

Chapter I

EXPERIENCE AS A SOURCE OF CERTAINTY

Experience, it is true, indeed, admits of different meanings even in an empirical philosophy. There are variations in the meaning of the concept of experience, such as, experience as idea, as meaning, as sense-data. And even experience has been used in contemporary philosophy as structure. Of course, this is a recent coinage of the term at the hands of some scientifically-minded philosophers. Schlick is the chief proponent of this novel view of the meaning of experience. Moritz Schlick was the nucleus of the Vienna Circle, the guiding spirit and founder of logical positivism. Originally there were a group of scientists, mathematicians who gathered around Schlick. Many of them belonged to this group and Carnap and Heisenberg became well-known philosophers of this 'Circle'. Wittgenstein was not a member of this group, but he associated himself with Schlick, the great pivot of the empirical tradition and the logical positivistic movement actually started with Schlick being influenced by Wittgenstein's Tractatus. Philosophical analysis of language and its relation to words, meaning, truth have actually started in an Wittgensteinian manner. Philosophical analysis ought to consist primarily in construction of a new, artificial system. Metaphysics, for the members of the 'Vienna circle' or logical positivists, is the attempt to demonstrate that there are entities which lie beyond the reach of any possible experience, 'Kantian things-in-themselves'. The logical positivists challenged the position of metaphysical

entities, so they were attracted by the principle of verifiability - 'the principle that the meaning of a proposition lies in its method of verification'. They saw in it a way 'of eliminating all references to entities which are not accessible to observation'. Usually and in ordinary discourse, experience means sense-experience. In The Encyclopedia of Philosophy¹ the word, experience is taken as the source of knowledge. Knowledge ultimately depends on the use of the senses and "What is discovered through them". Experience, in this sense, is used to mean direct reference to sense-contact with objects. But experience cannot always be used in this way. That knowledge ultimately depends on the use of the senses presents some difficulties, though the difficulties are not insurmountable. Thus we find that the recent empiricists maintain the view that there are limits to empiricism. One's experience cannot be used in a way that it can be followed a long way or upto the end for obvious practical and physical difficulties. They speak that only structure can be communicated without the communicating elements of experience. Their argument is that one's experience cannot be communicated. Thus they construe experience by making a shift from sense-experience and thought to merely formalised statements and experience means for them only structure. But experience cannot be used in the sense of structure, nor can it be used in the sense of mere sense-experience, because both these present to us some difficulties. ~~It is not~~

1 The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol. II, p. 499.

~~say that we experience without difficulties.~~ We do not say that we experience without an element of thought involved in it. Nor do we say that we experience only structure. Structural communication minus something is useless. In short, experience, in the plain-man's book and in the philosophy of perception always relates to a thought which is always the content in the sphere of experience. So before we go on to consider experience as a source of certainty we must make clear the usual meaning of experience as formulated by empiricists. The British empiricists like Locke, Berkeley and Hume hold the opinion that experience furnishes us with the materials of thinking² for which formalisation or a sort of pure empiricism (i.e. direct experience of structure or direct reference to sense-experience) in everything is not necessary. But the non-mental attitude is present in the traditions of Locke, Berkeley and Hume so that the explanation of objectivity has been made possible by the content-character of objects which we experience. In this sense, we want to bridge over a gap between the traditional empiricists and the recent empiricists who also believe in the objective side of our experience. Russell, for example, lays claim to the view that the principle of inductive inference cannot be justified by reference to experience. What he wants to mean is that the objective side of experience cannot be ignored. Yet, he was quite aware of the cognitive significance of experience and he admitted that there are general propositions. What he wanted

2 Cf. The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol.II, p.499.

to mean, probably, is that experience cannot be used in the sense of direct experience or in the sense of direct reference to sense-experience always.³ Nor does he encourage always the experience of structure minus something. And, therefore, again we may stop further - than the former view which is the normal and most ordinary usage of the word, experience - that if experience is to be considered as sense-data, idea, meaning etc., then the area of experience need not be limited to 'experiential contents'⁴ in the very strict limited sense and purely in the objective sense. We can have a better explanation of experience in the sense of immediacy of thought. Then, in that case, experience can be considered to be immediate. So experience cannot be used in the sense of direct experience always or in the sense of merely formalised statements, but in the sense of objectivity of thought and by experience we shall mean immediacy of thought. In this latter sense, experience has a wider meaning and experience is taken up to mean that all knowledge is ultimately derivable from experience.

