothing to make it appear. I am not, as a rule, even aware when it is going to appear. When it does appear I merely accept it. I am purely receptive of its appearance. No doubt an act of mental attention is involved in continued perception, as also a whole series of muscular activities which centre on the object. But these activities are easily distinguished from the content of the sensation itself. The attention is an activity which falls on *my* side. The green colour itself is not an activity, and falls therefore, on the side of the not-I.

The green patch, further, is independent of my consciousness in the sense that my consciousness does not control it. Its presence, its movements, its disappearance or replacement by a red patch, all these happen, or may happen, independently of me, independently of my wishes, thoughts, or feelings. They *happen* in my consciousness. This is a character of the not-I in general.

Thus the primitive world of the given divides itself into two halves, (1) what I do, the activities of my consciousness, and (2) what I suffer, what happens in my consciousness independently of me or of any of my activities.

The latter cannot be attributed to 'me'. It is something distinct from me and my acts. The former is the world of the I, the latter the world of the not-I.

The world of the not-I is at this stage independent of mind in the sense just explained, i.e. as being not an act of the mind and not subject to its control. But it is not as yet independent in any other sense. That it 'exists' apart from the mind, that it goes on existing when the mind is not aware of it, or that it exists for other minds, such thoughts cannot emerge at this stage, and are much later developments.

It will be noted that the characters of the not-I which we have mentioned above belong as much to the presentations of dream or hallucination as they do to the presentations of sense. The dream-mountain is as passive and as independent of my conscious activities as is the 'real' mountain. The dream-mountain falls on the side of the not-I. It is only at a later stage that it is again distinguished from the presentations of 'reality' and is condemned as 'subjective'.

The independence of the given is only another aspect of its passivity. It is independent for the very reason that there is no sign of my activities in it. Hence the only element of distinction between the I and the not-I which is given at the start, the only distinction which is a datum, is that between activity and passivity. This distinction, I say, is itself given. For the mind is immediately aware of its own activities—thoughts, feelings, volitions—as activities. This active character of mental life is just as much immediately presented as is the redness of red. The absence of any such activity on the part of presentations constitutes an immediately given contrast, and causes the primitive world to fall at once into the two halves, the I and the not-I.

It will be well to notice that for the consciousness of the distinction between them to arise there is not necessary any recognition that the presentation is either 'mental' or 'non-mental', that it is 'inside' or 'outside' the mind; and that the application of such epithets to it is probably quite meaningless, and is certainly not implied in the idea of the

not-I itself. Nothing is implied except passivity. That alone is the essence of the not-I. Statements that the objects which we see and hear are 'mental' or are not 'mental', that they are 'outside' the mind or 'inside' it, that they are 'ideal' or 'real', are all of them mere metaphysical theories which we *afterwards* weave. They are not reports of the given. They have no part in the original world of the given which we are considering. They are constructed, and how they come to be constructed is part of our problem.

We may now sum up our conclusions. Our assumption—to be justified by the course of our inquiries—is that the mind starts from certain fundamental data, which we call the given, and that it builds upon these data the whole fabric of knowledge by means of constructions and inferences between constructions. It is thus essential to our method to get clear about our starting-point, to separate what is given from what is not given. What is not given we have then to explain as construction or inference.

The given falls into two parts, that part which lies at the basis of our knowledge of the external world, and that part which lies at the basis of our knowledge of ourselves. The latter consists of our own mental activities, such as knowing, thinking, willing, feeling, attending. The former includes (1) presentations, meaning thereby the images of sense, of dream, hallucination, or delusion, which have not as yet become differentiated and distinguished from one another; for the differences between them are not given, but subsequently elaborated. The given of the external world also includes (2) duration-spread and extension-spread, and (3) certain relations, not only those involved in duration-spread and extension-spread, but also such relations as resemblance.

