Chapter One

Mill's theory of Proper Names

While talking about proper names one naturally begins with the John Stuart Mill. Mill's theory was the earliest and perhaps the best known theory on the subject. Mill was the first philosopher who implemented the seed of proper names. Although, Mill had not been recognized as a linguistic philosopher in the true sense of the term but from his grammatical classification of proper names later philosophers had gained ample clues on the basis of which they developed the concept of proper name.

According to Mill, every name denotes an object or every name either denotationally or connotationally or in the form of *de re* or de *dicto* is associated with an object. In short, it can be said that to be a name is to be a name of an object. According to Mill, 'a proper name is an unmeaning mark which we connect in our mind with the idea of the object.'[2]

According to Mill, a proper name like 'Paul' or 'ceaser' is a singular name which is devoid of all connotations. But here a question arises: what is a name? What is it to be a singular? What is it to be devoid of all connotations? Though the word 'name' is used in somewhat extra-ordinary sense in Mill as well as in much of traditional logic, it is not difficult to see what he meant by it. Generally, he thinks that a name is a word or a group of words. But this does not mean that not all words or group of words can be regarded as names. For example-'Paul', 'the first emperor of Rome', 'Man', 'Redness' are all names. But 'of', 'to', 'heavy' etc. are not names at all. According to Mill, the words of the second group can not be regarded as names because 'these words do not express

[2] Mill, J. S. *A System of Logic*, Chap-2, London, Longmans, 1843, pp. 34-38.

things of which anything can be affirmed or denied.'[3] We can say significantly that 'Paul died young' or that 'the first emperor of Rome was a great warrior' but at the same time we can not say that 'of' is a relation or that 'heavy' is difficult to carry. So it is clear, according to Mill, that 'a word or a group of words would be a name only if it could be used in the position of the subject of some assertion.'[4] It seems possible to add also that a name, in Mill's view, is what many contemporary philosophers have called 'a referring expression'.

What does Mill mean by a singular name? It is better to remember that Mill distinguished between a singular name and a general name. According to Mill, 'an individual or singular name is a name which is only capable of being truly affirmed, in the same sense of one thing.'[5] So 'Ram' and 'the king who succeeded William the Conqueror', as well as 'the king' under suitable circumstances, are individual or singular names. But 'Man' on the other hand, is not an individual or singular name; rather it is a general name because it can be truly affirmed of an indefinite number of individuals.

Again Mill says that a singular name is a name of a single thing or person. A name in Mill's opinion is that which can be used in the position of the subject in a subject-predicate statement.

Now it is clear that what Mill means by a singular name. Let us see what does Mill mean by a non-Connotative name? Mill says that 'a non-Connotative term (name) is one which signifies a subject only or an attribute only'[6]. On the other hand, 'a Connotative term is one which denotes a subject and implies an attribute.'[7] In this regard, Mill

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[3] Ibid, p.34.

[4] Ibid, p. 34.

[5] Ibid. p.34.

[6] Ibid, p.35.

[7] Ibid. p.35.

distinguishes between subject and predicate of a statement. A Name being a non-connotative term always occupies the subject position. On the other hand, connotative term always occupies the predicate position of a statement. That is why, connotative term not only denotes a subject or attribute. Connotative term always denotes an object and its properties or attributes. So Mill thinks that a name means a singular name and a singular non-connotative name which is positioned in the subject of some assertion.

According to Mill, 'a non-connotative term is such that it applies to a thing or things we can not infer that the thing or things to which it applies are possessed of some properties.'[8] Mill again says that a singular non-connotative term is a term which can be used to refer to some single thing, but from the fact that it can be used to refer to certain thing we can not infer that the thing is possessed of any properties. In this regard, Mill again gives an argument to accept that 'Caesar' is a non-Connotative term. According to Mill, a proper name like 'Caesar' applies to some individual, it is also correct, but we can not infer that the individual is possessed of any properties. From the fact that the term 'man' cannot be non-connotative because by the term 'man' we infer that he is possessed of the property of being an animal; where the term 'Caesar'(correctly) applies to an individual. We can not infer that the individual is possessed of some properties.

