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Dear Jack,[1]

Have you read Quine's <u>New Foundations for Mathematical Logic</u>[2], in his collection <u>From a Logical Point of View</u>?[3] Maybe you read it years ago in its original setting; I read it for the first time a few weeks ago, and it has been seeping into my mind and re-shaping my thinking ever since. Not my thinking about formal logic, but my thinking about philosophy. – You know how I have always been irked by these linguistic prohibitions which people throw about these days. I want to say, for example, that there is no such thing as the sum of the Moon and ten; and I am told that I mustn't <u>say</u> 'the sum of the Moon and ten'. And I want to say that redness isn't red; and I am told that I mustn't even <u>raise the question</u> of whether it is red or not. And I want to say that while 'hits doesn't sprint well' doesn't make sense, for it has a verb where a noun ought to be, 'hitting doesn't sprint well' not only makes sense but is demonstrably true (for abstract objects don't sprint at all, and therefore don't sprint well, and hitting is an abstract object, <u>ergo</u> hitting doesn't sprint well); but I am told that I mustn't put that sort of words into that sort of sentence-frame (though I'm never told at all clearly <u>why</u> I mustn't). But irked as I have been by these authors, I have felt obliged to pay <u>some</u> attention to them because it has appeared that only by so {2} doing can I avoid contradicting myself. And now Quine tells me in effect that I <u>can</u> say all these things I have always wanted to say <u>without</u> contradicting myself, and has shown me one way of doing it. So I am experiencing a sense of liberation very much like that to which Russell testifies, when he and More discovered that they could believe that trees are really green, etc.; only it is liberation from a prison which Russell himself later constructed. – It boils down to this (Quine doesn't talk about characters and properties, as I do, but about classes; but that's an irrelevant fad.)[4]:- It is clear that if there were any such character as the character of non-self-characterisation it would have contradictory properties; therefore there can be no such character. But if there is no such character, then that character does not characterise redness. And it seemed to me to follow from this that redness does not fail-to-characterise-itself, and since it obviously does not characterise itself, either then we must either say that there is no such character as redness (which is

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absurd) or go in for theories of types, categories, linguistic prohibitions and all that. But if I deny that the inferential form

$$X \text{ is } Y$$

$$\therefore X \text{ is characterized by } Y\text{-ness}$$

{3} universally holds, I am spared all this humiliation; and that seems to me a very small price to pay for this liberty. The exceptions will occur when there is no such character as Y-ness – which is, of course, a different case from that in which there is nothing that is Y. And even in these cases I can make intelligible and true statements which are ostensibly about the character of Y-ness, just as I can make intelligible and true statements which are ostensibly about the present king of France or the integer between 3 and 4. Nothing is meaningless, in short (leaving out cases in which a word like 'pob' is just used without any meaning being <u>assigned</u> to it), except what is ungrammatical in a simple schoolboy sense, and certain 'statements' which themselves purport implicitly or explicitly to be <u>about</u> meaning' (like the heterological stuff and the Liar). – Popper's on to this line too, in the latest <u>Mind</u>. It's the revolution of the year – I'm not, as you know, one for climbing on band-wagons; in fact, I probably tend to err a bit in the contrary direction; but <u>this</u> is a band whose tune I like, and I'm getting out the bloody trumpet and preparing to blare forth with the boys. – Some specimen statements and arguments I am prepared to commit myself to (to bring out the full frightfulness of my position [)]: - {4}

(1). My pencil does not characterise itself (for only characters characterise and my pencil is not a character).
(2). Non-redness does characterise itself.
(3). The character of non-self-characterisation does not characterise itself.
(4). The character of non-self-characterisation is not characterised by non-self-characterisation. (The contradictory of this does not follow from (3)).
(5). The character of being the present queen of England, and the present Queen of England, 'exists' in the same sense as of 'exist'. [They are different objects, and more over very different sorts of objects, but are nevertheless both objects, in the same sense of 'objects'.][5]).
(6). The character of non-self-characterisation, and the present King of France, and the sum of the Moon and 10, and the integer between 3 and 4, do not exist (in the same sense of 'do not exist').
(7). The character of being the present King of France exists, and the present King of France does not exist.
(8). Whatever is red is extended, but the character of redness is not extended.
(9). The relation of strict implication exists, but does not strictly imply anything, and is not red.
(10). If statements (1)-(9) are not all true (as I think they are), then some of them are {5} false, but none of them are meaningless.