As a general account of the given this must suffice for our purposes, though making no pretence at being exhaustive. But there are two supplementary observations which it seems desirable to make before we pass on. The first is to avoid a misunderstanding. It is not intended, of course, that pure awareness of the given, without any

thought element whatever, is ever an actual psychological state of either man or animal. Such pure awareness is an abstraction. In every state of consciousness there must be at least some minimal conceptual element. Such a minimal thought element will be studied in the next chapter under the name of the concepts of the given. It is difficult to conceive of any actual consciousness which would not involve at least some vague *recognition*, not of course of objects, but of sensory elements such as colour. Such recognition will involve the concepts of the given, and will to that extent go beyond pure awareness, pure passivity. Our contention must be, therefore, firstly that pure awareness, though it never exists unalloyed, is nevertheless a distinguishable element in knowledge and is the *logically* prior element; and secondly, that the most primitive actual consciousness, though it must contain some implicit or unconscious conceptual element, will yet approximate to pure awareness, and will approximate the more closely to that limiting state the more primitive and undeveloped it is. So that something not very far removed from pure awareness must have been the historical as well as the logical beginning.

Our second observation concerns the relation of knowledge to action. The given is independent of the will. The red patch is red, and its being so is not the result of our conations or of any kind of mental activity on our part. We cannot by any act of will alter red to blue. Outside my window is a tropical garden. I cannot alter this to a London street by a mere wish. The given has the hardness and unyielding character which is attributed to *fact*. Pure given and pure fact are identical. The given is precisely that which exists prior to and independently of any activity of the mind. The utmost that the mind can do is to build the fabric of knowledge on it as a foundation. It is possible (and we shall see later that it is true) that the mind may have before it more than one alternative way in which it may construct the fabric of knowledge, and that it may choose at its pleasure or convenience between them. But the foundation of the given it cannot alter. It is *there*.



Hence the extreme pragmatic view that knowledge has no function and no justification save that which it finds in action is not born out here at the starting-point of knowledge. This is sometimes expressed by saying that the pragmatic view fails to explain what is called 'fact'. In respect of what is given the mind is not free to apprehend what it likes. One can imagine circumstances in which the belief 'This is blue' might be much more useful than the belief 'This is red'. But if in fact the object is red, we cannot accept the belief that it is blue, however useful it would be to do so. Knowledge in its more advanced stages may perhaps possess some measure of freedom. We have yet to discuss that question. But it is not free here at the beginning. Nor can it ever, even in its highest flights, shake itself free from the given, which it contradicts only at the risk of being false. *Knowledge is everywhere tied to the given.* That is a first principle of epistemology.

This principle applies not only to that elementary kind of knowledge which consists in mere reports of the given, such as 'This is red'. It is true of knowledge throughout. The most elaborate and advanced scientific hypothesis must agree with the facts. If such a hypothesis leads to the prediction 'A will be red', and in fact A turns out to be blue, then we shall have to amend or give up our hypothesis. What contradicts the given or anything that is inferred from the given cannot be true. It is in this sense that all knowledge, even the most advanced, is tied to the given.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONCEPTS OF THE GIVEN

THE starting-point of knowledge is *my* given. And *my* given consists in the phantasms and appearances which occupy consciousness within my self-enclosed ego. In order to advance to knowledge of a public external world, it is necessary for me to issue forth from the privacy of my own ego into communication with other minds. The solitary mind, without the co-operation of other minds, can never come to the knowledge of an objective world. Its world will remain a private world of dreams. Hence the first great step forward towards knowledge is the substitution of a public external world for the private world of each ego. But before this great step is taken, is any knowledge possible? Is it possible for the solitary mind, shut up within itself, to elaborate even a rudimentary kind of knowledge? If so, it is clearly necessary that we should describe such knowledge in its correct sequence. The question will be discussed in this chapter. And we shall find that such knowledge, elementary though it be, is logically possible. It consists in what we shall call the concepts of the given.

No knowledge whatever is possible without concepts. We are as yet far from the kind of knowledge which is embodied in scientific laws and generalizations. And we need not consider it here. Let us examine any of the most rudimentary pieces of knowledge we can come at, and we shall find it conceptual. Not only such elementary judgments as 'This is red' involve concepts, but even the bare recognition of sensations such as might be expressed by the ejaculatory 'Red!' is conceptual, since it involves the classification of sensations.

Conceptual thought is the instrument with which the mind works upon the given. The given in itself is a chaos of presentations and presented relations. This chaos the mind reduces to order by means of its concepts. The mind

is the builder of the cosmos, and its bricks are the varied elements of the given.