While discussing about proper name after Mill there we have two terms 'Connotative' and 'non-Connotative'. According to Mill, a proper name is always non-Connotative, because for Mill a non- Connotative term always signifies a subject only or an attribute only. On the other hand, a Connotative term denotes a subject and implies an attribute. In this regard, Mill's distinction between Connotative and non-Connotative

[8] Ibid. p. 35.

terms needs further clarification. Mill says that "a non-Connotative term is one which signifies a subject only. A Connotative term is one which denotes a subject and implies an attribute"[9] Mill uses the terms 'signifies' and 'denotes' inter-changeably, so the difference between the two types, as it is here presented, is that 'the Connotative term does something in addition to what the non-Connotative terms does.'[10] This presentation of the Connotative term as doing something more turns out not to be justified by Mill subsequent explanation.

First, what is it that the two types of terms have in common? In Mill's varying terminology they both "signify", "denote", "stand for" or are "names of" the things of which they can be truly predicated. To use Mill's own examples, both 'Socratise' (a non-connotative term) and 'virtuous (a connotative term) denote Socratise.We can truly say of this man that he is Socratise and that he is virtuous. What connotative and nonconnotative terms have in common is that each of them has a range of correct application and an extension.

But how do these two terms differ? They differ in the ways in which they come to have their extensions. The connotative term 'virtuous' applies to Socrates and others, 'in consequence of an attribute which they are supposed to posses in common the attribute which has received the name of virtuous"[11].

By contrast, the non-connotative concrete term 'Socrates' and the connotative abstract term 'virtuous' apply to the man and the attribute respectively in consequence of these terms having been on these individuals to be "simply marks used to enable those individuals to be

[9] Ibid. p.36.

[10] Ibid. p. 36.

[11] Ibid. p.36.

made subject of discourse"[12].The attribute in consequence of which a non-connotative term applies is not one that is independent of the term rather it is just the attribute of bearing the term as a 'mark' (name).

Mill's explanation makes it clear that this difference in the conditions of application is the crucial difference between the terms. A connotative term is one that applies to an individual. A non-connotative term is one that applies to an individual simply because the term has been bestowed on it as a label. One consequence of this distinction is that a connotative term may be either general or singular depending on whether the attribute that "gives the name" is shareable, but a non-connotative term will always be a singular term applying just to the individual that bears the term as a proper name.

But what can be made of the claim with which Mill introduces his distinction-that connotative terms do something's more than non-connotative terms? The extra that they are said to do is to "imply an attribute". This is, of course, not something that connotative terms do independently of denoting .They denote just those individuals that have the "implied" attributive. To predicate a Connotative term is to ascribe an attribute. However, a non-connotative term also denotes only in virtue of certain attributes. They denote just the individual that bears the terms as names. Consequently, to predicate a non-connotative term is to ascribe the attribute of bearing the term as a name.

Mill, though, insists that non-connotative terms lack something that connotative terms have. He regards connotation as information or signification. He then says, "The only names of objects which connote nothing are proper names; and these have strictly speaking, on signification."[13] However there is confusion somewhere, for he has to

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[12]Ibid. p. 37.

[13] Ibid. p.37.

admit that it is informative to be told of a town that it is York. He tries to dismiss this by saying that there is no information except that 'York' is its name. He contrasts it with the information that the town is built of marble. Here, we have entirely new information, according to Mill. The identification of the town as York may easily be a new information because of the fact that it is built of marble.

The difference between predication of the non connotative term and the predication of the connotative term is simply is the kind of information imparted. The first gives information of a relation between the town and the term itself – the town has the name 'York'; while the other gives term independent of information about the material used in the construction of the town. The different in the kind of information expressed is precisely the difference between non- connotative terms and connotative terms. The former applies to those that have the attribute of having been labeled with the term. The latter applies to those things that possess some attribute other than bearing the term itself as a proper name.

