Did Berkeley write

The Irish Blasters?

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The Irish Blasters: or, The Votaries of Bacchus is an anonymous work of twenty-two pages "Printed, and Sold by the Booksellers," in Dublin in 1738. It is very rare. I have examined two copies: one in the Henry E. Huntington Library (San Marino, California), the other in the Willam Andrews Clark Memorial Library (Los Angeles). I know of only four others: one in the Long Room of the Library at Trinity College, Dublin; one in the Sir John T. Gilbert Collection in the Dublin Public Libraries; one in the library at Cambridge University (shelf mark Hib.8.738.9); and one reported "missing" by the library at Brown University. I believe that Berkeley might be the author of this pamphlet.

The text is prefaced (page 3) with this sentence:

The following passage of History is little more than a Translation of Part of the 39th Book of Livy, which being very applicable to the present Circumstances of Religion amongst us, is thought proper to be printed, in hopes that the Christian Magistrate may be spirited up by the Example of a Roman, to do as much for the Honour of the true God, as Posthumius did for false Deities; and that the infamous Society of Men, known by the Title of BLASTERS, may as successfully be punished as the Roman Bacchanalians; that Heaven may be saved the Expence of Thunder, which otherwise may come in such a Hurry of Vengeance, as to destroy the Righteous with the Wicked.

Another Irish work published anonymously in 1738, A
Discourse addressed to Magistrates and Men in Authority. Occasioned by the Enormous Licence and Irreligion of the Times, Berkeley acknowledged as his by reprinting in his 1752 Miscellany. The Irish Blasters complements Berkeley's Discourse to Magistrates in several ways:

(1) They share the same general purpose, which is to incite Christian magistrates to suppress blasphemers—in particular the new Dublin society of Blasters. Regarding Berkeley's Discourse his eighteenth-century biographer Joseph Stock provided this footnote: "Occasioned by an impious society, called Blasters, which this pamphlet put a stop to. He expressed his sentiments, on the same occasion, in the House of Lords, the only time he ever spoke there. The speech was received with much applause." Berkeley sat in the Irish House of Lords in the 1737-38 session. A letter from the Bishop of Raphoe to Berkeley dated 20 February 1738 indicates that Berkeley had recently written him about the society of Blasters. The Lords' Committees on Religion, which had been appointed on 17 February "to examine into the causes of the present notorious immorality and profaneness," issued on 10 March a special preliminary report directed against "the society or club under the name of Blasters." Berkeley appended this report to one of the five 1738 issues of the Discourse. In another of those issues he included among the revisions of the text of the Discourse itself an additional footnote mentioning "Blasters" by name. (Works, vol. VI, 219n.) In all editions he identifies "that execrable fraternity of blasphemers, lately set up within this city of Dublin," as "Blasters" in a footnote (p. 218). This society was much on Berkeley's mind in 1738.

(2) The motto on the title page of the Discourse—"Gallio cared for none of those things." (Acts, xviii, 17)—reappears in the main text: fully in the second paragraph (p. 201), partially in the seventh (p. 202). In Gallio Berkeley has an example from Roman antiquity of a (reprehensible) magistrate who showed indifference on the topic of religion. Berkeley surely would have appreciated a countertype to this Pauline example: an example from Roman antiquity of a (praiseworthy) magistrate who did care for "those things." The Irish Blasters provides the Livian example of the Roman consul Posthumius.

(4) When The Irish Blasters is read in conjunction with the Discourse, the latter can be construed as Machiavellian not just in the substance of its general thesis but also in the manner in which the thesis is presented. Berkeley's thesis is that of the need a government has for religion, and in the Discourse he applauds Machiavelli for maintaining in Discourses, I, 12, "that old Rome was more obliged to Numa, who established a national religion, than to Romulus himself, the founder of that State" (p. 214). The full title of Machiavelli's Discourses tells us that Machiavelli's reflections on contemporary sixteenth-century Italian political matters were to be viewed as commentaries on the First Ten Books of Livy. In 1732 in Alciphron, II, 7, Berkeley had already proposed using Livy to show how irreligion may bring a state to ruin. Why not, then, take Berkeley's Discourse—which pertains to a contemporary eighteenth-century Irish political matter—as a Machiavellian "discourse" on (a portion of) the Thirty-ninth Book of Livy?