The fact of there being concepts does not admit either of explanation or of further analysis. It is a *given* fact. We cannot say how or why the mind conceptualizes. That it does so is an ultimate fact. Conceptuality is the fundamental nature of thought which we *find*, and which we have to accept with 'natural piety'. All we can do is to begin at the beginning by studying first those concepts which form the logical starting-point of knowledge.

We must not be confused by the fact that the concept has two aspects, can be looked at in two different ways. It is the mind's instrument for dealing with the given. And it is also itself part of the given. We may view concepts along with volitions, feelings, emotions, &c., as the ultimate given elements of mental life. We are then looking at concepts from the outside and treating them as objects. Thus objectively viewed they are part of the given because they cannot be explained or analysed, but are ultimate data. But subjectively the concept is an instrument which the mind uses on the given. The concept sorts out the given and arranges it in order. And it may deal with itself as part of the given of mental life in this way. The psychologist classifies concepts. He is then using the concept (viewed as an instrument) to classify concepts (viewed as part of the given).

The logically first kind of concepts are what I shall call the *concepts of the given*. Let us remind ourselves that the mind at this earliest stage of its thinking is not confronted with objects or 'things'. It is confronted by the pure given, i.e. by sense-presentations, dream-images, hallucination-images, extension-spread, duration-spread, and a few relations. The 'thing' or object is as yet far ahead in the journey of knowledge. It has not yet been constructed.

The mind, therefore, cannot at this stage make to itself concepts of objects such as 'house', 'star', or 'man'. Much less can it generalize about houses, stars, and men. It has to begin with the concepts of sense-presentations, images, and the like. The earliest concepts are therefore concepts

such as 'red', 'blue', 'loud', 'odour', 'between', 'after', 'bitter-tasting', &c. And these are what I call the concepts of the given.

No doubt such concepts are constructions in the sense that they involve the activity of the mind. They are actively thought, not passively given. But they are not constructions in the technical sense in which I propose to use that term in this book. We have not yet reached examples of genuine constructions. We shall meet them first in the mind's advance from its private dream-world to a public external world of objects. We shall then see that this advance involves a leap beyond the given. It involves an extension of the given beyond itself by means of constructs or fictions. The mind has to introduce elements which are *not* given. No such addition of new or invented matter is involved in the concepts of the given. They contain no element which is not itself given, except the activity of thought itself. We shall not call them constructions, therefore, and shall avoid the use of that word except in the technical sense later to be introduced.

All that is necessary for the coming into being of the concepts of the given is that the mind should notice the resemblances and differences which occur among the elements of the given. All concepts whatever are founded upon the fact of a resemblance. This is true even of the later and more advanced types of concept. But here we are concerned only with the concepts of the given. All that is involved in the concept 'red' is that the mind should notice the resemblance of two or more red patches, and should identify the red in them. *How* the mind does this is a question which cannot be asked. The *fact* that it does so is ultimate and unanalysable. It is itself given.

The reader (who is of course an acute logician) may object that it is possible to have concepts of classes with only one member to each class, or with no members at all; and that therefore the concept as such cannot be founded, as here suggested, on the resemblance of two or more things or appearances. 'Red elephant', for example, is a class with no members. 'Planet inhabited by men' may

perhaps be a class with only one member. But these are hair-splitting refinements of later thought. The original concepts of the mind could not have come into existence without the comparison of two similar things, and such comparison is the logical foundation of the concept. The concept 'red' could never have become separated from the sensuous perception of red, thought would never have emerged from sensation, without such comparison. If we have the concept of a class with only one member, this at least implies the *possibility* that there might be other members possessing the common characters of the class. Mathematicians insist that 0 is a number. But this number could never have been discovered unless there had been something in the world to count, something to give us the previous conceptions of the numbers 1, 2, 3 . . . . In the same way concepts of nil-classes or of singular classes presuppose classes of at least two members. Therefore the comparison of two or more presentations is the logical basis of concepts. If this is admitted we can proceed with the argument which the acute logician interrupted.

