CHAPTER VIII

PERCEPTION AND KNOWLEDGE
There are many questions about the knowledge of the External World, say, how does one know what external objects are really like?; How does one know about the existence of physical objects?; How does one know about the objects which one is not perceiving?; and how does one acquire the concepts in terms of which one think and speak about the external world? The most basic question, regarding the problem of the knowledge of the external world, is how does one know that there are objects which exist independently of one's perception. According to the Realist Theory of Perception, then, the problem becomes: How does one know that the objects one perceive continue to exist when one is not perceiving them?

The simplest and the most natural answer is given by Empiricists that it is from our perception alone that one can know and one knows about the existence of something. Although this seems to be a plausible answer, yet it needs some clarity, because the question which is asked in any philosophical discussion of perception is: How does one's perception provide one with this knowledge that the things one perceives are external objects? The answer seems to imply that one does perceive external objects, and knows that one does.
Some of these questions have already been answered in the previous chapters, but here it would be appropriate to begin with the analysis of the concept of knowledge. Moore's basic metaphysical and methodological principles dictate that to discover what knowledge is, it is necessary to distinguish between the different senses of the verb "to know", and then to pick out and analyse the particular objects denoted by these senses of "to know" and the relations that exists among them.

In a philosophical discussion, the term "to know", is being used both in a "stronger and in a weaker sense". In one sense 'to know' means to have some special form of competence, for instance, I know how to play chess. Here, one is simply trying to convey that one is aware of the rules which are required for playing the game. This can be named as a 'weaker' sense of the term 'to know'.

Another instance of 'to know' is that the word means 'to be acquainted with'. For example, when a person says that he knows John, he means that he is acquainted with that person. But the sentence, I know the city, is more difficult, for it can mean either that he is acquainted with the city in the sense that he has already been there, or it can have the competence sense of 'know', where he

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1 Norman Malcolm, Knowledge and Certainty, p. 62.
is able to find the way around the city. So here it can imply one thing or the other.

The third sense of 'to know' is, that some thing is the case, i.e. one has some sort of understanding or it implies cognition. Here in this chapter we would be concerned with the third sense of the term 'to know' i.e. in the sense of cognition which is an instance of a stronger sense of the term 'to know'.

Moore throughout his earlier writings and the lectures of 1910-11, was convinced that careful observation of facts and appropriate differentiations of terms provide us with the following results:

First, every instance of cognition ultimately consists in an act of consciousness and distinct from the act of consciousness there is an object. Second, an act of consciousness can exist only as long as the corresponding instance of cognition exists. Thus when I cease to see a sense datum, my seeing of it ceases to exist. The object of cognition, however, may or may not exist after the act of consciousness to which it is related ceases. Third, it is conceivable that an act of consciousness and its related object may not be in the same place for example a sense datum exists in two different locations. "It seems to me conceivable", writes G.E. Moore in Some Main Problems of Philosophy, "that this whitish colour
is really on the surface of the material envelope... my seeing of it is in another place—somewhere within my body.*2

Reflecting on this analysis of cognition and its objects, Moore thinks that he can pick up four different ways of knowing, and corresponding to them, four different senses of the verb 'to know'. The first, and basic way to an understanding of any other sense of 'to know', is the sense in which it stands for cases in which the relations between the object cognized and its corresponding act of consciousness is similar to, or identical with, the relation that a patch of colour has to the consciousness of a person seeing that patch of colour. This is knowledge by direct apprehension, or, as Russell calls it, knowledge by acquaintance.3

Second, 'to know' represents cases in which the relation between the object cognized and the corresponding act of consciousness is similar to the relation that, for example, a hat on the table has to the act of consciousness of a person who is remembering, that his hat was on the table. Thus, he knows that his hat was on the table, but

*2 G.E. Moore, Some Main Problems of Philosophy, p. 31.

neither the hat and the table, nor any sense data that are connected with the hat and the table are directly present to his consciousness. This is knowledge by indirect apprehension, i.e., where there is no direct relation, but is based on memory. Moore until 1911, was unable to decide whether knowledge by indirect apprehension always presupposes the direct apprehension of a proposition, by means of which, (with the help of Russell's theory of knowledge by Description) one is given the awareness of the object indirectly apprehended, but later Moore seems to be bending towards it.

Moore further uses the term 'to know' by representing cases in which the following complex relation between acts of consciousness and the objects holds good. There is an act of consciousness, as in 'This proposition is in fact true'. One believes that it is true, and also in believing that it is so because of some further relation of conditions that it satisfies. Here, Moore really disappoints us for no specific conditions are given, but one infers from his writings, that it is somewhat related to the conclusive evidence. This is to Prof. Moore, 'Knowledge Proper'. Last, and also involving the previous sense of the term 'to know' is, where one describes a person as knowing something, such as a multiplication table, even though one may not at that time be conscious of anything. Here
one presupposes that the person in question has at sometime known, in one of the three senses of 'to know', the multiplication table.