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[5] Editors' note: This is added in the margin.

(11). It is possible that there should be a Necessary Being, but if there is He exists in the same sense of 'exist' as you and I do. [The doctrine of 'analogy' goes overboard with the theory of types. They are the same thing anyway.][6] (My present position removes a possible objection to my defence of the possibility of Necessary existence but entails the second part of statement 11).

(12). I cannot take a photograph either of the other side of the moon or of the number 2 (and here I say exactly the same thing of the two objects, though of course it is true for very different reasons in the two cases).

(13). I do not live in England, and neither does my power of standing on my head live in England.

(14). I do not like tripe, and neither does the fourth figure of the syllogism like tripe. (I and the fourth figure of the syllogism constitute a pair of non-tripe-likers; though only I, and not the fourth figure, am a tripe-detester).

(15). The fourth figure of the syllogism[7] is not aware that it is different from <u>consequentia mirabilis</u>[8] and neither is my grocer aware that he is different from the <u>consequentia mirabilis,</u> and neither is my cat; for the fourth figure of the syllogism is not aware of anything, and my grocer is not given to logical reflection {6} and I have no cat. (Despite the difference of these reasons it is the same predicate

   '<u>()</u> is aware that <u>()</u> is different from the <u>consequentia mirabilis</u>'

that is used, along with 'it is not the case that', in all these cases, and rightly thus used. Though there may be certain disguised differences of structure between the first two statements and the third. – It will be noted that the integer between 3 and 4 is not aware that it is different from <u>consequentia mirabilis</u> for the same reason that my cat is not; though it is also not aware of it for a further reason, which it shares not with my cat but with the fourth figure of the syllogism. And the fourth figure has this advantage over my cat that it <u>is</u> <u>un</u>aware of its difference from the <u>consequentia mirabilis</u>, whereas my cat is neither aware of it nor unaware of it. At this point my cat is in the same boat with the property of non-self-characterization and the barber who shaves all and only those who do not shave themselves, though it is knowable <u>a priori</u> that the prop. of non-s.c.[9] and the aforesaid barber are in this position, while that my cat is so is a purely empirical fact. The property of being at once ten feet tall and not ten feet tall is {7} <u>not</u>, I should say, in this position,{7}<u>not</u>, I should say, in this position, but shares with my grocer and the 4th syllogistic figure the privilege of being <u>un</u>aware of its difference from the <u>consequential mirabilis</u>; for this property exists, though it necessarily has no instances. – When I say, by the way, that my cat is neither aware nor unaware of its difference from the <u>consequentia mirabilis</u>, I do <u>not</u> mean that the 2 statements 'My cat is aware …' and

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[6] Editors' note: This is added in the margin.
[7] Editors' note: The fourth figure can be represented as the implication: $(x(P,M) \ \& \ y(M,S)) \supset z(S,P)$ where x,y and z are quantors (all, some, none, not all)
[8] Editors' note: The consequential $(\sim\phi \supset \phi) \supset \phi$
[9] Editors' note: non-self-characterization.

'My cat is unaware …' are without truth-values, but that they are both <u>false</u> and that in consequence 'It is not the case that my cat is aware …' and '~ my cat is unaware …' are both true. Similarly with my cat's fellow travellers[)][10].

    Now if you tell me that nobody ever <u>says</u> these things, or that these questions don't arise, I shall consider it a personal affront, for <u>I</u> have just said these things, and <u>I</u> have raised these questions.

        - Yours,

           Arthur

P.S. I'm inclined to think that if God does necessarily-exist, that's something He hasn't on His own. I should say that the existence of most abstract objects, where they exist, is necessary. Maybe He's the only <u>concrete</u> necessary existent. But I'm only feeling my way about in this new paddock – gambolling around experimentally, and sniffing the grass.

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[10] Editors' note: It is not clear were '(' should be.