The red patches are given, and the relation of resemblance between them is given. And the concept 'red' contains nothing except these elements. There is nothing in this concept which the mind has *assumed*, or introduced out of its own stores. There is nothing except what has been actually *seen*, actually perceived by the senses. To arrive at the concept there is necessary, of course, the mental act of comparison. But the act of comparison does not involve that the mind in making the concept *adds* any element to the given, and then takes that addition to be a part, not of itself, but of the object. This occurs in the true 'constructs' of the mind which we shall study later, but not in the concepts of the given. These latter have nothing in them except what is itself given.

It is for this reason too that we take the concepts of the given to be the logically *first* kind of concepts. They are possible to the solitary mind which has no knowledge either of other minds or of a public external world of objects. They are the only kind of knowledge which is so

possible, and therefore they constitute the beginning, the first step, of knowledge. They involve too the smallest possible element of mental elaboration. They are the closest to bare awareness of the given. They depart from it by a hair's breadth. They differ from such bare awareness only in being of the nature of thought, in being conceptual. But they involve no inferences, no hypotheses, no fictions, and no genuine world-building. The concepts of 'things' and objects which we meet with later, 'house', 'man', 'star', are logically subsequent to the concepts of the given, because (1) they involve concepts of the given, and could not come into existence unless the concepts of the given had come into existence first; and because (2) they involve that the mind actually adds to the given by means of imaginative constructions.

Needless to say, concepts of sense-presentations are not the only kind of concepts of the given. In the first place, such a concept as 'red' might be derived as easily from the experiences of dream or hallucination as from the experience of what we afterwards come to call the real. Secondly, concepts of the given include concepts of those relations which are themselves given. 'Resemblance' is a concept of the given. So is 'unlikeness'. So again are such durational concepts as 'before' and 'after', and such extensional concepts as 'beside', 'above', 'between', &c. (but 'between' is gathered both from duration-spread and from extension-spread). But we must be careful here not to fall into the mistake of supposing that these last-mentioned concepts are the advanced spatial and temporal concepts of geometers and mathematicians. Nothing like space or time has yet come on the scene. We have only extension-spread and duration-spread. We may see a red patch between two blue ones. When the same conjunction occurs again on another occasion, we compare the two experiences, and note the resemblances of the relations, and we have the concept 'between'. This does not involve a three-dimensional space, nor an empty space, nor a space extending beyond the actual field of presentations. Much less does it involve any recognizable geometry.

Not only concepts of particular qualitative presentations, such as 'red', 'loud', 'sweet', fall under the head of the concepts of the given, but even more general concepts such as 'colour', 'sound', 'odour', 'taste', 'sensation'. This may at first sight seem surprising. For it is customary to arrange concepts like a pyramid, the less general at the bottom, the more general at the top. Arranged in this way, we should have 'red', 'green', 'blue', 'bitter', at the bottom, and the general concepts 'colour', 'taste', 'smell', above these. And still higher in the pyramid above 'colour' and 'taste', would come the even more general concept of 'sensation'. It might seem, then, that the more general concepts are farther away from the given than the less general ones, and should not be lumped together with them, but should be made to constitute a second stage, a later advance, in knowledge.

There is no objection to counting two stages instead of one, if the reader so desires. I shall allow him to arrange his concepts in pyramids or any other pretty figure that takes his fancy. But it still remains true that the so-called higher concepts, the more general ones which are placed high up in the pyramid, may still be concepts of the given in the sense here defined. Any concept is a concept of the given if it can be formed direct, without any intermediate steps, from a comparison of two or more elements of the given. There is nothing in such concepts beyond what is given, except the mental act of comparison. There is no hypothesis, assumption, or other addition by the mind to the given. The mind observes two red patches, observes the resemblance of red to red, and frames the concept 'red'. The mind observes two patches, one red, the other green. It notes a certain resemblance between them, a common something which binds them together and distinguishes them from sounds, tastes, &c., and so frames the concept 'colour'. There is nothing in this concept except the given resemblance. Moreover the concept is formed directly from the experience of the given without any intermediate logical steps. The concept 'colour' is not dependent, as the pyramid theory is apt to assume, on the

more specific concepts such as 'red' and 'green'. To prove this, we will consider a mind confronted by a number of colour patches no two of which are of the same colour, a mind whose experience is entirely limited to one red, one green, and one blue patch. Such a mind would have difficulty in framing the concepts 'red', 'green', and 'blue', because to frame the concept 'red' normally requires the presence of at least two reds, and so with the other colours. But such a mind could without difficulty notice the resemblance between the red, green, and blue patches which is connoted by the word 'colour', and could therefore frame that concept independently of the lower concepts.