It would not be out of place further to mention the distinction between 'immediate knowledge' and 'knowledge by direct apprehension'. Immediate knowledge is a species of knowledge proper. The difference between the two is that direct apprehension does not require the presence of a proposition. For example, one can directly apprehend sense data; whereas the immediate knowledge does. It is specifically the "kind of way in which you know a proposition to be true — really know it, not directly apprehend it — when you do not know any other proposition from which it follows."^3

Whatever we know, we try to put it down in a form of a 'proposition', 'sentence' or a 'statement'. So the most essential question related with the problem of 'Perception and Knowledge' is that of 'Propositions'.

A 'proposition' is a judgement expressed in words, Russell defines it as a 'content of belief'. A.J. Ayer sees 'Proposition' as a "class of sentences which have the same intentional significance for anyone who understands them". Thus a "proposition" is what is asserted or

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expressed in a statement. It is not an entity of any type as Carnap and others have thought, Carnap says, "We apply the term 'proposition' to any entities of a certain logical type, namely those that may be expressed by (declarative sentences) in a language." He thinks that a 'proposition', is something of the sort of objective being, which may or may not be exemplified in nature, for unlike the 'property' it is used neither for a linguistic expression nor for a subjective mental occurrence, but rather for something objective that may or may not be exemplified in nature.

The view of Carnap has a serious defect in so far as it may mean that a 'proposition', which is an entity of a logical type, has some sort of ontological status. To avoid this, it is better to confine the definition to the linguistic statement which asserts something. Now, that which is expressed by the 'proposition' may or may not be exemplified in nature and in the former case the proposition is true, and it is false in the latter case.

A proposition is anything that is believed, disbelieved, doubted or supposed. Since there are a number of such propositions which have never been believed, disbelieved or doubted by anybody, the statement can be altered as 'a proposition' is anything susceptible of being believed,

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4 R. Carnap, *Meaning and Necessity*, p. 27.
disbelieved, doubted or considered true or false.

Moore equates the meaning of the term 'Proposition' with the apprehensible meaning of a sentence. "It is quite plain, I think", says Moore, "that when we understand the meaning of the sentence, something else does happen in our minds besides the mere hearing of the word of which the sentence is composed and it is no less plain that the apprehension of the meaning of one sentence with one meaning differs in some respect from the apprehension of another sentence with a different meaning — There certainly are such things as two different meanings apprehended. And each of these two meanings is what I call 'proposition'. When we hear certain spoken words and understand their meanings, we may do three different things, we may believe it, disbelieve it or we may simply understand what the words mean without either believing or disbelieving it — This sense in which we apprehend a proposition in these three cases is one sense of the word apprehension."\(^5\)

But Moore does not clearly point out what the meaning of 'meaning' itself is and further, how a proposition is nothing short of the meaning of the sentence, and if one can use one's own meaning of the term 'meaning', obviously the proposition is not the same as the meaning of the

sentence, for the proposition is said to be true or false, but the same cannot be said about the meaning of the sentence. It implies, then, that, to Moore a proposition is the apprehensible meaning of a significant sentence. This meaning is quite different from the "Fact". This can easily be assumed, because the meaning of the sentence can be easily grasped even when there is no fact. Again, different sentences in different languages are often found to be equivalent because they have the same meaning. So, sentences may differ without any difference in the proposition they express. Even in the same language, there may be different sentences having the same meaning, for example "Brutus killed Caesar" and "Caesar was killed by Brutus" express the same proposition.

Moore maintains a difference between 'proposition' and 'a sentence', for he defines declarative sentence:

"An Eng: sentence is "declarative" if and if both it makes sense when the words and syntax are used in accordance with good English usage, and also with (1) begins with "I know that", "I think that", "I feel sure that", "It's certain that" or any other of the Eng. phrases which have a similar meaning or by putting any of the above, before it makes sense."6

that "He asserted the proposition 'P' does not mean the same as "He utters (or writes) the sentence 'P' or some

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equivalent but he utters a sentence which means 'P'. Even if we do not have any instance of a sentence, there would be some propositions which are true and others false. If any propositions are to be asserted, instances of sentences are only a sufficient but not a necessary condition of their being true or false or even of their being believed. Keeping in view the distinction between the 'sentences' and the 'propositions' one finds that in the case of any sentences where, 'this', 'that', 'now', etc. are used, the proposition expressed is determined by the context of its utterance; and that the slightest change in the context results in a different proposition.