Experience was originally taken by empiricists to indicate a kind of certainty which we get from the immediate cognition of an object due to a sense-object contact. Thus perception means a definite, an immediate cognition of an object

3 Cf. The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol. II, p.503.

4 Yolton, J.W., "Locke's Concept of Experience" in Locke and Berkeley, edited by C.D. Martin & D.H. Armstrong, p.40.

which is possible due to a sense-object contact. Immediacy of perception means immediacy of cognition as representative of an object given in our sense-perception. This is also the view of the Navya-Naiyāyikas. 'Immediacy' does not mean that perception is a direct perception of objects. Locke himself pointed out that we perceive ideas. He means by perception simply immediacy which, to be explicitly stated, is immediacy of thought. Samuel Alexander calls thought 'a twilight existence'.* There is no other way to know object than through thought which, being possible, due to a sense-object contact means itself content. When we speak of the objectivity of thought, we mean that our thought cannot but be of an object. Our thought must be directed upon something. So the functions of our perception are two-fold. When the knowing mind and the physical object are related to each other, it at once forms the 'stimulus of the act of knowing' and determine the 'character' or 'content' of our knowing by means of which we distinguish an object from others. Whenever we try to show a universal character of knowledge through our subjective experience, we do it through an objectivity of thought. Whenever we make a distinction between one object and another, we do it through the objectivity of thought, only because, thought has got a content-giving character. Otherwise, we could not make

* Although the literal English meaning of 'twilight' is not a happy one, yet, when Alexander calls thought a 'twilight existence', it is used in the philosopher's phrase in a good sense.

any distinction between object and object and all things would have been reduced to mere subjective fancies. Even, at the empirical level, when we speak of the universal essence or essences and determine a relation between individual experiences which are subjective ones and essences, we do it through an objectivity of thought, because, thought itself is characterised by objectivity and universality simultaneously. When we speak of an experienced object, we mean that experience is related to a content or experience has got a thought-giving character.

Thus our thought is exactly the representative* of what is given in sense-perception. We can ordinarily deny neither the capacity of the sense-organs nor the physical objects. Experience for the empiricists means immediate knowledge or perception; it claims an immediate form of objectivity. Knowledge, according to Locke, basically starts with experience. We know the basic programme of all traditional empiricists that experience should be forwarded with an open and simple mind. The mind receives what it gets from the external world. Therefore, we know, Locke appeals to everyone's own observation and experience.⁵

* The term, 'representative' is annexed here, only because it is especially applicable in Locke. And the next moment we have used the expression, immediacy or immediate knowledge to indicate simply the immediacy of thought. Locke also uses the word, immediate, immediacy to indicate immediacy of thought as he also uses the word representation to indicate particular cases of representation which involves the same case of thought. Therefore, we can wipe out this distinction for the sake of our discussion uniformly. Immediacy of thought and our thought is representative do ordinarily mean the same thought involved in our sense-experience or sense-perception.

5 Cf. Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Vol.III, Tr. by E.S.Haldane and F.H.Simson, pp.303-304.

Nothing can be transmitted to the understanding which is not in the sense-field. The external world furnishes our senses with the materials of knowledge. The mind cannot actually think unless it is endowed with all the materials of knowledge as acquired from objects of the world. Locke starts with experience as an empiricist and seems to indicate how far our knowledge conforms to experience. Thus Locke defines perception as an immediate form of objectivity. By objectivity he means objectivity of thought which we perceive in experience. In the epistemic criterion of meaning all traditional empiricists accept that our thought is related in a way to the world of things. The relations are between the reals. In Berkeley's philosophy we also find a similar attitude. In Berkeley's philosophy emphasis on sense-experience is also given in acquiring knowledge. On the objective side, in Berkeley, ideas are referred to by objects. The characteristic feature of a cognition is such that it points towards an object or relates to a content. Berkeley says, we are definite of our ideas of sensible qualities. To Hume, impressions are nothing but perceptions and impression means sensory perception. They enter into our mind with more force and liveliness.⁶ Thus our knowledge of the mental is peculiarly direct and certain. Ideas originate in the mind when our sense-organs come in direct contact with objects of the world. Although in one place Hume says