Classification of Proper names

Mill has divided name into various types which are as follows:

Singular and general names

Mill classifies name as general and individual (or singular) name and then distinguishes between them. A general name is familiarly defined as a name which is capable of being truly affirmed, in the same sense of an indefinite number of things. 'An individual or singular name is a name which is only capable of being truly affirmed, in the same sense of one thing.'[14]

Thus, man is capable of being truly affirmed of John, George, Marry and other persons without assignable limit; and it is affirmed of all of them in the same sense; for the word man expresses certain qualities and when we

[14] Ibid. p. 38.

predicate it of those persons, we assert that they all possess those qualities. But John is only capable of being truly affirmed of one single person, at least in the same sense. For though there are many persons who bear that name, it is not conferred upon them to indicate any qualities or any thing which belongs to them in common; and can not be said to be affirmed of them in any sense at all, consequently not in the same sense. "The king who succeeded William the conqueror" is also an individual name. For there cannot be more than one person of whom it can be truly affirmed, is implied in the meaning of the words. Even 'the king' when the occasion or the context defines the individual of whom it is to be understood, may justly be regarded as an individual name.

It is not unusual, by way of explaining what is meant by a general name, to say that it is the name of a class. But this, though a convenient mode of expression for the some purposes, is objectionable as a definition. It would be more logical to reverse the proposition and then turn it into a definition of the word class: "A class is the indefinite multitude of individuals denoted by a general name."

It is necessary to distinguish general names from collective names. A general name is one which can be predicated of each individual of a multitude; a collective name can not be predicated of each separately, but only of all taken together. "The 76th regiment of foot in the British Army", which is a collective name, is not a general but an individual name; for though it can be predicated of a multitude of individual soldier taken jointly, it can not be predicated of them severally. We may say 'John is a soldier' and Thompson is a soldier and Smith is a soldier but we can not say Johns is the 76th regiment and Thompson is the 76th regiment and Smith is the 76th regiment. We can only say, John and Thompson and Smith and Brown and so forth are the 76th regiment.

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"The 76th regiment" is a collective name, but not a general one. A regiment' is both a collective and a general name. General with respect to all individual regiments, of each of which separately it can be affirmed; collective with respect to the individual soldiers of whom any regiment in composed.

Concrete and Abstract names

Mill admits Concrete and Abstract name. According to Mill a concrete name is a name which stands for a thing; an abstract name is a name which stands for an attribute of a thing. Thus 'John', 'the sea', 'this table' are names of things. 'White', also is a name of a thing. Whiteness is the name of a quality or attribute of those things. 'Man' is the name of many things; humanity is a name of an attribute of those things.'[15] Old is a name of a thing; old age is a name of one of their attributes.

We have used the words concrete and abstract in the sense annexed to them by the schoolmen, who, notwithstanding the imperfections of their philosophy, were unrivalled in the construction of technical language, and whose definitions, in logic at least, though they never went more than a little way into the subject, have seldom, I think, been altered but to be spoiled. A practice, however, has grown up in more modern times, which, if not introduced by Locke has gained currency chiefly from his example, of applying the expression "abstract name" to all names which are the result of abstraction or generalization, and consequently to 'all general names, instead of confining it to the names of attributes.'[16] A more wanton alteration in the meaning of a word is rarely to be met with; for the expression general name, the exact equivalent of which exists in all languages I am acquainted with, was already available for the purpose to which abstract has been misappropriated, while the misappropriation

[15] Mill, J.S. *A System of Logic*, London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1972.pp.90-112..
[16] Ibid. p. 91.

leaves that important class of words, the names of attributes, without any compact distinctive appellation. The old acceptation, however, has not gone so completely out of use, as to deprive those who still adhere to it of all chances of being understood. Thus, Mill goes on to say that by 'abstract, then, I shall always, in Logic, mean the opposite of concrete: by an abstract name, the name of an attribute; by a concrete name, the name of an object'.

Do abstract names belong to the class of general or to the class of singular name?

Mill says that some abstract names are certainly general. However, some of those which are name, but not of one single and definite attribute but of a class of attributes. The word 'color' which is a name common to whiteness, redness and so forth. Even the word whiteness, in respect of the different shades of whiteness to which it is applied in common; the word magnitude, in respect of the various degrees of magnitude and the various dimensions of space; the word weight, in respect of the various digress of weight, such also is the word attribute itself, the common name of all particular attribute. But when only one attribute, neither variable in degree nor in kind, is designated by the name; as variables, tangibleness, equality, squarness, milk-whiteness, then the name can hardly be considered general; for though it denotes an attribute of many different object , 'the attribute itself is always conceived as one, not many.'[17] To avoid needless logomachies, the best course would probably be to consider these names as neither general nor individual, and to place in the class apart.