It is stated in the above passage that a 'proposition' is either true or false. Now the questions which immediately arises are, How does one gets the 'knowledge' of its truth or falsity? What are the necessary and sufficient conditions of saying so? How does one analyse the concept of 'Knowledge' itself?

The first condition of 'knowledge' is that of truth. When a man is asked to justify his claim to knowledge, he is required to give reasons for saying so or saying it to be true, i.e. "if S knows that P, then it is true that P" or in other words, "if S knows that the sentence Q is true, then Q is true". It expresses a necessary condition of knowledge, that if one knows a certain thing to be true,
then he cannot doubt it; either he knows or he does not know.

Much of what is known to be true, is known as a matter of belief. In general to believe that a certain statement is true is to give one's assent to that proposition. A particular statement is considered to be true either on the ground that someone has a belief that it is true, or he himself believes it to be true. A proposition or a statement is asserted only after having a sound belief in that: first one has a belief and only then an assent is given with regard to its truth or falsity. *By belief is meant not the act of belief, but what is believed and what is believed is nothing else that what I mean by a proposition!* But from this argument no one can ever infer that belief and assertion are the same. It is not correct to say that to assert a proposition is to express a proposition that is believed. In the words of Stebbing,

"When anyone asserts the proposition P, either he believes P and asserts P to be true, or he does not believe P but intends his hearer to accept P as true. The assertion of P then, seems to be equivalent to the putting forward of P as true, even though the person who asserts P may not believe.*8

Johnson seems to regard assertion as equivalent to conscious belief and the only alternative to asserting a proposition

7G.E. Moore, Some Main Problems of Philosophy, p. 63.
8Stepping, Modern Introduction to Logic, p. 213.
that is believed is merely to utter it, i.e. "to utter without belief". Belief and assertion are obviously different, for when one believes a proposition, one necessarily assert it, but not vice versa. Thus, it seems to follow, that knowing something necessarily involves a belief about it and only after that an assent is given, like 'If S knows that P, then S believes that P'.

There are problems concerning the implication of this condition, for the term 'believe', like 'know' has more than one sense. Moore rightly points out that sometimes one says that 'this or that belief is true or false'. This assumes the ambiguity of the use of the term 'belief', for sometimes it is used as an act of belief, and at other times as a proposition which is believed; but usually it is taken as a proposition which is believed. Sometimes, it is seen that two different persons entertain the same belief; entertaining the same belief does not mean that the act of believing performed by one is the same as performed by the other. They are different, at least numerically. What is identical in these two acts of believing of the two different persons is "what is believed"; and "what is believed" is not different from what Moore calls as "Proposition". Moore maintains that:

"... every belief whether it is true or false, always has an 'object' which may be called a proposition the belief simply consists in one particular way... in being conscious of it in
the particular way which we call believing."\(^9\)

Thus, it seems to follow that what one believes or the object of belief, i.e. the proposition is something which is there. Such a thing is in the universe, whether a belief is true or false. This argument suggests a simple theory of relation of a true belief to the fact to which it refers. It is rightly affirmed that a true belief corresponds to a fact, and a belief is false if it is not so. But, here, it ought to be pointed that one is not to see what strength of conviction is implied by saying that a person believes something. Some philosophers insists that a man may know something to be true, even if he lacks conviction of its truth, whereas others maintain that a man only knows something as true, when he is sure or certain of the truth of what he believes, or to say, 'I know' implies that one has the right to be sure that S is P. But Colin Radford denies this possibility, while still maintaining that, "If S knows that P, then S believes that P\(^*\), on the ground that a man may know something to be true that he does not believe at all."\(^10\) Carolyn Black asks if one of the criteria for knowledge is belief. Does knowledge entails, necessitate, involve belief. Does one puts a condition of belief while giving a definition of

\(^9\)G.E. Moore, Some Main Problem of Philosophy, p. 259.

knowledge. Moore asks the question "Here certainly is a common use of belief in which 'I believe' entails 'I don't know for certain'. Is there another in which 'I know for certain' entails 'I believe'? One reason why it seems so is because 'I thought I knew' entails 'I believed'. C. Black further asks the question whether 'I know for certain' entails 'I believe'? If someone makes a statement, "I know that the cat is on the table" it is true that: (1) I may truly be said to believe and not know that the cat is on the table, if, say, the cat is not on the table; (2) I would not claim that I merely believe that the cat is on the table; and (3) there may be a dispositional belief here i.e. I may if asked, and if a sensible setting for the question could be provided say that I believe that I know that the cat is on the table. Instead of using the term 'believe' here I may use the term 'know', depending on how careful I want to be about my original claim and how sure I am about whatever it is that I claim to know.12

When anyone makes a claim 'I know that P' this does not includes that one believes that the cat is on the table, while already claiming the cat is on the table. It is wrong to say that 'a person believes, but does not believe that he believes', but a correct way to say is that 'a person knows, but does not believe or know that he knows'.