6 See David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, edited by
Lalby-Digge, p.1.

that our knowledge is only of our own mental states, yet he says that if we are not justified in thinking that we do not have a direct knowledge of an external world of things*, then, we are not entitled to refer to things of the external world in order to distinguish between our mental states. This conflict is due to the fact that Hume sometimes characterises the mental as objective and sometimes as subjective. But a suitable meaning of experience can be that experience pertains of both the subject and the object. Therefore, the relation between experience as objective and experience as subjective has not been properly attended to in Hume. Yet, in spite of this difficulty in Hume the objective character of a cognitive event is emphasized. Our mental states point beyond themselves to objects. Knowledge, according to Hume, is of immediate experience. Our experience, according to Hume, corresponds to possible sensible impressions. Objects are taken by Hume in the sense of external reference. By objects he means objects that are outside us. If we have ideas, they are of impressions which ultimately refer to things or objects. The possible objection may be that Hume does not believe in external objects. All right, Hume does not, although we find a number of

* Things, objects, facts, states-of-affairs are interchangeably used in our dissertation. In any case, the empiricists believe in something given or in experience the subject-matter of which is outside us. So our experience is about a thing or a fact or a state-of-affair etc. In this sense, Hume also believes in something extramentally given. We do not usually mean that Hume speaks of things. Usually he does not, although 'Hume tried to explain our belief in the existence of body, which he reduced to the continued and distinct existence of perceptions. . . .'

commitments made by Hume in his Enquiry (vide page Nos. 17, 18 and 19) as he had a natural propensity to believe in external objects or to make a belief in the 'existence of body' which he reduced to the continued existence of perceptions. If we do not accept his first position that he believes in external objects, we have to accept his second position as he says that all impressions are outward. And whenever we speak of ideas, they follow from impressions, as they are the exact 'replica of impressions'. Therefore, although Hume, a thorough-going empiricist maintains the view that simple impressions are elementary constituents of an experience, yet, he does not avoid the meaning-content of the act of consciousness. Whenever there is experience, there is an element of thought involved. Every experience has got its cognitive significance. Thus experience as referred to by the empirical philosophers relates to the objective side of experience. Therefore, the only difference between Hume on the one hand and Locke and Berkeley on the other is that Hume speaks of impressions, while Locke and Berkeley speak of ideas, but in both the cases, the objective side of experience is emphasized and our "knowledge of the real" needs an intermediary object between the knowing mind and the ultimate object. This intermediary object is the one immediately given or thought and represents the ultimate object".⁷ Locke, although a realist, is a representationalist. According to him, there are external objects, but they are not ultimately

7 Aaron, R.I., John Locke, p.101.

objects of perception. Experience of objects and ideas due to their experiencing are co-extensive. Cognitions or thoughts have got an objective existence. Our cognitions have correspondence to their objects. Since our consciousness is associated with objects, all our experience applies to possible empirical facts.

A very unique relation between thought and perception has been clearly stated by C.R. Morris in his book, entitled Locke Berkeley Hume in the following :

"All thinking about the physical world assumes the validity of observation Thought can never transcend the sensible in regard to the physical world;"⁸

The scientific view on the nature and structure of a physical object depends upon the 'observation of its sensible qualities'. Science can never avoid the evidence of the senses. Modern science, in its epistemological relationship believes in affections of qualities of objects which are given in sense-experience. Modern science is an empirical science. If the qualities are not perceived and if the observable phenomena are not properly observed, then the structure of a physical object will be other than the qualities and observable phenomena perceived. If we are not sure of our Observations, we cannot be sure of the structure of a physical system of objects. Science has to

⁸ Morris, C.R., Locke Berkeley Hume, p.68.

believe in the empirical criterion of cognitive significance which can be attributed to anything to interpret a system of objects with a 'well determined structure'. Our cognition has got its objective significance in order to interpret systems of Physical phenomena. For example, if we take 'X' for the class, 'man' and if 'a' being one of the constants, a, b, c has certain qualities, m, n, o, then the other constants also possess the same qualities.⁹

The most recent empiricists like Schlick and Russell whom we call logical analysts accept the validity of sense-perception. They believe in the direct cognizance of an object which is given to us through experience. Schlick an empiricist, says in one instance that our mental states are our own. Yet, he does not deny the objective side of our experience. He does not say that our mental states are ours only. He is confident of the knowledge of objects which are experienced by us. Our mental states, although mental and subjective have got an objective significance and this objective significance is derived from experience. In short, experiences have their objectivity. Russell, for example, states his view, in the following way :