It may be objected to our definition of an abstract name, that not only the names which we have called abstract, but adjective, which we have placed in the concrete class, are names of attributes; that white, for

[17] Ibid. p. 92.

example, is as much as the name of the colour as whiteness is. But a word ought to be considered as the name of that which we intend to be understood by it when we put it to its principal use, that is, when we employ it in predication. When we say, snow is white, milk is white, linen is white; we do not mean it to be understood that snow, or linen, or milk, is a colour. We mean that they are things having the colour. The reverse is the case with the word whiteness. Here what we affirm to be whiteness is not snow, but the colour of snow. Whiteness, therefore, is the name of the colour exclusively. But white is a name of all things whatever having the colour; a name, not of the quality whiteness, but of every white object. It is true. This name was given to all those various objects on account of the quality. We may therefore say, without lack of decorum, that the quality forms part of its signification; but a name can only be said to stand for, or to be a name of, the things of which it can be predicated. We shall presently see that all names which can be said to have any signification, all names by applying which to an individual we give any information respecting that individual, may be said to imply an attribute of some sort; but they are not names of the attribute; it has its own proper abstract name.

Connotative and non-connotative names

Mill divides names into connotative and nonconnotative, the latter sometimes, but improperly, called absolute. This is one of the most important distinctions which we shall have occasion to point out, and of those which go deepest into the nature of language.

A non- connotative term is one which signifies a subject only or an attribute only. "A connotative term", Mill opines, "is one which denotes a subject, and implies an attribute."[18] By the term subject here is meant anything which possesses attributes. Thus John, or London, or England,

[18] Mill, J. S. *A System of Logic*, London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1949. p93.

are names which signify a subject only. Whiteness, length, virtue, signify attribute only. None of these names, therefore, is connotative. But white, long, virtuous are connotative. The word 'white, denotes all white things, as snow, paper, the foam of the sea, and so forth, and implies, or as it was termed by the schoolmen, connotes, the attribute whiteness.'[19] The word white is not predicated of the attribute, but of the subject, snow, and so forth; but when we predicate it of them, we imply, or connote, that the attribute whiteness belongs to them. The same may be said of the other words cited above. Virtuous, for example, is the name of a class, which includes Socrates, Howard, the Man of Ross, and an indefinable number of other individuals, past, present, and to come. These individuals, collectively and severally, can alone be said with propriety to be denoted by the word: of them alone can it properly be said to be a name. But it is a name applied to all of them in consequence of an attribute which they are supposed to possess in common, the attribute which has received the name of virtue. It is applied to all beings that are considered to posses this attribute; and to none which are not so considered.

All concrete general names are connotative. The word man, for example, denotes Peter, Jane, John and an indefinite number of other individuals, of whom, taken as a class, it is the name. But it is applied to them, because 'they posses, and to signify that they possess, certain attributes.'[20] These seem to be, corporeity, animal life, rationality, and a certain external form, which for distinction we call the human. Every existing thing, which possessed all these attributes, would be called a man; and anything which possessed none of them, or only one, or two, or even three of them without the fourth, would not be so called. Or, if such newly-discovered beings possessed the form of man without any vestige

[19] Ibid. p 94.
[20] Ibid. p. 95.

of reason, it is probable that some other name than that of man would be found for them. How it happens that there can be any doubt about the matter, will appear hereafter. The word man, therefore, signifies all these attributes, and all subjects which posses these attributes. But it can be predicated only of the subjects. What we call men are the subject, the individual Stiles and Nokes; not the qualities by which their humanity is constituted. The name, therefore, is said to signify the subject directly, the attributes indirectly; it denotes the subject, and implies, or involves, or indicates, or as we shall say henceforth connotes, the attributes. It is a connotative name.