Moore while dealing with this question seems to be supporting that knowledge does not comprise belief. He writes that the dictionaries of Johnson and Webster refers to two senses of the word 'belief'. One is compatible with proved knowledge, while the other sense of 'belief' is incompatible with it. He maintains that:

"Johnson defines 'believe'; "to credit... from some other reason than our personal knowledge", which says that "S believes P" entails "S does not personally know P". But he defines "credit" "to believe"; and if you substitute "believe" for "credit" in the first definition, it follows that "S personally knows P" is not incompatible with "S believes P". Webster recognises the incompatible one: "to be persuaded of the truth of, upon evidence furnished by ... circumstances other than personal knowledge"; but he also recognises the other one by defining 'persuade'(as) 'cause to believe'.

The explanation of the term 'belief' in this sense explicitly gives a sense in which it is incompatible with knowledge. Moore refers to the question of entailment for he seems to be implying that 'thought' and 'believed' overlap each other. To say that 'I know that P' amounts to 'I believe that P'. This is true in some cases but not in all cases. 'I know that P' can mean I believe that P is the case, while 'I believe that P can mean that I believe P is merely probable. Whereas Moore and Ayer, on the other

\[13\text{(ed.) C. Lewy, G.E. Moore : The Common Place Book, p. 115.}\]
hand, maintain for a man to know something to be true, he must believe it to be 'true with considerable certainty'. So long as a man believes that P is true in the sense of being genuinely convinced of the truth of P, he may be said to know that P.

Moreover, in so far as it is possible to prove that one has the right to be sure of something, it is possible to prove that something is true, for to have the right to be sure that P is true, and so to prove that one has the right to be sure of P is to prove that one has the right to be sure that it is true. But from this it can be implied that one may have the right to be sure of something which is false meaning thereby 'one has the right to be sure of P, but is mistaken', only if there is an evidence that P is false, evidence which would affect one's right to be sure of it. If this is so, then it cannot be said that 'I have the right to be sure of P, but I am mistaken'. Thus if one has the right to be sure of P, it follows logically that there are good reasons for believing P to be true, and there are good reasons for believing P to be false. To be able to give good reasons for believing P to be true is an acceptable proof that it is true. Therefore to have the right to be sure that external objects exist is an acceptable, though not a logically conclusive proof of their existence. One can have the right to be sure of P even when P is false, whereas one cannot know P, if P is false.
Some philosophers have confused the use of "feeling sure" with 'knowing'.

"I have just said that I feel sure that there are flowers in the garden, but I might equally well have said that I know there are flowers in the garden and meant the same thing. In some contexts obviously to say that I feel sure is to say that I know." 14

To say that 'I know' and 'I feel sure' are sometimes synonymous is mistaken though based on the correct interpretation that one does not sincerely and justifiably claim to know, unless one feels confident of their validity. Therefore, to say 'I know' is to feel confident and vice versa. This statement sometimes misleads one to say that 'we should normally be prepared to express this complete confidence by saying that we know something to be the case'. 15 But it does not follow either from the fact that whenever one feels confident in saying 'I know', then 'I know' and 'I feel sure', are synonymous; nor that it is logically self-contradictory to say, 'I know but I am not very confident'. "From the fact that someone is convinced that something is true... it never follows logically that it is true," 16 but from the fact that someone knows that

something is true it does logically follow that it is true. So pervasive is this rule and so shocking is the occasional violation of it, that one ought not to say with Malcolm that there is a sense of 'know' which "allows for the possibility of a refutation."\(^{17}\) The possibility of a refutation is there, if and only if, the truth value of a proposition is unknown, whereas if the truth is known, then to know it to be true, is known that a refutation is impossible, and if it is known to be false, then it has already been refuted. Therefore, one can say, 'If he knows that \(P\), then he must be sure that \(P\).

After seeing the analysis of knowledge, as stated above, the fundamental point which needs further elaboration is the need for the justification of saying, 'I know that \(P\).' So, in saying, 'I know that \(P\), (a) one must either be able to recognize that '\(S\) is \(P\)' as a truth, or (b) to be able to offer '\(S\) is \(P\)' as the truth, or (c) to be sure that '\(S\) is \(P\)'; and still he should be able to give evidence or a proof that '\(S\) is \(P\)', or again be absolutely certain that '\(S\) is \(P\)' in the sense that no mistake can be made about it.