"We have knowledge by acquaintance of an object if we are directly aware of it".¹⁰

9 Cf. Hempel, C.G., Aspects of Scientific Explanation, pp.113-114, 121.
10 Passmore, John, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, pp.232-233,

Russell holds the opinion that we are directly aware that we are experiencing something. From what has been stated above it is evident that we are aware of our mental states and experience with which we have direct acquaintance. First, Russell believes in something that is given in perception. Secondly, Russell believes in the objectiveness of our mental states.

Ayer, an advocate of recent empiricism accepts the reality of the given. He says that we have sense-data experiences but they form part of an external world, and he logically believes in an existence of the external world of which we have sense-experience as it will be clear from the following remark :

"Nevertheless it is assumed that since these objects are undeniably experience, they must in some sense be real".¹¹

Ayer says, "our sense-data experiences are material in nature. According to Ayer "The meaning of a sentence is an empirical fact."¹²

On an analysis it can be said that Ayer believes in the cognitive character of our mental events. He, according to Ayer, give the name of empirical fact to what can be actually observed.

11 Ayer, A.J., The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge, p.76.

12 Ibid., p.95.

We are confident of what we experience. Ayer is an empiricist in both the senses. In the first instance, he believes in an experience which is sense-given. Secondly, he believes in the richness of contents which indicate facts in observation.

Perception arises due to the stimulation of the sense-organs. Our cognitions originate in and from the contact of the sense-organs with objects. Our ideas or thoughts have reference to an extra-mental reality. We are definite of the functioning or operation of the sense-organs in relation to their particular objects. We are confident that a cognition is produced out of experiencing an object. Cognition, although a mental event, is directed outward to an object. For emphasizing the objectivity of experience Moore makes a distinction between the act of experiencing and the object experienced, both of which exist and are distinct from each other. So cognition has a foundation in an object of perception.

What is relevant to our discussion is that we take into consideration the part played by cognition. Whenever we experience a thing, we become definite of the nature of an object that is revealed to our consciousness by way of cognizing it.

Thus according to the empiricist, the very process of knowledge implies that the mind is confronted with an object and that we are never identical with that object. For example, to

Hume, our knowledge of the mental is peculiarly direct and certain. Even, then, it (knowledge) cannot be called mental, because the source of the 'mental' is somewhere else. We cannot say, in Hume's sense, the ideas have their mental origin. To relate the ideas to the mind does not mean that they are purely mental, because accessibility to an analysis of experience is only possible through ideas. So we should not think that a purely mentalistic attitude reigns over in an empirical philosophy like Hume's own. Only we want to thump upon objectivity and we say - where do the ideas come from? They are from impressions. Bennett also says, Hume's ideas are 'quasi-sensory states'.¹³ So if there are ideas, they are from impressions. As soon as we begin to start with experience, impression begins to enter in with its content which is nothing but thought. Therefore, we contend to say that Hume's experience means sheer objectivity and if we speak of ideas, they are of impressions. We also find a similar attitude in Brentano's philosophy. He also thinks of the knowledge of the mental as direct and certain, but his knowledge of the mental is used with a deeper significance to mean an intentional meaning which we shall discuss later on for the sake of a comparative study and also when we shall try to formulate our own view. In Locke, the primary concern of ideas is with experience.

13 Bennett, Jonathan, Locke Berkeley Hume : Central Themes, p.222.

Locke considers all ideas being characterized by 'geneticism'. In other words, he considers all ideas having their sensory origin initially, because complex ideas are also based, at bottom, on sensory ideas. Locke speaks of the representative theory of perception and ideas represent to us things or sensible properties of things in the world. This is the first sense of the word, representation. Representation, in normal usage, means representation of ideas and they are used in the objective sense and are used to mean immediacy of thought relating to the idea of one-to-one correspondence. In this sense, reification of ideas has been made possible¹⁴ by Locke and Berkeley both. There may be one justification that reification seems to plead for ideas. And reification may jibe with representation in the first sense as noted above when we count such of our sensory experience. Whether Locke and Berkeley have reified ideas or not - that does not matter. In any case, we know in Locke as in Berkeley that ideas represent objects. This view is *prima facie* correct. Thus we see that representations, as Passmore points out, have affiliations with Locke's experience. But ideas are one item at one time and the next item at another time. Therefore, representation is more puzzling a term as it is with us. On a nearer view it can be found out that Locke's representative theory of ideas is responsible for the whole reconstruction of his theory of ideas which he has not explained