(3) The Irish Blasters fills a lacuna in the Discourse, where Berkeley lists "some unsuspected testimonies, ancient and modern, which will shew that the public care of a national religion hath been always a most principal point in the esteem of wise men, however run down by the prevailing licence of our times" (pp. 212-13). The Discourse devotes a paragraph each to four Greeks (viz., Zaleucus, Aristotle, Plato, and Hippodamus the Milesian), but it allots to the Romans only this sentence: "The Roman historians and poets do so abound with passages ascribing the successes of their government to religion, and its declension to the want or neglect thereof, that it may seem impertinent to enter into a detail of what every schoolboy knows" (pp. 213-14). The Discourse then passes immediately to modern authority, starting with Machiavelli. The Irish Blasters, however, does fill in a part of the Roman gap of "what every schoolboy knows" (even in the upper classes few females, however intelligent and thinking, had the advantage of a classic education) by supplying a testimony of the historian Livy.

(5) The rhetoric of both the Discourse and the sentence prefacing The Irish Blasters is apocalyptic. The mood is suitable to the Machiavellian thesis that government would perish
without a state religion. The doomsday tone of the Discourse is found in remarks such as "Our prospect is very terrible," "it is to be feared, that age of monsters is not far off," and "many things look like a prelude to general ruin," as well as in the concluding reference to "that torrent which...threatens a general inundation and destruction of these realms" (pp. 221-22). The first of the two sententiae antiquae on the title page of The Irish Blasters is taken from II Peter, ii, 12: "But these as natural Brute Beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the Things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own Corruption." The prefatory sentence concludes hoping "that Heaven may be saved the Expence of Thunder, which otherwise may come in such a Hurry of Vengeance, as to destroy the Righteous with the Wicked." Berkeley would welcome this imagery.

Notes

7. Cf. "it is to be feared the final period of our State approaches" in Berkeley's 1721 essay on The Ruin of Great Britain (Works, vol. VI, pp. 84-5).
deist positions, ultimately laying blame for the whole tribe on the philosophy of Locke.

It is not particularly surprising that the publication of *Alciphron* caused something of an outcry among those, or the supporters of those, directly attacked, but Berkeley shrugged it off (B. to Johnson, 4 Apr. 1734). Browne and Mandeville answered for themselves, but others had to answer for Shaftesbury. “After a petty anonymous pamphlet of 1734 the flutter ended,” writes Jessop in his editorial introduction to *Alciphron*, and it is to this by no means insignificant pamphlet that the rest of this note is addressed.

*A Vindication of the Reverend D——y, from The scandalous Imputation of being Author of a late Book, intitled, Alciphron, or, the minute Philosopher* is a 104-page pamphlet found with alternative title pages, one with a London and the other a notional Edinburgh imprint, but both in fact published by London booksellers (Millar, Wilford). It purports to be a letter written “Near Inverness” to a friend in Edinburgh and has four components. Pages 3-51 consist of the letter proper. The author pretends to show that *Alciphron* cannot be the work of such a master of philosophy and literary form as Berkeley, but in effect is attacking Berkeley for unscrupulousness: the characters of the dialogue are straw men; the critics of orthodoxy are as unfairly represented as the defence is weakly argued; Shaftesbury is insulted, and there are striking examples of Berkeley’s misunderstanding ancient as well as modern writers. There is some engagement too with Berkeley’s own philosophy, but it is of variable quality. Pages 53-79 apply to *Alciphron* some passages of Shaftesbury as comment on the style and content of Berkeley’s dialogue. An Appendix, pp. 81-102, for good measure clobbers Butler, for being no fairer to the great and good Earl (on conscience) than his declared opponents. And a concluding Advertisement, pp. 103-4, holds out the promise that Berkeley will soon translate the whole of Shaftesbury into blank verse along the lines of *Alciphron* V.22, and supplies a Scriblerian puff.