Sometimes one can say that '\(S\) is completely justified' if his belief is based on an evidence or, in other words,

\(^{17}\)N. Malcolm, *Knowledge and Certainty*, p. 63.
a person is completely justified. If a belief is based on evidence then a person's belief in P is completely justified by the evidence. But his being justified by the evidence does not ensure that the others will also accept it. They too must have their own evidence which completely justifies their belief before one is completely justified in believing that P.

Similarly, there are two possible ways in which one may be completely justified in believing something (1) One may be completely justified in believing that P, because of some evidences which affirm his belief, or as some other philosophers, such as Thomas Reid, that one may be justified in believing something without need for evidence or other justificatory support for the belief. Moore belongs to the latter group, for he seems to be knowing certain things without knowing what their evidence is.

The beliefs alleged to be so justified are of a special kind, like, fundamental beliefs of common sense concerning memory and perception. There are the basic beliefs constituting the evidence in terms of which all other beliefs are justified. Empiricists affirm the existence of basic beliefs, for, without them no justification can be possible. Their argument is, that unless there are such basic beliefs, the condition that 'If S knows that P, then S is completely justified in believing that P' would
lead to circularity. If non-basic beliefs are completely justified by evidence, then it could be argued, that they be justified by some knowledge, which further would demand an true evidence. If the condition for 'S knowing that P' is completely justified by its evidence, then a person be completely justified by something that he knows. If his evidence for P is Q then he must know that Q. Therefore, it follows that, in the absence of basic beliefs completely justified true beliefs, without evidence, attempt to justify a claim which, in turn must be justified by an appeal to still other beliefs. This involves an infinite regress.

Pierce, Popper, Quine are of the opinion that beliefs are seen as justifying one another, but none as in any sense self-justifying. To dispense with the circularity of the doctrine, it can be argued, that some beliefs are relatively more basic; they are accepted as true by some kind of convention or are posited for certain time, but the element of dogmatism involved is only provisional and is open to revision, as upheld by Moore. One could still argue forth that there need not be any basic beliefs; that all beliefs may be justified by their relation to others and that there is nothing untoward in such mutual support. Most philosophers have thought that knowledge-claims, when completely justified, were justified on the basis of some objective method of assessing such claims. Thus the whole argument can be put 'S knows that P' if and only if it is true that P, S
believes that P, and S is completely justified in believing that P*. In other words, 'knowledge is a completely justified belief'. Accepting this view, knowledge as a justified true belief would lead only to some kind of an understanding, but not knowledge, for it does not rule out the possibility of being mistaken in believing it to be so, one can be completely justified in believing that P by one's evidence, where P is some false statement, and can deduce Q from P, where Q is some true statement. Having deduced Q from P, which one is completely justified in believing that Q. Assuming that one believes that Q, it would, therefore, follow that a man has Q. One may not be aware of this, especially if Q is a disjunction of two statements, the statement P and a true statement R, and one has no reason whatsoever for thinking that R is true. In such a case, the belief that Q will be true, but the only reason for believing Q to be true is the inference of Q from P. Since P is false, it is a matter of chance that a person is correct in his belief of that Q.18

This shows that a completely justified true belief lacks knowledge and does not infer what the belief is from a false statement. Therefore, the final analysis of knowledge seems to be, that, 'S knows that P, if and

only if, (1) it is true that P; (2) S believes that P, and S is completely justified in believing that P. In some way that does not depend on any false statement. Or putting it more clearly, if S believes that P and S is completely justified in believing that P, then this materially implies that S is completely justified in believing that P, and P does not in any way include any false statement.

Hence 'I know P' is not to make a claim, for it is not a linguistic act. Claiming to know is a linguistic act, whereas 'I know that P' is just performing an act of giving assurance, or is to give 'one's authority; for knowing is not an act. It is a condition or state that one comes to achieve. It is just a state of mind. For to say that 'one knows P' does not assume that one knows, that he knows 'that P'. One is certain of that; and is able to give good reasons for accepting that P.