14 Cf. Bennett, Jonathan, Locke Berkeley Hume : Central Themes, pp. 30-35 and 70.

along a truly empirical line. The word, representation carries with it a sense of ambiguity. There are different notions/ideas regarding representation. A more glorious puzzle seems to peep into our mind that Locke at one time makes a distinction between ideas and objects. In Locke, on the one hand representation is equal to an idea representing an existence in the physical world outside. Representation is a direct representation of an object existing in the outside world. On the other hand, representation is the universal idea and is at once the 'logical content'. Logical content and intuitive content are not the same. In this second sense, representation is not justified empirically. Representation in the second sense, i.e. sensory-intellectual is not correct. Prof. Bennett also subscribes to this view. It means finally the complexity of ideas. Thus ideas cover a wider area than objects in the mental world. Berkeley's case is slightly different. 'Objects are simply ideas' according to Berkeley. Berkeley in fact differs from the view what we call representation of Locke. To put it more clearly, Berkeley does not encourage the idea of representation in exactly the same sense as it is in Locke. But the central point of enquiry may be at par with Locke's that ideas have their objects. Berkeley's philosophy also seems to give more importance to the mental. But we do not know definitely what is the nature of the word, 'mental'. To use Berkeley's own words, ideas are really the 'creatures of the mind'. They have their being in the mind. The word, idea is used in Locke as in Berkeley in an

overlapping sense. The demarcation between ideas is not clear in Locke and also in Berkeley. Hume in many respects shares with Locke's view. We may cite some examples for the rationalistic trend of Hume's thought which in the ultimate analysis does not find favour with his empiricism. Hume took certain mental faculties as explanatory of certain experiences. But all happenings, according to Hume took place according to certain rules. Hume very frequently speaks of thought. Sometimes his thought appears to be different from psychological thought. It is reflective thought. Therefore, the point 'ideas clarify objects' is given much more prominence in the philosophies of the traditional empiricists, the reason simply being that the traditional empiricists have developed their philosophies ultimately towards ideas.

To sum up the points in retrospect, we may say that if representation is taken in Locke's first sense, then it means sheer objectivity.¹⁵ Yet it is not clear how he has taken up representation. The other view is also present in Locke. We cannot totally say that the empiricist like Locke does not give importance to the mental. Therefore, we see, Locke sponsors objectivity by re-defining 'the psychical' or 'mental'. Locke tries to find out a relation between the subjective affairs of the mind and the objective character of knowledge of objects. Yet, this relation is not proper and the relation is not carried out consistently because of his traditional definition of perception

15 Aaron, R.L., John Locke, pp.101-103.

as an immediate form of objectivity and secondly, because of his using the word, representation in an ambiguous sense. Frankly speaking, in Locke, the words, 'conception', 'universal', 'representation' have been used in an ambiguous sense. This is what we call the misplacement of the notions. (my italics). This has been done because the idea of subjective experience has not been given free access to in Locke's philosophy etc. Still, we hope, there is a third sense of representation. By representation in the third sense, we mean non-sensible ideas, yet, they have their valid reference to experience. In this sense, we mean ideas of a general character shared by particulars of the same sort.¹⁶

We see that empiricists have so far undertaken a positive search for certainty of knowledge. Experience for them means a cognitional contact with objects which are given in sense-perception. We are aware of the immediacy of thought which helps us to know objects. Our thought is "an encounter through which man becomes aware of the actuality of reality itself."¹⁷ Whenever the empiricists take experience as the source, the valid method of knowledge, they believe that the objective factors of knowledge are the fruit of knowledge. Experience

16 Aaron, R.I., John Locke, pp.101 and 103.

17 Centore, E., "Humanistic significance of Science : Some Methodological considerations", Philosophy of Science, Vol.38, No.3.