This satire comes to life, and seems far less heavy-handed, if one knows the author’s background as a lifelong controversialist (he wrote a similar but much shorter satire on Philip Doddridge’s *Life of Colonel Gardiner* in 1747). The author was the Rev. William Wishart, D.D., then minister of a Scots congregation in London, and a friend of leading dissenters like Isaac Watts, Anglicans like Thomas Rundle, and educationists like John Ward. Wishart was later elected Principal of Edinburgh University and is now mostly remembered for leading the successful opposition to Hume’s appointment to the Moral Philosophy Chair in 1744/5. His important ms. papers in Edinburgh University Library have not been systematically examined before because they are written in a form of shorthand (speedhand) which it needs patience and practice to decipher. But among these is the original draft of *A Vindication* in all its parts, still in a self-contained bundle which, to judge by the dust lines, has hardly been opened for 250 years. It has enough deletions and revisions in Wishart’s hand to confirm that he was indeed the author composing the work, and was not simply transcribing it after publication. There is also a memo recording his instructions for the publisher and printer. These include provision for a printer’s joke in which the name “Mr. Dion” (the name Berkeley adopted as narrator of *Alciphron*) is to be deliberately misprinted “Mr. Dean” and an erratum printed at the end—as did indeed happen—and strict instructions that, apart from having the co-operation of his brother the Rev. George Wishart at the Edinburgh end of the business, the authorship must be kept absolutely secret from “all the rest of our friends”, and particularly Colin Maclaurin, professor of mathematics at Edinburgh, “who is intimate with R. [Rundle?] who is intimate with Berkeley”.

Wishart in his youth had been one of a caucus of radical Edinburgh divinity students who in 1717 founded the Rankenian Club—his brother and Maclaurin were later members—and the Rankenian connection has a double significance here.

First, Berkeley scholars will be familiar with the story that the Rankenians “amused themselves” by maintaining a correspondence with Berkeley, “in which they pushed his singular tenets all the amazing length to which they have been carried in later publications,” while he replied “endeavouring to avoid the consequences drawn from his doctrines” (Scots Magazine 33 (1771), p. 341). Their bluff was called when he invited them all to join the Bermuda project, which they mostly decided was “aerial”. Wishart was one of those who
had this early interest in Berkeley, and occasional allusions to Berkeley crop up throughout his sermon notes. A correspondent in his London period, G. Douglas, asks to borrow the Principles and Three Dialogues: "I remember you were formerly a great admirer of Dr Berkeley's principles; and therefore may be presumed to have his books."

If one looks at A Vindication to see just what Wishart had once admired in Berkeley, it was the proof that "the whole Assemblage of sensible Objects is a constant Production, a new Creation every Moment". He saw Berkeley as a voluntarist and an exponent of the Design argument, and as having proved that the connection between visible and tangible objects is a non-necessary one dependent on the will of God. He claimed that Berkeley introduced an incoherence into his later philosophy by trying there to use the language model as an argument for the existence of God instead of something that was explained by it. In a later notebook he recorded that Lord Kames in his 1751 Essays clearly misunderstood Berkeley when he made him out to be denying the authority of the senses for establishing the reality of the physical world and the existence of God. These are all broad and general issues of Berkeleyan cosmology; but Wishart's attack on Hume in 1743 for, inter alia, allegedly rejecting God's creation of matter suggests that he had not got involved in the central tenets of Berkeley's immaterialism.

The second important thing about the Rankenians is that they were passionate admirers of Shaftesbury, whose writings were the main inspiration for their rebelliousness. So one can take perfectly literally Wishart's expression of dismay in A Vindication that a philosopher whom he had once respected should so mischievously lampoon others whom he absolutely revered. In 1722/3, two of the young Rankenians (Wishart and George Turnbull, soon to be Thomas Reid's teacher at Aberdeen, whose writings also make allusion to Berkeley) had entered into a correspondence with the first Viscount Molesworth. This correspondence arose through their friendship with the politically active Irish students at Glasgow, and part of it is still accessible on a microfilm (n. 4082) in the National Library of Ireland. Molesworth was an Anglo-Irish M.P., one of the last survivors of the Shaftesbury circle, and Francis Hutcheson's Dublin patron. Turnbull at least is happy to accept the sobriquet "free-thinker" and is interested in the heretical writing of Molesworth's friends Toland and Collins, while Wishart is interested in the broad tradition of classical republicanism, and both wish to see liberal religion and Shaftesburian ethics oust creeds and catechisms from the Scottish curriculum. By 1729 Wishart was a Glasgow city minister and Dean of Faculty at Glasgow University, and his involvement in Hutcheson's appointment as Moral Philosophy Professor at that time led to a lifelong friendship. Berkeley is charged in A Vindication with lifting his criticisms of Mandeville from Hutcheson and blamed for not equally following Hutcheson's guidance on the correct reading of Shaftesbury. Some of Berkeley's own friends (Synge, Swift) were personal friends, but not ideological allies, of Dublin members of the Molesworth circle, but there is no evidence that Berkeley knew any of them. Berkeley must nevertheless have included in his mental picture of a Shaftesbury "school" the literary group patronized by Molesworth in the 1720s, whose serialized essays, including Hutcheson's on Mandeville, appeared as letters in the Dublin Weekly Journal. Molesworth had been the point of contact between the English, Irish and Scottish followers of Shaftesbury, of whom the English were the most deistically inclined. But Berkeley's uncharacteristic bitterness, if not bigotry, in impugning their intellectual integrity did his own philosophy a disservice.¹