Connotative names have hence been also called ***denominative,*** because the subject which they denote is denominated by, or receives a name from, the attribute which they connote. Snow, and other objects, receives the name white, because they possess the attribute which is called whiteness. Peter, James, and other receive the name man, because they possess the attributes which are considered to constitute humanity. The attribute, or attributes, may therefore be said to denominate those objects, or to give them a common name.

It has been said that all concrete general names are connotative. Even abstract names, though the names only of attributes, may in some instances be justly considered as connotative; for attributes themselves may have attributes ascribed to them ; and 'a word which denotes attributes may connote an attribute of those attributes.'[21] This word is a name common to many attributes, and connotes hurtfulness, an attribute of those various attributes. When, for example, we say that slowness, in a horse, is a fault, we do not mean that the slow movement, the actual change of place of the slow horse, is a bad thing, but that the property or

[21] Ibid. p. 96.

peculiarity of the horse, from which it derives that name, the quality of being a slow mover, is an undesirable peculiarity.

With regard to those concrete names which are not general but individual, a distinction must be made. Proper names are not connotative: they denote the individuals who are called by them; but they do not indicate or imply any attributes as belonging to those individuals. According to Mill when we designate, for example, a child by the name Paul or a dog by the name Caesar, we actually make sense to say that these 'names are simply marks used to enable those individuals to be made subjects of discourse.'[22] It may be said, indeed, that we must have had some reason for giving them those names rather than any others; and this is true; but the name, once given, is independent of the reason. A man may have been named John, because that was the name of his father; a town may have been named Dartmouth, because it is situated at the mouth of the Dart. But it is no part of the signification of the word John, which the father of the person so called bore the same name; nor even of the word Dartmouth, to be situated at the mouth of the Dart. If sand should choke up the mouth of the river, or an earthquake change its course, and remove it to a distance from the town, the name of the town would not necessarily be changed. That fact, therefore, can from no part of the signification of the word; for otherwise, when the fact confessedly ceased to be true, no one would any longer think of applying the name. 'Proper names are attached to the objects themselves, and are not dependent on the continuance of any attribute of the object.'[23]

But there is another kind of names, which, although they are individual names, that is, 'predicable only of one object, are really connotative.'[24] For, though we may give to an individual a name utterly unmeaning,

[22] Ibid. p. 97.
[23] Ibid. p 97.
[24] Ibid. p.98.

which we call a proper name- a word which answers the purpose of showing that thing it is we are talking about, but not of telling anything about it; yet a name peculiar to an individual is not necessarily of this description. It may be significant of some attribute, or some union of attributes, which, being possessed by no object but one, determines the name exclusively to that individual. "The sun" is a name of this description; "God" when used by a monotheist, is another. These, however, are scarcely examples of what we are now attempting to illustrate, being, in strictness of language, general, not individual names; for, however they may be, in fact, predicable only of one object, there is nothing in the meaning of the words themselves which implies this: and, accordingly, when we are imagining and not affirming, we may speak of many suns; and the majority of mankind have believed, and still believe, that there are many gods. But it is easy to produce words which are real instances of connotative individual names. It may be part of the meaning of the connotative name itself, that there can exist but one individual possessing the attribute which it connotes, for or instance, "the only son of John Stiles" or "the first emperor of Rome." Or the attribute connoted may be a connexion with some determinate event, and the connexion may be of such a kind as 'only one individual actually had; and this may be implied in the form of the expression.'[25] "The father of Socrates" is an example of the one kind (since Socrates could not have had two father); "the author of the Iliad," "the murderer of Henri Quatre," of the second. For, though it is conceivable that more persons than one might have participated in the authorship of the Iliad, or in the murder of Henri Quatre, the employment of the article implies that, in fact, this was not the case. What is here done by the word the, is done in other cases by the context: thus, "Caesar's army" is an individual name, if it appears from

[25] Ibid. p. 102.

the context that the army meant is that which Caesar commanded in a particular battle. The still more general expressions, "the Roman army", or "the Christian army", may be individualized in a similar manner. Another case of frequent occurrence has already been noticed; it is the following. The name, being a many worded one, may consist, in the first place, of a general name, capable therefore in itself of being affirmed of more things than one, but which is, in the second place, so limited by other words joined with it, that the entire expression can only be predicated of one object, consistently with the meaning of the general term. This is exemplified in such an instance as the following: "the present prime minister of England." Prime Minister of England is a general name; the attributes which it connotes may be possessed by an indefinite number of persons: in succession however, not simultaneously; since the meaning of the name itself imports that there can be only one such person at a time. This being the case, and the application of the name being afterwards limited by the article and the word present, to such individuals as possess the attributes at one indivisible point of time, it becomes applicable only to one individual. And as this appears from the meaning of the name, without any extrinsic proof, it is strictly an individual name.