The fact is that the pyramid arrangement of concepts is by no means logically essential. It is merely an arrangement which we choose because it is convenient for certain purposes which we need not discuss here. We could form the 'higher' concepts without first having framed the lower.

It may be true that to note the general resemblance between blue and green and red is more difficult, requires a more practised and alert mind than to notice the resemblance between red and red. The latter resemblance is more obvious than the former. But that is a psychological, not a logical, difficulty. It may also be true that as a matter of historical fact, men actually framed the lower concepts first, and then with the practice and skill thereby attained, went on to notice the more general and less obvious resemblances which give rise to the higher concepts. But all this is not to the point. The resemblance between red and green, though less obvious, is just as much *given* as the resemblance between red and red. And the general concept of 'colour' is therefore a concept of the given.

The same remarks obviously apply to such general concepts as 'sound', 'odour', 'taste', as distinguished from the concepts of particular kinds of sounds, odours, and tastes. Indeed the truth of what is here urged is perhaps more plain in regard to such presentations as those of taste than it is in the case of visual presentations. For it



does not appear that the mind would experience any special difficulty in noting the general resemblance between differing tastes, and so forming the generic concept of 'taste', even before it had compared sweet with sweet or bitter with bitter to form the particular concepts of those special kinds of taste.

Even such a very general and pervasive concept as that of 'quality' is really a concept of the given, provided it is not taken in the sense of quality inhering in 'things'. In this latter sense it is a cognate of the concept of 'substance and accident', and belongs to a much later and more sophisticated stage of thought. It is not then a concept of the given. It is rather a metaphysical theory about things, or at least implies a background of such theory. But if, eschewing these advanced ideas, quality is taken in its simplest possible sense to mean only that general resemblance which colours, sounds, tastes, bear to one another, without any metaphysical implication of an underlying substance, it is then a concept of the given.

It makes no difference whether a concept of the given is formed from comparison of a sense-presentation with another sense-presentation, or with a memory-image, hallucination-image, or any other. The phenomena of memory no doubt present somewhat mysterious features. That, however, is not our present problem. From the point of view at which we now are the image which stands before the mind in memory is simply part of the given. It exhibits all the features of givenness, and the distinction between memory-images and actual sense-presentations is not relevant to our present inquiry.

Concepts of the given elements of mental life are, of course, to be included among concepts of the given. Thus the concepts of 'concept', 'sensation', 'volition', 'emotion', are concepts of the given.

We have represented the concepts of the given as the earliest step in our knowledge. There are two possible misunderstandings to be avoided here. Firstly, it is not meant that the concepts of the given are necessarily first in historical or psychological order. It is meant that they

are logically first. How knowledge began in the history of the race is a problem the solution of which is probably lost in the mists of past ages, notwithstanding that biological and anthropological inquiries may possibly throw some light upon the subject. How it begins in the history of each individual, by what stages the human infant progresses towards knowledge, is a question the fringe of which the psychologist, whose special business it should be, has scarcely yet touched. It is likely enough that his researches in the future may prove that knowledge begins simultaneously at a number of different points. He certainly will not discover that the infant explicitly and clearly frames such a tenuous and abstract concept as 'quality', or indeed any clear concepts at all, before it has any idea of 'things'. But we need not concern ourselves with these questions. Although we have urged that the psychological order of events frequently follows the logical order, it would be the height of absurdity to suppose that this is always the case. And where the two orders diverge, our business is with the logical only. We are here inquiring what knowledge would logically be possible to a self-enclosed mind which had not yet arrived at the knowledge either of 'things' or of other persons. Such knowledge, we must hold, is the logical beginning of all knowledge, since each of us must necessarily begin with his own self-enclosed experience. Looked at from this point of view it is clear that the logically first element of knowledge is the concepts of the given. They are presupposed by the later concepts of 'things', and more obviously by the still later forms of knowledge embodied in generalizations and scientific laws. One could not understand the mineralogical laws which govern the formation and distribution of rubies unless one had first the idea of what rubies are. And the knowledge of what 'ruby' means presupposes the recognition of the sense-qualities red, hard, and the like. And we shall find that whereas the concepts of the given imply nothing more than a simple act of comparison between two or more givens, e.g. between two red patches, the concepts of 'things' on the other hand

imply this and *also* a great deal of additional mental construction.