¹ Fuller documentation on Wishart's connection with the Shaftesbury-Molesworth tradition, and his later role in the defeat of Hume, are provided in my paper "Hume, Wishart and the Edinburgh Chair", forthcoming in the Journal of the History of Philosophy. I hope in due course to complete a fuller account of the philosophy of the Rankenian Club, as part of a broader project on David Hume and the Scottish Clergy. That work, of which the present note is a product, is supported by a grant from the British Academy.
Berkeley and the Libyan monster

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In the celebrated early criticism of Berkeley’s Three Dialogues in Acta Eruditorum for August 1727 (p. 383) his theory of immaterialism is compared to a ἀυρμήκων θηρίον. In volume two of Jessop and Luce’s edition of Berkeley’s Works (p. 153n) this is printed as λυμίκων. Λυμίκων does not exist in classical Greek. Λυμίκων occurs only in late papyri in the sense of ‘western’ from Αἰγύπτιος, ‘the West’ (cf. Liddell and Scott 9th edn.) H. M. Bracken in his Early reception of Berkeley’s immaterialism (revised edn. 1965) accepts an emendation, Λύκων, suggested by Professor G. F. Else, which would make it a reference to the Lycian chimaera. He argues that the chimaera being a tripartite monster—composed of goat, snake, and lion—would be a specially suitable emblem for what the reviewer in the Acta described as being ‘a mixture born from the philosophies of Descartes, Malebranche and Spinoza’.

I doubt this, and I believe that previous scholars have been correct in taking λυμίκων as an error for λυμίκων, meaning ‘Libyan’—for the following reasons. (I think the spelling in Jessop and Luce must be a misprint and not an emendation, though ‘a western monster’ would not be quite senseless.) First, a scholar or a printer is more likely erroneously to substitute λυμίκων for λυμίκων rather than for λύκων. The letters i and u are easily confused and both λυμίκων and λυμίκων would have been pronounced exactly alike by scholars in continental Europe in 1727. Secondly, since the chimaera was unique while the Libyan monsters were a class, one would expect the definite article to be used in the Greek for ‘the Lycian monster’, but not for ‘a Libyan monster’. Thirdly, the metaphor from ‘a Libyan monster’ in fact fits the general context better than that from the chimaera. Dio Chrysostom in his Libyan Myth (Discourse 5, 12-15) describes monsters in the Libyan desert whose upper parts were those of a beautiful woman, their lower parts those of a snake, and with wings like a bird or sphinx. These, he says, lured travellers to destruction by their superior feminine charms. This fits in with the words in the Acta, speciose defendit and dissimulet. There was nothing speciosa or dissimulans about the fire-breathing chimaera, while Berkeley’s style was certainly speciosa in both senses of the word, ‘handsome’ and ‘plausible’. Further, the proverb, ‘Always something strange out of Africa’ had been a commonplace since before the time of Aristotle, who quotes it in his History of Animals 606b. All this, I think, supports the traditional interpretation. Berkeley as a good classical scholar would hardly have missed the nuances in the allusion.
Philosophy and Apologetics in Berkeley*

Genivieve Brykman

Here I shall be examining how philosophy and apologetics find themselves in conflict in Berkeley’s battle against scepticism. When I speak of Berkeley’s philosophy, I mean his immaterialism only—i.e., his proof of the nonexistence of matter by the dual argument that (1) the word “matter” is meaningless, and (2) the notion of matter is contradictory. By Berkeley’s work I mean all of his writings (published and unpublished) that relate to his overall apologetic designs. By early works I mean what he wrote between 1701 and 1713, and, if published, in the first edition only.

Intended to clarify this account at the outset, these definitions are not merely conventions. For, if it is recognized in a general way that all of Berkeley’s work is in the service of a simple truth—that we are in a constant, direct, and immediate dependence on God—then it can be seen that his philosophy is a means of defending Scripture. Now, the end does not justify the means, neither are the means to be confused with the end, nor, still less, to take the place of the end. Too, the immaterialism of the early works is a parenthesis or, as Berkeley called it, a detour into theory, language, and free thinking, by a prelate for whom the primacy of practice, silence, and submission could not be in question.