Positive and negative names

The fourth principal division of names is positive and negative. 'Positive, as man, tree, good; negative, as not man, not tree, not good.'[26] To every positive concrete name, a corresponding negative one might be framed. After giving a name to any one thing, or to any plurality of things, we might create a second name which should be a name of all things whatever, except that particular thing or things. The negative names are employed whenever we have occasion to speak collectively of all things

[26] Ibid. p.103.

other than some thing or class of things. When the positive name is connotative, the corresponding negative name is connotative likewise; but in a peculiar way, connoting not the presence but the absence of an attribute. Thus, not-white denotes all things whatever except white things; and connotes the attribute of not possessing whiteness. For the non possession of any given attribute is also an attribute, and may receive a name as such; and thus 'negative concrete names may obtain negative abstract names to correspond to them.'[27]

Names which are positive in from are often negative in reality, and others are really positive though their form is negative. The word inconvenient, for example, dose not express the mere absence of convenience; it expresses a positive attribute, that of being the cause of discomfort or annoyance. So the word unpleasant, notwithstanding its negative form, does not connote the mere absence of pleasantness, but a less degree of what is signified by the word painful, which, it is hardly necessary to say, is positive. Idle, on the other hand, is a word which, through positive in form, expresses nothing but what would be signified either by the phrase not working, or by the phrase not disposed to work; and sober, either by not drunk or by not drunken.

According to Mill, 'there is a class of names called privative.'[28] A privative name is equivalent in its signification to a positive and a negative name taken together; being the name of something which has once had a particular attribute or for some other reason might have been expected to have it, but which has it not. Such is the word blind, which is not equivalent to not seeing or to not capable of seeing, for it would not, except by a poetical or rhetorical figure be applied to stocks and stones. A thing is not usually said to be blind, unless the class to which it is most

[27] Ibid. p.103.
[28] Ibid. p. 111.

familiarly referred, or to which it is referred on the particular occasion, be chiefly composed of things which can see, as in the case of a blind man, or a blind horse; or unless it is supposed for any reason that it ought to see; as in saying of a man, that he rushed blindly into an abyss, or of philosophers or the clergy that the greater part of them are blind guides. The names called privative, therefore connote two things: the absence of certain attributes, and the presence of others, from which the presence also of the former might naturally have been expected.

Critical observation of Mill's Theory of Proper Names

We have already stated that Mill actually brings the concept of proper names in the arena of linguistic philosophy or philosophy of language. Even though the later development of the theory of proper names takes different philosophical implications, but there is no question of doubt that philosophers like Russell and Frege took clues from Mill's theory of proper names. Even the concept of proper name that we have noticed in Kripke's philosophy is somehow or other is Millian. We think that Millian understanding of the concept of proper name as non-connotative impacts a lot on those linguistic philosophers who have developed no-sense theory of proper name. In short, there is no question of doubt that Mill's book *A System of Logic* brings a unique concept of proper names on which linguistic philosophers later on pay much attention. In recent time some philosophers, such as, Michael Devitt and Kim Sterelny raise some objections against Mill's theory of proper names. Mill held that the meaning of a name is just the referent of the name. In this regard, he says, "...proper names are not connotative: they denote the individuals who are called by them; but they do not indicate or imply any attribute as belonging to those individuals."[29] Devitt and Sterenly in their book *Language and Reality: An Introduction to Philosophy of Language* go

[29] Mill, *A System of Logic,* op. cit. p.20

over four well-known arguments against Mill's theory. In this regard, they follow Frege and postulate sense. However, David Cole in his recent paper entitled "A Defense of Mill's Theory of Names" supported Mill by giving plausible answers to the objections raised by Devitt and Sterelny against Mill.