The second misunderstanding which we have to avoid goes hand in glove with the first. It is not meant to be alleged that this first stage of knowledge ever exists by itself as a separate psychological state. It is not asserted that there are minds in existence, either human or sub-human, which know the concepts of the given, but do not know 'things', and have no other kind of knowledge. What is here asserted is, firstly, that within any given psychologically normal state of knowledge, the element which we have called the concepts of the given can be logically distinguished from the other ingredients. And secondly, that it is logically prior to any other kind of knowledge. A solitary mind, cut off from all communication with other minds, and living in its private world of phantasms, could not conceivably rise to the knowledge of external 'things'. It could know nothing of a common public world. But it could frame the concepts of the given. They are therefore the first steps which the solitary mind makes towards knowledge.

We need not concern ourselves overmuch with the formal question of what kind of *judgement* can be based on the concepts of the given. Knowledge, it may be urged, consists in judgements. This is not anything different from saying that it consists in concepts. For a concept can always be translated into a judgement, concept and judgement being but two forms or aspects of a single unitary mental activity. What kind of judgements, then, can the solitary mind, possessed of no concepts save those of the given, make? Bearing in mind that the question is not as regards psychological possibilities, I can see no reason why such judgements as 'This is red', 'This is loud', or even 'This colour is red', 'This sound is loud', should not be possible. If it be urged that 'this' is an impossible conception at this stage, since it implies a world of objects, I should dispute this view. 'This' merely signifies whatever occupies the focus of attention, and if taken in that sense is itself a concept of the given. Even the bare ejaculation

'Red!' is an implicit judgement the logical meaning of which is 'This is red'. Hence there seems no reason to doubt that the concepts of the given constitute genuine knowledge, however meagre.

We must now turn to the important question whether there is any evidence, in the rudimentary kind of knowledge which we are discussing, of its subordination to action; or of its validity being constituted by its practical usefulness. We may begin with a remark which is really of general application to all knowledge. The doctrine of evolution renders it probable that all knowledge, and therefore the elementary kind of knowledge involved in the concepts of the given, has been developed for practical reasons in the struggle for existence. No doubt intelligence grew because it was found to give its possessor an advantage over less intelligent competitors. No doubt knowledge would never have come into existence if it had not been for its practical value. And certainly these facts will have left their mark on the structure of knowledge. But it does not follow that knowledge *is* nothing but whatever belief happens to be practically helpful. Because knowledge of truth is useful, and has been evolved solely because it is useful, it does not follow that whatever is useful among our beliefs is true. To find out whether the pragmatic test is or is not the sole determinant of the validity of knowledge, we must examine the structure of knowledge at each of its several stages. And we will now proceed to do this for the first stage of knowledge, the concepts of the given.

The pure given itself is admittedly independent of our wills, is not fashioned by us to meet our practical needs. It is the concept which, during the last thirty or more years, has received the special attention of those philosophers who most vociferously insist that knowledge has no validity except that which it borrows from action. It is the concept which, we have been told, has been so exclusively evolved for practical ends that it does not truly serve the theoretical purposes of knowledge. It is the concept

which is supposed, by one of the leading philosophers of this way of thinking, to mislead us and distort the truth, so that 'intuition' has to be called in to repair the damage. Indeed the main battle of modern philosophy, which is the battle of reason against various forms of 'intuition' and irrationality, rages round the concept.

In studying the concepts of the given we are studying the original fountain and source of conceptual knowledge. We are at the very beginning. It is here, therefore, that we should begin our study of the relation of concept to action. Whatever we find at this stage is bound to have an important influence on the whole of our inquiry.