Analysis of Berkeley’s Philosophical Commentaries (his notebooks of 1707-1708) and his Essay towards a New Theory of Vision (1709) shows that it was not with the Principles of 1710 that Berkeley developed his first weapons against scepticism: a first immaterialist hypothesis seems to have been formulated very early. After Pierre Bayle, it underscored that the arguments brought to bear by the “new philosophers” —their calling our trustworthiness of our perceptions into question by a criticism of secondary qualities—worked as well against primary qualities: extension, figure, motion, etc. According to the first immaterialist hypothesis, reality comes down to the “ideas” we have of it; but there could still be a material substance, an inaccessible “something” that exists outside of us, coexisting with God himself. With the second immaterialist hypothesis, brought forth at the same time as the principle that to be is to be perceived, we move to more radical questions. Instead of venturing no further than what is present in our perceptions, Berkeley now questions the very meaning of our descriptions: does the language by which we describe reality correspond term by term with our ideas, as it had been supposed to? What exactly is the meaning of “thing”, “substance”, “existence”? What indeed is it for a word to have a meaning? With such questions Berkeley was very original in his day, and it is with these questions that he is of interest still to analytic philosophers.

But the question about the meaning of words remains, in the Introduction to the Principles, subsidiary to the traditional presupposition that “pure thought” is the ideal basis of any cognitive proceeding. Too, in 1710, Berkeley’s main objective is to “draw the curtain of words” and “consider... naked, undisguised ideas”. He still does not take into account the indispensable metaphorical curtain through which our language lets us perceive the undescribable.

It has long been recognized that with the criticism of abstract general ideas undertaken in the Introduction, Berkeley thoroughly upset opinion of the time. Contrary to Locke and many others, Berkeley showed that the meaning of words does not reside in the general ideas arrived at by a process of abstraction. The fact is not always regarded, however, that Berkeley wrote a very careful first version of the Introduction (the “first draft”). In this version, the chief “curtain of words” was not at all abstract ideas, nor the fact that words must, in principle, correspond to ideas. Instead Berkeley there brought

*Dissertation presented (1981) for the Doctorat d’Etat (a summary) by Genivieve Brykman (directed by Genivieve Rodis-Lewis, Professor at the Sorbonne).
out something that becomes very elusive in the published Introduction: that language serves less to communicate knowledge than to persuade, to seduce, and make us act, even when no “ideas” are aroused in our minds. Too, the generally admitted correspondence between words and ideas is, in the first draft of the Introduction, a very small part of what could be taken to constitute the meaning of words.

This is why a comparative study of Book A of his notebooks and the first Introduction, on the one hand, and of the published Introduction, on the other, brings out a remarkable implication in the text published in 1710: the tactical exigencies of the criticism of material substance seem to have led Berkeley to play down the existence of a “mediate sense” of words and the existence of a sense not associated with ideas—indeed, to make them simply implicit. Although explicitly recognized in Book A, the category of meaningful words that do not stand for ideas finds no direct place in the 1710 Introduction; this category reappears only allusively and progressively in the body of the Principles (sections 27, 89, 139, 140), by a pedagogical principle dear to Berkeley (but one that scarcely makes open war against scepticism possible): to inculcate an idea in his reader’s mind gently. The criticism of matter, insofar as it turns on the absence of any idea corresponding to that word, makes it impossible to take account of these words that do not stand for ideas—words, however, that are the mainstay of the language of educators.

It is certain that from the Principles on, Berkeley sought to tone down the extravagance of his thesis. Thus the discontinuous existence of “things” and “minds”, which seems to be the upshot of the principle “to be is to be perceived or perceiving”, is kept only implicit. However, no appeal to a Divine Wisdom is adduced in the Principles to guarantee the continued existence of things. Berkeley retains three criteria of “reality”: the “liveliness” of sensible ideas, their regularity, and their independence of our will. Never does the continuity/continuation of things enter into the concept of “reality”. In 1713, in the Three Dialogues, Berkeley made some concessions to the existence of a Divine Wisdom in order to account for the creation of the sensible world six days before the creation of man. These concessions were not an abandonment of materialism, but an attempt to effect the reconciliation of it with common sense and Scripture. Finally, at the end of 1713, immaterialism was deliberately passed over in silence, as the essays for the Guardian, and then De Motu (1721), confirm. In De Motu there is total silence on essential points like the criticism of the words “matter”, “thing”, “being”, or the criticism of abstract ideas. In De Motu there is preserved only the least original but also least extravagant element: the dualism of active and passive things. And, furthermore, put forth in Cartesian terms—things called “things” and not “ideas”. But it must still be hypothesized that even in 1721 immaterialism was pushed into the background, not given up.