The first objection that has been raised by Devitt and Sterelny against Mill is about identity statements. According to Devitt and Sterelny, the statement 'Everest is Everest' is not informative, whereas the statement "Everest is Gaurisanker" is informative. On Mill's account, they have the same meaning by virtue of the fact that they refer to the same object. However, according to Devitt and Sterelny, the sentences as cited above do differ in meaning. As the sentences under consideration differ in meaning, the names containing these sentences also differ in meaning. Accordingly, Mill view is wrong because Mill tells us that the meaning of a name is just the referent of the name.

To overcome this objection as raised by Devitt and Sterelny against Mill, David Cole intends to say that this objection to Mill's theory turns on epistemic considerations that are irrelevant to the semantics of names. By arguing that the sentences differ in meaning, Devitt and Sterelny actually have intended to say that as these sentences play different roles in peoples' lives, "they are epistemically and cognitively so different"[30] However, Cole claims that they do not show that any of that sentence bears on meaning, particularly on their prefer account of meaning in terms of truth conditions. Cole then quips: why should we suppose that the two sentences differ in truth-conditions, given that 'Everest' and 'Gaurisanker' co-refer? How do we know that the first sentence is true? Is it not a contingent rule that in a single context each occurrence of a name

[30] Devitt and Sterelny, *Language and Reality: An Introduction to Philosophy of Language*, Basil Blackwell, 1987, p.26.

has the same referent as every other? If it does, then that only tells us pseudo-apriori that the first is true, not what it means. Again if it does, then Cole observes that someone could know that the first is true without knowing what it means. Accordingly, the meaning of the referring term "Everest" is irrelevant to the special epistemic status that the first sentence enjoys. It enjoys that status only because of certain knowledge we have about how our language works. According to Cole, Mill perhaps could concur that the two sentences differ in that we might know that the first is true but not know that the second is true. However, this does not lead us to assume that we come to know what either means, or do we know that they differ in meaning. Let us consider the following two meta-statements:

"Everest" and " Everest" co-refer.

"Everest" and " Gaurisankar" co-refer.

If we carefully examine these statements, it seems to us that at this meta-level, it is true on Mill's theory that the first statement is not informative, but the second may be an important discovery. What then is the discovery? According to Cole, the discovery is a discovery about the same meaning of "Everest" and "Gaurisanker". As Mill's theory assumes that the former sentence is inconsequential but the later can be an important discovery, the difference can hardly be cited against Mill's theory of name. Cole then concludes by saying that it is quite possible to assume that at times sentences under consideration have the same meaning even though not all people know this. When this happens, the sentence will play different roles in those people's lives and may have different epistemic status.

The second objection is about ***negative existence statements***. Indeed negative existence sentence creates immense trouble in philosophy of language. According to Devitt and Sterelny, if Mill's view of proper

name holds good then the true sentence "James Bond does not exist", would have a subject term having no referent at all. As a result, it can be said that Mill's theory of name would lack all meaning as Mill emphatically confessed that the referent is the only meaning a name has. Now the problem that arises here is that how a sentence would be true even if it subject term, i.e., the name indeed lacks referent.

According to Cole, sentence about existence statement as cited above actually concerns ***the exotic or striking realm of truth in fiction***. Perhaps the sentence can best be understood as saying: The "James Bond"- stories are fictional. In such a case even though, prima-facially, the works which appear to refer to one "James Bond", but in real sense of the term "James Bond" does not, in fact, refer. Such way of understating has been attributed by Quine as "semantic ascent" where one can move to the meta-level and produce paraphrases of the original sentence. This is similar to the way we may treat the 'nobody' constructions in the King's confusions in Alice in Wonderland. Here we use paraphrases to clarify and avoid unwanted ontological commitment. In the process of paraphrasing there we notice a considerable departure. Here what appears to be a referential position in the original sentence does not occupy that position in the paraphrases that more clearly capture the truth-conditions. As the sentence under consideration is fictional, the paraphrase involves talking about certain myths and works of fiction. This moves, Cole opines, however, does not involve us in assuming that " James Bond" refers to a " fictional character" nor even to an idea so to speak; rather it simply suggests that like "nobody", " James Bond" does not refer to anyone or anything at all.