Keeping in view the above analysis of the concept of knowledge, we can examine Moore's view. Moore starts with certain propositions, which he claims to know for certain. For example: 'Here is one hand and here is another', 'The earth has existed for many years past', 'many human bodies have lived for many years upon it'. In his 'Defence of common sense', Moore specifies some of the propositions which, in his opinion, are known with certainty to be true and he exemplifies some of the classes
of propositions concerning which he is uncertain. Moore asserts that he knows with certainty that there exists at present (at the time at which he wrote these words) a living body, which is his body; that his body was born at a certain time in the past, and has existed continuously ever since; that ever since it was born it has been either in contact with or far from the surface of the earth; that every moment since it was born there have also existed many other things having shape, size in three dimensions; that very often there have existed other things of this kind with which it was in contact; that among the things of this kind which have formed part of the environment, there have, at every moment since its birth, been a large number of other living bodies, human bodies each of which has, like it, been born at sometime, continued to exist, and has at every moment of its life been either in contact with or not far from the surface of the earth. He knows, too, that the earth has existed for many years before his body was born; that a large number of human bodies have at every moment been alive on it and that many of these bodies had died and ceased to exist before his own body was born. Prof. Moore further asserts that he knows that each of us has frequently known with regard to ourselves everything which he (Moore) claims to know with regard to himself.
Next we proceed on to see how Moore answers to sceptics, who deny the knowledge of the existence of any external object. They want that the meanings of words like 'know' and 'believe' should be changed, so that under no circumstances shall it be correct to say "I know this is a hand" except only when I believe it. Moore tries to give the proof of an external world. He says:

"I can prove now, for instance, that two human hands exist. How? — By holding up my two hands, and saying, as I make a certain gesture with the right hand, 'here is one hand', and adding, as I make a certain gesture with the left, 'and here is another'.

This proof, Prof. Moore says, is required to meet three conditions: First, that the premise 'Here is one hand' and 'here is another' together with certain gestures, is different from the conclusion; Second, that the premise is something Moore knows to be the case and not something which he only believes or thinks is so; and third, that the conclusion 'Two human hands exist at this moment' did follow logically from the premise. Moore's proof amounts to a demonstration, there is a deductive inference from the premise 'Here is one hand' and 'here is another' to the conclusion. 'At least two human hands exist'. Moore insists that this proof will not be a proof unless he knows for certain that 'Here is one hand and here is another'.

is true. If he does not know this, the claim, "at least two human hands exist" does not follow. It is essential to his proof that he does know this, since it cannot be the case that this proposition is false, that is, if he knows that "Here is one hand and here is another" then this proposition is true and any proposition which follows from it, e.g. "at least two human hands exist" is also true.

Moore's argument seems to be unconvincing and begging the question, for the sceptics want Moore to prove the premise. "Here is one hand", which Moore is unable to give, if he is to prove that "Here is one hand and here is another", he will have some premise in the proof, in the same way in which he has this proposition as a premise for the proof of "at least two human hands exist". The conclusion follows from the premises, but that premise itself follow from no premise, or follow logically from still further premise one of which, ultimately, does not follow from any premise, this is settled, as Moore thinks, if anyone of these premises is known to be true. "It must be the case that we are capable of knowing at least one proposition to be true, without knowing any other proposition whatever from which it follows." 20 To say a proposition is true because

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20 G.E. Moore, *Philosophical papers*, p. 123. (It is the case that G.E. Moore in the passage quoted is insisting on the self validating character of certain perceptual judgements; which according to him ensure their own truth' and in the light of which alone, all other beliefs are justified. As the conclusion in question regarding two
it follows from some other proposition which is known to be true, and to say a proposition is true because it is known to be true, are, according to Moore, two very different things. In the first case, a proposition is true, if it is a logical consequence of some other proposition known to be true, and in the second, case, though the proposition is known to be true, it cannot be asserted as true unless it is proved to be true. It is Moore's view that if a proposition is to be proved it must be deduced from some premise. But still he denies that though Moore has not been able to prove the first premise, he cannot know "I can know things, which I cannot prove."  

Here it must be brought forward, that the dispute between Moore and the sceptics is not about any matters of fact, since each would presumably concede that what the other says about common sense is true. Their difference is really about the language to be used in describing facts which are not themselves in question.

Nelson argues that the word 'know' is to signify that one possesses some skill or mastery, acquired through instruction, training or practice = (S), second the word hands is logically entailed by the two premises of this direct kind, Soit is justified according to Moore).

to 'know' signifies that we are aware of something = (A),
(3) when we have conclusive evidence = (E) know. 22

Some philosophers maintain that Moore's assertions
'I know that is a hand is not pointless but true and quite
intelligible, yet if it appears that Moore's assertion by
its very existence requires some sort of evidence then his
assertion cannot be interpreted in the A or S knowing. If
it is so then it is pointless, but Nelson tries to show
Moore's assertions when interpreted in A and S sense of
know is not pointless or improper, because "when we
philosophize we are not concerned with imparting contextual
information. We are concerned with something like
delineating or explicating concepts of which no one being
addressed is deemed ignorant due to particular circumstances." 23
But while saying in an (E) sense of know we are guaranteeing
with more and more certainty that we do (E) know. Nelson
suggests that we must combine the assertion that we (E)
know and the evidence by bringing together an E know
assertion and its evidence into one temporal union, but
this produces only conceptual absurdity. For while waving
and saying 'Here is a hand' we have already given the
evidence; so in that case Moore's assertion is not only
contemplually absurd but involves a kind of internal