Wherever the relation of resemblance holds, even partially, between any two elements of the given, there is possible a concept of the given. A *class* can be based on *any* resemblance. And as any given element will stand in numerous relations of resemblance to numerous other elements, a single element may therefore be a member of many different classes. The red patch before my eyes is not only a member of the class 'red'. It not only resembles the neighbouring red patch, but it also resembles green in being a 'colour'. It even resembles a sound or odour in being a 'sensation'. In general, any given may fall into numbers of different classes. And since the number of different resemblances which may be observed to hold within the general field of the given will be indefinitely large, the number of possible concepts of the given is also indefinitely large.

It is here, if anywhere, as it seems to me, that the pragmatic factor will exert its influence. For the mind, confronted by the possibility of a very large number of concepts, and being unable to make use of them all, is compelled to *select*. What will be the motive of its selection? On what principle will it use some and neglect others? It is certainly logically possible that its selection might be made in the theoretic interest of pure knowledge. But though this is a logical possibility, no one who considers the question will accept it as a fact. For the ideal of pure knowledge has come into existence very late in the history

of the race. Even now it is real only for a few men of science, scholars, and philosophers—a mere drop in the ocean of humanity. For the vast masses of men knowledge is almost solely an instrument of practical activity. And that those concepts which, being logically presupposed by all others, must have come into use in the very first glimmerings of the dawn of knowledge, should have been selected on theoretical grounds is a manifest absurdity. One is impelled to the conclusion that, as a matter of fact, selection must, throughout the greater part of the history of the race, have been made in the interests of action. The mind will have selected those concepts which are likely to be useful to it in the control of experience.

Consider, for example, the colour concepts. The number of distinguishable shades of colour is not unlimited, but is very large. Colours shade off into one another. And not all shades of colour have names. But the conceptualization of colour will depend upon the use each particular person makes of it. For certain crude purposes a simple classification into red, blue, green, and yellow may suffice. The loving labourer in flower gardens will require a more elaborate classification, and the artist a still higher discrimination of shades.

To the primitive man the resemblance between red and red, the concept 'red', is important. In the recognition of objects, the search for food, the flight from danger, colour will be in a thousand ways an important clue. But the subtle and tenuous resemblance between a colour and a sound which gives rise to the very abstract concept of 'quality', will be useless to him. It may, however, become very useful to those in a more advanced state of society whose interests necessitate the use of more abstract concepts.

There is a resemblance between a star and the sharp point of a thorn. Both are material points. And we might on this basis classify thorns and stars together. But though this would be logically defensible, it would be useless in practice, and this resemblance will therefore be ignored. Primitive men will class thorns with thorns as hurtful to

the bare feet, and he will class stars with stars as giving him a faint light at night to guide his steps. In general the mind will select the useful resemblances and make concepts of them, and will ignore the useless ones.

But although to this extent the pragmatic test will be operative even in this first stage of knowledge, it will be noted that it acts among the concepts of the given as a criterion of usefulness and not of truth. A concept of the given will be true if based on an existing resemblance, false otherwise. And if this is admitted, the further point must be pressed home that such a concept may be true even though useless. Among the innumerable resemblances which exist we select those which will be useful to us in our practical activities and ignore the rest. But the ignored resemblances are just as real, and to note them would be just as true. To compare a thorn-point to a star may be useless, but is nevertheless a correct comparison, and a concept or judgement based on it would be 'true'.

It is most important to note that the bare concept of the given does not contain that element of *prediction* which has been stressed as characteristic of the concept in general by some modern pragmatist writers.<sup>1</sup> It is pointed out by such writers that our concept of an object, say an apple, has as part of its meaning the fact that certain presented experiences are the signs of possible future experiences. For example, I see the red appearance of the apple. I do not actually *see* that it is an apple at all. All I see is a red round patch with certain characteristic markings and shades of light. I *interpret* this visual appearance in the light of past experience as an apple. This means that I take the characters which I have actually perceived (the red round colour patch) as a sign of the possibility of experiencing those other characters of an apple which I have not as yet perceived in the present instance. The red round appearance is a sign that *if* I bite the object I shall experience a sweet taste; that *if* I open up the interior of the object I shall experience a whitish visual appearance,

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, *Mind and the World-Order*, by Clarence Irving Lewis.

and so on. Opposite me as I write is a shiny yellowish surface. I interpret this to myself by applying to it the concept 'wall', i.e. I believe it to be the wall of my study. This means, among other things, that I take the yellowish appearance to be a sign that *if* I stretch out my hand I shall experience the tactile sensation of resistance or hardness. Thus the recognition of an object by means of the application to it of a concept always involves, and in fact consists in, a prediction of possible future experience.