supplies us with the materials of thinking so that there can be a system of knowledge. It is true, indeed, that if we have to recognize experience as experience, we have to recognize equally the objectivity of thought. The empiricists hold that whenever there is experience, there is thought. Yet, mere objectivity of thought, we shall see, cannot give us an objective system of knowledge which is equally communicable and sharable by others. In our final analysis we shall see that an objective system of knowledge is equal to its truth. The problem arises, for the empiricists could not take subjective experience as it is. In spite of the relation between experience and the objectivity of thought, the empiricists ignore the fact that cognition is also subjective in nature. It is true, indeed, that one's experience cannot be achieved without being subjective. If we just look to the meaning of experience, we may amazingly note as Prof. Yolton has remarkably put it, that experience must be made from the 'reflective'/inward level. (my italics). Here we shall take the words 'reflective' and 'inward' in the same sense to mean that our experience is subjective, mental in nature. To speak of empiricism and the proponents of empiricism, either traditional or modern, they are wise enough not to maintain the absurd conclusion that experience can be achieved without participating in it. Notwithstanding this, the empiricists take experience in such a way that by experience they only emphasize the objective side of experience and its relation to the objectivity of thought. Thus in the gradual development of empiricism the question of valid

reference of experience to non-sensible ideas is immediately raised by the empiricists like Locke and Berkeley even.¹⁸ A similar reference can also be made in Aaron's book, John Locke.¹⁹ Because of his definition of perception as an immediate form of objectivity of thought, Locke is not ready to determine the relation of experience to non-sensible ideas ultimately, for, one may raise an objection by saying that an idea is in the mind, and, yet, its precise relation to the mind is not easy to determine. If the ideas are in the mind, they at once become related to one's own mind. In this sense, ideas become non-sensible. But any non-sensible ideas cannot be called non-sensible in a sense that they have their valid reference to experience - this position Locke is not ready to accept. Our experience inspite of its objectivity cannot form an objective knowledge unless it is related to the individual consciousness. In this sense, the relation between subjective experience and inter-subjectivity is not properly maintained and, therefore, an objective truth cannot be communicated.

Frankly speaking, the empiricists take experience in an objective realm. Thus whenever they say that every thought, if properly analysed, is equal to its content or it has got its content-giving character, they necessarily mean to indicate a

18 Urban, W.M., Language and Reality, p.27.

19 Aaron, S.I., John Locke, p.100.

relation between experience and the objectivity of thought. All empiricists do admit of this very characteristic *prima facie*. Even the most recent empiricists for whom experience means only structure hold the view that structure depends on experience*. Let us clarify this point a little. We shall not commit ourselves to an elaborate explanation of structure just now. Only we have a foot-note here at this page in support of the view that structure depends on experience. Only we can say that experience without its content to inhabit in structure is not possible. We cannot think of structure without experience. Yet the problem arises regarding meaning, truth and communication relating to experience. In modern terminology, this becomes a serious problem for us when we find a gap between form and thought and this problem creates an impasse, when the recent empiricists like Schlick and others deprive experience of thought that may be regarded as the content of knowledge. They do not admit of the communicability of content. We may centre our discussion on Locke's idea of communication here also. Locke, of course, did not avoid content as the communicating element in knowledge. Yet,

* We have a good number of statements as given by Schlick for our considering the fact that structure depends on experience. Schlick's "given" means something representative of which we have a *datus* given in our experience. We are not, however, going along the Kantian line. So along the experiential line of enquiry we may further speak of Schlick's commitments to what are called 'synthetic propositions a posteriori' (Ref.: "Denial of the synthetic a priori" - Philosophy and "On the Meaning of propositions" - Logical Positivism, edited by Ayer).

in his book entitled Locke Berkeley Hume, Prof. Bennett subscribes to the view that Locke's communication is objective in nature,²⁰ Moreover, Locke attaches communication more and more to articulation. In this latter sense, Locke uses communication in such a way that, it seems to us, language communicates itself. So communication or the purpose of communication is not properly served as we are not concerned with linguistic communication. Here we may find an affinity between Locke's communication which is linguistic and that of the recent empiricists which is structural communication. If we bracket the second sense of Locke's communication, then it still remains objective minus one's communicating thought from the subjective level of consciousness. But who will communicate? If the subject-matter of communication is not related to the subjective level of communication, then communication on an inter-subjective level is not possible. Communication is complete when we attach the same meaning to a word which indicates the same thought in both the speaker and the hearer. We want to communicate our ideas for the benefit of communication of meaning and truth in general. Our communication becomes completed when an understanding takes a vital role on the point of equity of both the speaker and the hearer. Communication is inter-subjective communication in a true sense. In the long development of empiricism, experience for recent empiricists is used in the sense

