

PHILOSOPHICAL LIMERICKS

Said Plato: 'The things that we feel
Are not ontologically real,
But just the excrescence
Of numinous essence
Our senses can never reveal.'

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

There was a young student called Fred,
Who was questioned on Descartes and said:
'It's perfectly clear
That I'm not really here,
For I haven't a thought in my head.'

V.R.ORMEROD

A toper who spies in the distance,
Striped tigers, will get some assistance
From reading Descartes,
Who holds that it's part
Of his duty to doubt their existence.

But if he's a student of Berkeley,
One thing will emerge, rather starkly,
That he ought to believe
What his senses perceive,
No matter how dimly or darkly.

LESLIE JOHNSON

'If you're aristocratic,' said Nietzsche,
'It's thumbs up, you're O.K. Pleased to meitzsche.
If you're working-class bores,
It's thumbs down and up yours!
If you don't know your place, then I'll tietzsche.'

GERRY HAMILL

The philosopher Berkeley once said
In the dark to a maid in his bed:
'No perception, my dear,
Means I'm not really here,
But only a thought in your head.'

P.W.R.FOOT

There was a young man who said: 'Ayer
Has answered the atheist's prayer,
For a Hell one can't verify
Surely can't terrify -
At least till you know you are there.'

ANON

Heraclitus gave splendid advice:
Keep your boots well away from thin ice;
It's lovely for ducks,
But you're in the flux,
And won't drown in the same river twice.

PETER GIBSON

To fools a being can be taught
Than which none greater can be thought;
Well, Anselm said that,
But he was a prat -
Sweet nothings can only make naught.

PETER GIBSON

The cryptic philosopher, Kant,
Announced: 'I most certainly shan't
In my *Prolegomena*
Allow that phenomena
Are anything but what they aren't.'

E.F.C.

Cried the maid: 'You must marry me Hume!'
A statement that made David fume.
He said: 'In cause and effect,
There is a defect;
That it's mine you can only assume.'

P.W.R.FOOT

There once was a man who said: 'God
Must think it exceedingly odd
If he finds that this tree
Continues to be,
When there's no-one about in the Quad.'

RONALD KNOX

[*The Reply*]
Dear Sir, Your astonishment's odd:
I am always about in the Quad.
And that's why the tree
Will continue to be,
Since observed by Yours faithfully, God.

ANON

A solipsist with triplets said: 'Though
No-one else can exist, if it's so,
Why I went through so much
To bring up my clutch
In my fancy, I really don't know.'

LUPELLUS

There once was a man who said 'Damn!
It is borne in upon me I am
An engine that moves
In predestinate grooves:
I'm not even a bus, I'm a tram.'

M.E.HARE

Said Wittgenstein: 'Don't be misled!
What *can* be shewn, cannot be said.'
He aimed to be sensible,
Not incomprehensible,
But wrote the *Tractatus* instead.

PETER ALEXANDER

Said shopkeeper William of Occam,
'Multiverses? No! No! I don't stock 'em!
And if you ever get
Hold of Hugh Everett -
Or Dave Deutsch - up in prison please lock 'em!'

DAVID TOMPSETT

The nominalist William of Ockham
Said: 'Changing my name would sure shock 'em,
So using my Razor
(Or maybe a laser)
I'll cut it to just Will of Ock - hm?'

PETER GIBSON