The second objection of Devitt and Sterelny about negative existence statement actually leads to the third objection that has been termed as ***Empty Names Objections.*** According to Devitt and Sterelny, the sentence

'James Bond is disgustingly successful'- is true. But on Mill's account the sentence could not be true as the subject term of the sentence under consideration does not denote. As the subject term fails to denote anything, it would be meaningless and this, in turn, would make the sentence meaningless. Devitt and Sterelny thus elevate objection by saying that don't try to tell us it refers to a fictional character which gives us all sense of reality or do not pretend to being it scientific or an idea.

In replying the objection raised by Devitt and Sterelny against Mill, Cole inclines to say that this sentence and other sentences, very similar to this, are misleading in nature which does not hamper Mill's original position of proper names. Indeed, Cole observes, these are peculiar constructions on which to rest a refutation of a theory. In fact, anyone who did not know the Fleming stories would indeed suppose that there was a real person named "James Bond" Therefore, Cole claims that prima facially this sentence appears to be misleading. Even one should not reject out rightly the concept of truth in fiction. Even David Lewis holds that truth conditions are close to those in "Truth in Fiction". In case of truth in fiction, we do enter into a little make-believe pretence where the stories are supposed to be true. Accordingly, it has been suggested by saying that there is no incompatibility with Mill's theory as far as handing fictional truth we are talking about. According to Cole, if "James Bond" actually denoted a person with the biography set forth by Fleming that person would be disgustingly successful. Cole insists that in the original sentence, we are not trying to refer by uttering "James Bond", rather we are making a claim about the representations made in the novels.

The fourth objection has been termed as ***opacity*** by Devitt and Sterelny. According to Devitt and Sterelny, sentences such as:

(a) Falwell believes Bob Dylan corrupted America and

(b) Falwel does not believe Robert Zimmerman corrupted America are both true.

However, as far as Mill's theory is concerned Bob Dylan and Robert Zimmerman are the same person because these names mean the same thing. As a result, it can be said that both the sentences mean the same thing (compositionality). However, the only notable distinction is that sentence (a) is affirmative; whereas sentence (b) is negative. However, Devitt and Sterelny claim that on the basis of these sentences, it can be said that Mill's theory actually suffers from contradiction. According to Cole the problem with this objection actually lies in finding out the correct distinction between ***referring*** and ***mentioning.*** Linguistic philosophers often confuse in finding out the subtle distinction between ***mentioning and referring***. Accordingly, if we do not use the names "Bob Dylan" and "Robert Zimmerman" in terms of referring but to use and understand these names in terms of mentioning, then the objection that has been raised by Devitt and Sterelny against Mill in terms of opacity does not find its foothold. According to Cole, here we are describing a certain mental representation that Falwell has. Even if Falwell believes "Boby Dylan corrupted America", and also even if he believes " Bob Dylan" is a name of a person who corrupted America, this does not make inconsistent with Mill's view. According to Cole, in *de dicto* belief attribution the attributer is not using the terms in the attribution, and importantly is not using them to refer. Further, an atheist, Cole opines, does not contradict himself in saying "Falwell believes God will punish Bob Dylan". This is simply for the fact that here on account of *de dicto* readings of belief attribution, there is mention of terms where referring is irrelevant. Further, let us consider a parallel argument to this objection to Mill, which does not turn on Mill's theory but rather on ordinary synonymy: Falwell believes telling lies is immortal, but Falwell does not

believe mendacity is immortal. Here the term 'mendacity' and 'telling lies' mean the same thing. Accordingly, the sentences are contradictory in the sense that both are true even though they possess different sense. Cole thus suggests that the problem that has been raised by Devitt and Sterelny against Mill's theory will be solved if we do not take the opaque contexts *as use, but as mention.* There is nothing wrong in claiming that two expressions that mean the same thing might appear in otherwise identical *de- dicto* belief attributions where the one be true and the other be false. Accordingly, there is nothing surprising if this actually happens with names. If it does, then there remains nothing wrong in Mill's theory. Therefore, the objection that has been raised against Mill's theory in terms of opacity fails to stand up.

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