22 J. O. Nelson, 'I know that there is a hand',
Analysis 2.6, 1964, p. 185.

23 Ibid., p. 183.
contradiction. But in claiming to have E knowledge of the proposition 'Here is a hand', Moore is signifying according to Nelson that, if asked for a conclusive evidence can be brought to support this claim, yet Moore's assertion already presupposes that the evidence have been given.

'This premise is rather like the assertion 'Being already seated, I will not sit down and it is because of it involves this kind of internal contradiction' that Moore's assertion is 'conceptually absurd'.\[24\]

But Moore draws a distinction between 'being able to prove P' and having a conclusive evidence that P which is to be found in Moore's lectures, he says:

'. . . having conclusive evidence' of the truth of the proposition 'I am awake is 'a very different thing' from 'being able to prove it.\[25\]

Moore continues:

'I could not tell you what all my evidence is, and I should require to do this at least, in order to give you a proof.'

This shows that it is Moore inability to identify the evidence he claims to have the truth of the proposition 'I am awake' which is the ground of his denial that he

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\[24\]Ibid., p. 190.

is in a position to 'prove' that he is awake. Moore writes:

"We are all I think, in this strange position that we do know many things, with regard to which we know further that we must have had evidence for them, and yet we do not know how we know them, i.e. we do not know what the evidence was." 26

If Moore claims that having 'a conclusive evidence' is different from giving a proof then Moore's premise is not 'conceptually absurd' on E know interpretation.

Wittgenstein in his book On Certainty is neither concerned with defending common sense nor is proving that there is an external world. What he thinks is that Moore's interest in these have given a way to concentrate on propositions which play an unusual role in our language and thought. When one comes to see the role that they play one gains insight into the nature of logic.

Wittgenstein treats the proposition that Moore claims to know as examples of that agreement which judgement needs if language is to be a means of communication. These propositions are to be seen as agreements in form of life. If this abolishes logic, then one's conception of logic seems to be wrong. Though Moore is right when he declares these propositions are not to be doubted but is wrong when he takes them as propositions he knows. It would

26 Ibid., p. 44.
be equally misleading to say that these were propositions that he does not know. Moore's mistake lies in "countering the assertion that one cannot know them by saying 'I do know it'."

Moore is not in a doubt that, 'here is one hand and here is another'. Moreover, there is no doubt about what he says, but when a philosopher says, that he cannot know these things, he does not say this because he doubts what Moore says, or because he thinks that there is any doubt about what Moore says, but because he thinks that there can be some doubt, and this is not countered by producing a case in which there is no doubt. "Moore has every right to say he knows there's a tree there in front of him. Naturally he may be wrong", is a correct view maintained by Wittgenstein.

What seems to emerge from Moore's writings when he says that he knows these things is "numeration of a lot of empirical propositions which one can affirm without special testing, propositions i.e. which have a peculiar logical role in the system of empirical proposition." [29]


28 Ibid., para 520.

29 Ibid., para 136.
They are propositions that form part of our picture of the world, but all propositions are not of the same kind. "I have a world picture. It is true or false. The propositions describing it are not all equally subject to testing." But what is the role of such propositions? How do they stand in relation to our world picture, as referred to by Wittgenstein. They possess some of its characteristics. One of the reasons for using the notion of a world picture is to prevent oneself from thinking of it as a hypothesis. Unlike an hypothesis it is the matter of course foundation and as such also goes unmentioned. And this is the propositions which Moore singles out for attention. His propositions are such as stand fast for him and for us. In the words of Wittgenstein. "They are the hinges upon which our doubting and questioning turns. Without them there could be no doubting and questioning, nor knowing or remembering."