It can be asked, however, whether the vestiges of the early work to be found in the Alciphron (1732) are to be taken to indicate an unchanging “Berkeleianism”. The Fourth Dialogue is not simply a rehash of the New Theory of Vision. This time the heteronomy of visual and tactile ideas serves not to show the existence of a “language of nature” associated with a denial that there is an extension that is the common object of these two senses, but to demonstrate the existence of God directly by a language God speaks to us through his creation. In the Seventh Dialogue, the doctrine of the Introduction of 1710 is remarkably truncated, and Berkeley puts in the mouth of his pious speakers the doctrine of the meaning of words contained in the first version of the Introduction. From here on, faith prevails over reason, authority over free thinking, and the power of words over their meaning.

However, from 1710 to 1732, immaterialism had made its own way in the world. A frequent object of ridicule, it had sometimes given rise to more serious discussion (notably in France, Scotland, and America). Most of the criticism seems to have been done independently and in a progress of which Andrew Baxter’s work, An Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul (1733), seems to be the end point.

The year 1733 is a notable date then: with the appearance of, on the one hand, Baxter’s systematic refutation of the Principles, and, on the other, of Peter Browne’s refutation of the doctrine of the meaning of words presented in the Alciphron. Browne devoted 180 pages of his last work, Things Divine, to a reply to the “Minute Philosopher”. Baxter and Browne were in agreement that the criticism of material
substance rested on a dangerously loose use of the word “idea” given currency by Descartes—a use that entailed the nonexistence of any substance. These refutations constituted a radical challenge, which explains the how and why of Berkeley’s publication of revised editions of his early works. They let us look in a new way at the changes made in the Principles and in the Three Dialogues in 1734. To be noted in particular: the disappearance of the claim to “demonstrate” that matter does not exist; the toning down of the criticism of language and the recognition (henceforth reiterated) of a “certain power of abstracting”; the suppression of the criticism of metaphorical language about substance and the verb “support”; the disappearance of all talk of our having “no idea or notion of spirit”. On the evidence it appears that, to reply to Baxter, who had criticized the loose use of the word “idea”, Berkeley borrowed from Browne the distinction between (sensible) “ideas” and “notions”. An unpublished letter to Browne will show that, for Berkeley, the use of “notions”, to account for the meaning of certain words, does not allow a return to the theologians’ obscure analogies between this world and the domain of the supernatural.

The Analyst coincides with this critical revision of the early works. Beyond its interest for the history of mathematics, this work is an apologetic extension of the thesis contained in the Alciphron: the mysteries of religion are no more susceptible to being done in by rational examination than are “the mysteries of mathematics”. And in mysteries the authority of God is worth more than Newton’s. As the 1752 edition of the Alciphron confirms, what is beyond reason is, by the introduction of “notion”, made legitimate: we can speak of what we have no idea of; and since what is beyond reason is not contrary to it, “matter” is rehabilitated in the Siris: the appeal to the consensus of the ancient philosophers now strengthens common sense by making the reality of appearances unquestionably not the deception of an Evil Genius but the effect of Divine Providence.

An obscure Supplement to volume one of Berkeley’s Works

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The Works of George Berkeley Bishop of Cloyne, edited by A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessop, have been out of print for some time. It is therefore a good thing to have a reprint published by Kraus Reprint (Nendeln, Lichtenstein). The publishers have changed the original format of volume one in a surprising way, however. To Luce’s Introduction to the Commentaries one finds a “Supplement to the Editor’s Introduction to the Philosophical Commentaries” by Désirée Park. What she has to say in this Supplement was earlier published in her book called Complementary notions: a critical study of Berkeley’s theory of concepts (The Hague, 1972). The publishers present it as an attempt “to update” (p. 6.1) A. A. Luce’s Introduction.