This *predictive* character of the concept is used by some writers as evidence of the complete subordination of knowledge to action, and of the truth of the general attitude of pragmatism. For it is pointed out that this predictive character is found wherever objects are conceptualized, and that it is in this way that the concept becomes a guide to action. I only know how to act if I can predict that *if* I do thus and thus, I shall experience such and such results. The concept enables me to do this. And this, and nothing else, is the function of the concept. The concept which successfully guides action is true. The concept which misleads action is false. Knowledge generally, therefore, is to be judged by whether it leads to successful action or not.

It cannot be doubted that concepts of objects have this predictive character, that they do guide action in this way, and that knowledge has in fact been developed in the struggle for existence as an instrument of practical action. But in suggesting that this predictive character is essential to a concept and is the sole ground on which its validity can be judged, *the pragmatists appear to have overlooked the concepts of the given*. For, unlike the concepts of *objects*, the concepts of the given do not possess this predictive character. The recognition of any object as what it is—an apple, a star, a philosopher—means that I read into the presentation a great deal more than is *now* actually presented. Into the presentation of the round red appearance I read the sweetness, the white interior, of the apple. But nothing of this kind occurs at the level of the concepts of the given. The concept 'red' implies nothing



beyond the fact that the mind has noted the resemblance of this red to that red. The mind does not in such a case interpret. It does not predict, or add, or introduce anything from the outside. The concepts of the given are therefore, *in themselves*, useless as guides to action. Of course they become useful when they are taken up to form parts of concepts of objects. Thus in the recognition of an apple the concept 'red' becomes a sign of other possible experiences. But by itself the concept 'red' indicates nothing whatever beyond itself. This is the same with all the concepts of the given. In themselves they do not possess any predictive characters, and are not in any way guides to action.

Perhaps the point is clear enough, but still I will put it in yet another way. To say of a certain visual appearance 'This is an apple' is to make various predictions of possible future experience which may guide action. But to say simply of the same appearance 'This is red' predicts nothing at all, and cannot in itself help action in any way. *And yet it is true.* Therefore its truth cannot reside in its utility.

In other words, the assertion that concepts are predictive is not universally true. It is only true of *some* concepts. Therefore this character cannot be the ground of the validity of conceptual thought in general. For no one will dare to assert that the concepts of the given are not perfectly valid concepts. They possess truth. And this truth they possess quite apart from any predictivity or utility, which they do not in themselves possess.

It will not avail to reply that in combination with other concepts the concepts of the given are useful. This we already know. No doubt the concept 'red' helps in the recognition of an 'apple', and the concept 'apple' of course is predictive and utilitarian. But the concepts of the given can logically exist without any knowledge of objects. It is knowledge of *objects* which is predictive. Therefore the concepts of the given can exist and be valid without any such connexion with concepts of objects as renders them useful.

This conclusion is profoundly significant. Not only does it show that perfectly valid concepts are possible whose validity cannot be identified with usefulness. But it is also clear that all later knowledge depends on such concepts, and that therefore, whatever influence practical activities may exert on the development of later knowledge, it is not the sole determinant. All knowledge, therefore, depends in the last resort upon a class of concepts which are valid apart from any pragmatic rest of validity. The fount and origin of knowledge, which is here in the concepts of the given, has a validity independent of any usefulness. This conclusion about the beginning must inevitably influence profoundly our further study of knowledge.

It will be clear, I think, that even here we have not overlooked the genuine insight which we admitted at the outset to be embodied in the pragmatic point of view. But among the concepts of the given utility does not constitute truth. It does no more than guide the mind's selection, from among innumerable concepts, of those most likely to be helpful to mankind. Concepts of the given are, *in themselves*, without any utility value. They acquire utility only as parts of concepts of 'things'. Their truth is independent of utility. But those which, when taken as parts of concepts of things, are useful, will be selected by the mind to form part of its everyday armoury of concepts.