20 Bennett, Jonathan, Locke Berkeley Hume: Central Themes, pp. 214.

of structure. For them the only publicly sharable factor in knowledge is structure. They maintain subjective experience in so far as it means inter-subjective experience of structure minus the contents of knowledge that are contained in our experience. This has been done because they have accepted the logical development of experience. Their over-emphasis upon the objective side of experience also compels them to reach such a logical conclusion. On a nearer view, we shall see that by giving up content, they have also given up the very basis of experience. We do not know form, but, as we know, the communicating element in knowledge is content itself. This statement finds its justification upon the fact that when the recent empiricists have first, begun, to analyse experience, they have done it objectively.

Even Kant for whom knowledge means categorised knowledge is not without the premonition that our thought being characterised by objectivity has got an external reference. This view finds its justification in Prof. Urban's book, "Language and Reality" which can be put in the following words of Urban himself :

"In the terms of Kant, the postulate of the 'empirical' employment of the understanding is just that existence shall mean reference to the sensuously observable".²¹

21 Urban, W.M., Language and Reality, p.390.

Therefore, it is true that experience for the empiricists by common consent, supplies the materials of thinking. Unless thought is involved in our analysis of experience, there is no objectivity, communicability and sharability of thoughts. We see, therefore, that experience was originally taken by the empiricists to reach a certain kind of certainty. Yet, the question it leaves us with is that if we do not believe the fact that subjective experiences have any significance in the binding force of the factors of knowledge, then what happens in the case of general statements or in the case of description which lays claim to constitute a system of knowledge.

If we do believe in a cognitive significance of our subjective experience inspite of its being characterized as subjective, then, we can bridge over a gap between the subjective and the objective aspect of experience. Objectivity is not possible without a precondition of subjectivity. Even Kant, for the sake of the empirical part in his philosophy, when he speaks of the synthetic principles a priori, does not mean that they are not derived from experience. Rather, on the other hand, he says that they are derived from experience or in Kant's own words, they are 'borrowed by us from experience',²² for which subjective unity of consciousness is necessary for the manifold intuition

22 Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Tr. by N. Kemp Smith, B2, p. 26.

empirically given. Kant, when he speaks of the empirical employment of the understanding does not mean that concepts are merely formal. On the other hand, empirical concepts* are full of content in as much as our subjective experience is not without any significance and has got an objective cognitive significance and secondly, because we believe that an empirical statement is capable of being tested by a confrontation with experiential findings. That subjectivism in best rewarded can be further supported by Kant's treatment of synthetic principles a priori being characterised by an intentional significance of subjective experience.²³ This attitude is not absent in Locke as well as in most recent empiricists like Russell and others. Thus Locke had a vision of preconceptual experience. Although for Locke, the universal is the meaning and an idea and it is the logical content, yet, his concept of the universal is not non-conformable to experience as Locke calls a general idea as the representative of all of the same kind or it is a "character or a group of characters shared by particulars of the same sort".²⁴ Locke has seen the empirical possibility of the justification of the universal. What is logically possible may be empirically possible also. Only the proper relation between the two has not been sometimes properly attended to by the empiricists. For Ayer

* Have we any justification to call the concepts empirical ? As the concepts have good reference to experience, we call them empirical.

23 Cf. Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Tr. by N. Kemp Smith, B18, p.34.

24 Aaron, R.I., John Locke, p.201.

experience means sense-data experience. Nevertheless, in support of our problem of showing a significant relation between subjective experience and objective communicable truth Ayer says that a justification of a complete system of empirical knowledge can be found on empirical grounds. For Schlick, the meaning of a proposition is an actual state of affairs accruing from experience. By experience Schlick, in some context, means a total reaction to an external reality in all its complexity. This statement will be clear from the following statement :

"It is the first step of any philosophizing" that to give the meaning of a statement "except by describing the fact which must exist" is utterly impossible.²⁵

Hume's experience finally may be a note of departure from the empirical stand, yet, he says that we "learn by analysis that ideas corresponding" to the "perceptions behave in certain ways according to certain rules".²⁶

Brentano, a noted realist of Germany in spite of stressing the objectivity of knowledge equally stressed the view of mind as 'intentional'. Our mental act, according to Brentano, is not merely chimeral. It occurs simply because it refers to an object. We have no barrier to call our experience subjective.