“To update” A. A. Luce’s Introduction should mean to correct or to complete it in the light of new information that he was unaware of but would have had to accept if better informed. But Luce was well informed about Désirée Park’s ideas. His review of her book in Hermathena (No. CXVI, 1973, p. 111) was most negative. Rather than update Luce’s work Park’s Supplement obscures it by mistaken statements and odd speculation. To include this Supplement as part of Dr
Luce's Introduction is something that cannot possibly have been authorized by the late A. A. Luce's representatives.*

As this Supplement is now included in Luce's and Jessop's edition of Berkeley's Works, it is urgent to discuss it in some detail. I quote the main parts of this Supplement and comment on their contents.¹

One discovery emerging from what the publishers present as "her exhaustive research on the British Museum MS of Berkeley's Philosophical Commentaries" (p. 6.1n) is this. According to the received view, Notebook A and Notebook B have been bound together in the wrong chronological order. But, Désirée Park argues, the bookbinder committed more mistakes than this. She writes:

This is not however the only transformation which the notebooks suffered, for the evidence of the manuscript points as well to the inversion of the penultimate quire of Notebook B.

The most obvious result of this error is the detachment of the concluding lines of Berkeley's conscientiously recorded description of the "cave of Dunmore" from the body of this work. At present this essay is divided in mid-sentence. A less obvious result is that the relationship of folio 164v to Notebook B and hence to Notebook A has been unnecessarily obscured. (P. 6.1)

Thus there are at least two parts of Notebook B which, according to Désirée Park, have been misplaced by a careless bookbinder:

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*Dr J. V. Luce writes as follows on behalf of his brother and himself as the executors and representatives of the late A. A. Luce: 'The reviewer is correct in his supposition that we did not authorise the inclusion of Professor Park's Supplement in the Reprint of the first volume of the Luce-Jessop edition of Berkeley's Works. At no stage of the project were we approached or consulted in any way, either by Messrs. Nelson and Sons or by the Kraus-Thomson Organisation. Had we seen the text of the Supplement in advance we should not have approved of it, and we totally reject the suggestion of the Publisher that it represents an acceptable updating of A. A. Luce's editorial work.'
not belong to Notebook B proper, but was nonetheless closely attached to it by Berkeley. This is seen too by its relative isolation from the other inverted notes, which include algebraic equations, laws on motion and notes for a sermon. (Ibid.)

It is an obvious mistake to speak of "the other inverted notes, which include algebraic equations...". Those algebraic equations (related to De Ludo Algebraico, written on folios 168v, 169r, and 169v) are not inverted—as they would be if inverting the gathering to which they belong. And when Désirée Park goes on to speak about

the physical fact that this folio of eight entries, called by Professor Luce “Eight notes and queries on Locke's Essay”, did not belong to Notebook B proper, but was nonetheless closely attached to it by Berkeley (ibid.);

then this is only to repeat the odd idea that folio 164 was originally two halves, one recto-half and one verso-half, once bound in different parts of the manuscript, later pasted together by a bookbinder who thereby happened to invert the queries. This is certainly no "physical fact" at all. The fact is that, in relation to the entries on the recto-page of this one folio (folio 164), those queries were always inverted and will so remain as long as the manuscript exists.

The other consequence of Désirée Park's idea is supposed to be this:

Second, the subject matter of folio 164v is characteristic of the kinds of questions which Berkeley especially considered in Notebook A. The most striking example is Entry 493 in Notebook A which gives a negative answer to the first question of folio 164r...

It is not easy to understand what her point is here. Suppose she is right. So what? On what issue would it be at all interesting for an understanding of the Philosophical Commentaries to know that some pages that do not belong to the Commentaries at all (though included in the same manuscript volume) would have been misplaced by a bookbinder? Probably Désirée Park is arguing on this theme: closer in space—closer in contents. And, surely, if we split folio 164 in two and put the verso-half at the very end of Notebook B (though impossible), then this notebook would end by a series of queries. Is the idea that Berkeley would have ended Notebook B with those questions that he intended to deal with in Notebook A? If so, one may wonder why he did not start to answer them until he had already written some 100 entries in Notebook A.

The climax of the Supplement is Désirée Park's reference to her own book as a major source for an understanding of the Philosophical Commentaries (pp. 6.1-2, 6.5-6). By reference to this work Désirée Park "updates" A. A. Luce's observation that verso notes often comment on recto ones by this information:

there is a more interesting fact about these entries borne out by the manuscript of the Commentaries (p. 6.5).

What the evidence is behind this "more interesting fact", supposed to be "borne out by the manuscript", is not clear. But the result is this:

as early as the Commentaries, Berkeley had taken care to introduce those concepts which provide for a theory of unimagible notions as the counterpoise to his more celebrated theory of ideas (pp. 6.5-6).