One might take them as assumptions that these are propositions which are not so much matter of fact but one which are taken for granted and yet are ones which could and perhaps in a penetrating philosophical enquiry should

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30 Ibid., para 162.
31 Ibid., para 167.
32 Ibid., para 341.
be subject to question. Wittgenstein says that in Moore's proof:

"The idea of 'agreement with reality' does not have any clear application,"\(^33\)

So that while such propositions as those that Moore enumerates might be described as the foundation of all our convictions, yet one can say that these "foundations walls are carried by the whole house."\(^34\)

Though Moore gives importance to the common usage, i.e. the meaning of the terms should be taken in its ordinary sense. If one attends to Moore's philosophy, one would know his position on the meanings of common usage that one manages it without having a complete critical analysis of some of its implications. As such, Barnes points out that if one were to ask Moore whether he knows the meaning of 'This is a good big inkstand'. What the question of Barnes shows is the office and business of common-sense philosophy, that it analyses the analysandum which is yet not completely articulated, and, it is what Moore is saying that:

"... this depends upon what one means by 'Knowing the meaning'. If one means understanding the meaning of the proposition then the answer is yes, if on the other hand, is meant knowing the correct analysis of the meaning the answer is no."*\(^1\)

\(^{33}\) *Ibid., para 215.

\(^{34}\) *Ibid., para 248.

* W.H.F. Barnes, *Philosophical Predicament*, p. 36.
Within the vague limits that he lays down, the philosopher has to frame more definite meanings of his own before he can give a satisfactory answer. Because of this vagueness of meaning, common sense is bound to give inconsistent answers to conceptual doubts. This also brings one down to the main difficulty with G.E. Moore's proposal, for Moore tries to answer questions which common sense would never have asked. The controversy between Moore and other philosophers is not about facts, but on the meaning of the framework itself, i.e. they were more involved in their conceptual clarifications.

Both knowledge and perception, have a natural connection with their objects. Belief has no such connection. In this way knowledge, and perception are more like each other; therefore either of them is like belief. The likeness of knowledge and perception makes it easy to use the metaphor of sight in talking of knowledge, but this is not so in case of belief. To know that P, involves the case that... there are sufficient reasons for asserting that P. It is not true that to know that P, one must also know some reasons for asserting P distinct from the fact that he knows that P. Anyone would say, he knows something not when he thinks that his belief is caused by his having apprehended that it is right. Knowledge is not an evaluative term; there is no justification or reasons in what it means; whatever is asserted is thereby implies, but no reasons are given for its assertion.
Perception is a sort judgement in the sense that either one has a knowledge of a thing through acquaintance or through description. So it can be true or false; it is true if it corresponds to a fact. Having a sensory illusion involves the belief or inclination to believe that one is perceiving a certain physical object or the perceptual experience or sense impression on which the belief is founded. Believing that a particular object 'looks' such and such does not mean that one has a knowledge of that particular object. Even Moore rejects the idea of calling 'perceiving' a kind of 'knowing' in his earlier writings, but later on he changes his opinion, for he writes:

"... sense perception and all the different forms of sense perception, seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, etc. we should I think commonly say were ways of knowing."35

In 1952 Moore adds a footnote to this passage saying;

"I do not now think that it is true, I often see in the street people whom I do not know and I do not think we commonly use 'Know' in such a sense that to perceive a person or a material object or a sense datum. There is no common use of "know" such that from the mere fact that I am seeing a person it follows that I am at that moment knowing him, although many philosophers have talked as it were, and I myself have sometimes in these lectures used 'know' in this improper way."36

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36 Ibid., p. 93.
What seems to be wrong with Moore's argument is, that he is implying the use of 'know' in an acquaintance sense, whereas the sense of 'know' while saying I know the material object is entirely different. Moore points out that there is not a common use of 'know' such that from the mere fact that one is seeing a person, it means that he at that moment knows him. Though this seems to be true, yet it is equally true that one can be said to know that he is a person. Since this is true that one sees, that he is; it is a good usage to say that perceiving is a kind of knowing.

What we 'see', we 'see it as', is correctly pointed out by Wittgenstein. Seeing a thing to be so, and its being so is very different, i.e., seeing a thing as it is presented or seeing that. The responses to this can vary from person to person, but at least there is some sort of common agreement on the use of language, or for the meanings of words and for this Moore lays down a criterion for the acceptance of common sense beliefs: (1) universal acceptance i.e. if a belief is accepted by the majority of the people it is true or is known to be true, (2) compulsive acceptance, because of certain conventions and traditions, (3) self-evident, so naturally true, etc.
Moore does not limit the domain of 'Knowledge' by referring only to sensory experience, for he wants to maintain, that many sorts of objects other than these discovered by the senses are the objects of acts of consciousness, like the timeless facts, relational universals and non-natural qualities. Moore also wants to state that there are necessary synthetic truths and that one can apprehend these truths.

If knowledge consists in demonstrating the truth of one's statements, then Moore is perfectly right in saying, 'I know this is a hand' from which he is able to draw the conclusion that 'there are material objects', all this is not based upon any mistaken beliefs, for his main purpose is only to defend common beliefs and thereby to show that this particular statement is meaningful.