25 Schlick, Moritz, "On the Meaning of Propositions" in Logical Positivism edited by A.J.Ayer, p.87.

26 Morris, C.R., Locke Berkeley Hume, p.140.

because primarily all our experience belongs to the subjective conditions of our mind and secondly because, all our mental acts intend to know something by referring to facts in observation. The mind's character is such that it can reveal the exact nature of an object by means of knowing it and by way of making its mental acts directed towards an object.

The relation between the subjective and the objective side of the whole thesis of our experience has not been properly met with by the empirical philosophers. They ignore that all our experience may even be called subjective in a broader sense. Yet, we cannot call the subjective as merely subjective. On the other hand, objectivism is involved in the form of the subjective, because, 'Comprehension is neither an arbitrary act nor a passive experience but a responsible act claiming universal validity'.²⁷ Our knowing, although personal and subjective can, yet, be called objective, since, it is the condition for describing an objective concept which includes within itself an indeterminate range of yet unknown and yet empirically true implications. The empiricists do not consider the fact that subjective experience has any relation with objectivity. There is no contradiction between subjective experience and inter-subjective experience which is properly called an inter-subjective world of Objectivity, because objectivism is involved in our subjective experience and accordingly

27 Polanyi, M., Personal Knowledge (in his preface, p.vii).

it is transmitted to other minds. Although the empirical philosophers did not frankly admit of the existence of subjective experience, yet, they had an awareness of it. For example, the traditional empiricists could not stress the point of subjectivity but a kind of subjectivism was being matured to conclude their philosophies. Their subjective attitude is not totally absent in empiricism when the empiricists like Locke, Berkeley and Hume have tried to signify objectivity of thought by defining and re-defining the subjective or mental and, therefore, lastly by relegating themselves of the confusion by making a relation between the subjective experience and the objectivity of thought. In this sense, probably, Locke is right in making content the main point. But he did not clarify it. In our opinion, this is not the only point. The part played by subjective experience is not amply assured in Locke as there is an incompatibility between his notion of content and the notion of universality which is sensory/intellectual. We may guess that content has other meanings, as Locke uses some terms having a duplicating nature, such as, reflection, concept, representation and universality. When we analyse these terms, we usually relate them to content which in turn appears to us having some mental faculties/elements which are foreign to experience. Therefore, without going into controversy we say, we could have no objection if his content could have meant an over-individual content. In many cases, it remains implicit. In our opinion, our mental contents, although

subjective are over-individual contents which have a far-reaching cognitive significance. Because all experiences have contents, inter-subjective experiences are made possible. In his book, An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, Russell also says, perceptual knowledge is usually right in its content in spite of logical inconceivabilities²⁸ and probabilities. It is impossible to deny personal involvement in the system of knowledge. Our personal knowledge is creating a significant model of knowledge. If we take mental contents as subjective and say that they are incommunicable in nature, then the data can never be shared. For example, when we hear a dying man's death agonies it is sympathized by those who are around. It is not mere sympathy for the sake of formality but it is sympathy, for the pains of the dying man are felt and shared by, by his fellow-mates. It is because of mental contents of different individuals, say, a, b, c, d, e that an objective system can be constituted. We know the form together with the content, not the content with the form. Everything cannot be determined objectively through space-time determination. Spatial and temporal objects must have a limitation - what is called the limitation of perception. Space-time determinations have led the recent empiricists to accept the world's form, not the world's content. This is curiously a Kantian echo. But form is empty without content. So, if content is made the main point which also means an over-individual content of others, then, an

28 Ref. Russell, B., An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, p.116.

inter-subjective world of objectivism can be maintained to constitute a system of knowledge. Thus a gap between subjective experience and the world of objects can be bridged over.

In this dissertation, we shall consider how far experience is committed to a particular aspect of meaning. In this thesis, we shall try to show that subjectivism involves an inter-subjective understanding and, therefore, objectivism so that an objective communicable factor in knowledge may be shared. We shall also try to show how far subjectivism involves objectivism so that an inter-subjective understanding may be possible for the communication of truth in general.