This is the central thesis of Désirée Park's book according to which Berkeley had "a theory of unimagible notions". A. A. Luce had this to say about it in his review:

its central thesis, indicated by its title, is wrong-headed and perverse (p. 111).

When he wrote this review, A. A. Luce could not possibly imagine that Désirée Park's thesis would now appear as a part of his own work in an attempt to update his introduction to Berkeley's Philosophical Commentaries.

Note

1 I do not comment on a discussion concerning the plus sign, where Dr Park in two and a half pages repeats what A. A. Luce already said in three lines. Neither do I comment on her suggestion that some verso entries could be interpreted as comments on recto ones in a way that is not clear from A. A. Luce's numbering.
Review of Berkeley
by J. O. Urmson*

Kevin G. Brolley
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This book is a short introduction to the various facets of Berkeley’s philosophy, from the attack on matter and the ensuing immaterialism, to his views on science, God and spirits, mathematics, political and moral philosophy. It also contains a summary of biographical details.

The book begins well with Urmson setting Berkeley in opposition to the Corpuscularians, which avoids the all too restricted claim that Berkeley was attacking Locke. This broad approach does not last however, as he then states “Berkeley’s main targets for attack were to be John Locke and Sir Isaac Newton” (p. 13). Urmson’s support for this claim is drawn from quotations which speak highly of Newton and Locke and from quotations that condemn only the Nihilarians. In none of the passages that Urmson cites is there a pejorative reference to either Newton or Locke. He then concludes from this, “So the principal objects of attack were Newton and Locke” (p. 14). This is curious reasoning at best, as the evidence in no way supports the conclusion.

By confining Berkeley’s targets to Newton and Locke another problem arises. Urmson considers section 17 of The Principles, where Berkeley rejects the notion of matter as a support for accidents, as one of the two arguments for the unintelligibility of matter. But because Berkeley refers to ‘material substance’ he confuses, says Urmson, the notion of matter with the notion of substance.

The doctrine of matter is independent of the substance-attribute analysis of things, which occurs only in Locke among the authorities we have quoted. By speaking of material substance so often Berkeley allows himself to confuse two distinct issues. (p. 20)

This supposed confusion is seen to spoil the argument of section 17. Had Urmson not insisted on quoting only the authority of Locke in this instance he might have seen that the two notions were not so clearly distinguished, and that Berkeley could, with some justification, speak of material substance. Hobbes, at least, conflates the two and seems to use the terms matter, body, and substance interchangeably.1 Indeed it is striking that Hobbes is never considered as a target.

Berkeley is also called an ‘extreme empiricist9 by Urmson, and he claims that Berkeley “even sets out his empiricism in five simple propositions” (p. 16), which propositions correspond to the first five of PC entry 378. It seems to have escaped his notice that the first two propositions are clearly rejected by Berkeley in the published works. Nor does he mention that propositions 1, 3, and 5 were obelized by Berkeley in that entry.

The chapter on Mathematics, however, is a particular highlight. Here he considers two points: Berkeley’s own positive philosophy of mathematics, and his attack on the mathematicians of the day. When discussing the latter point Urmson’s clear and easy style, which prevails throughout the book, is particularly evident. With his own set of equations he presents the main argument of The Analyst in a most lucid fashion.

The chapter on Moral and Political philosophy should also be welcomed, as this side of Berkeley is rarely commented upon in introductory books.

Finally, the book lacks an explicit discussion of the importance and seriousness of Berkeley’s attack on scepticism and irreligion. This is a most egregious absence, as Berkeley’s concern for these two tendencies is the motivation behind almost all of his philosophy. A book intended as an introduction should certainly contain such a discussion.

1. See De Corpore chap. 6, art. 8, (vol. 1), where the terms matter and body seem to be equated; and see Leviathan, chap. 34, (vol. 3, p. 381), where the terms body and substance are clearly equated; in The English Works of Thomas Hobbes by William Molesworth, (London: John Bohn, 1839) 11 vols.
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It is planned to hold a Berkeley Conference at Trinity College, Dublin in August 1985 to celebrate the 300th anniversary of his birth. Those wishing to read papers should contact: Dr David Berman, Philosophy dept., Trinity College, Dublin 2, Ireland.

The *Berkeley Newsletter* appears once a year in late autumn. It includes notes on Berkeleian topics. A note should not normally exceed five pages and should be type-written. The *Newsletter* also lists items of Berkeley interest. Authors wishing to have their books, articles or notes listed should send the requisite information to the editors, who would be grateful for any other information relating to Berkeley publications.