In this paper, I will attempt an exposition of some recent criticisms of Wilfrid Sellars on the notion of 'The Given', and a proof that Sellars is right about this notion, the proof being one which takes its light from the inadequacy of the criticisms which will be revealed.

In [1], William S. Robinson argues that Sellars has not shown that 'The Given' is a 'myth'. Robinson mostly confines his scrutiny of Sellarsian text to 'Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind' (EPM). Robinson's claim is that none of the arguments in EPM logically require that the Given is anything less than 'legendary' because

To say of an object that it is a myth is to imply that that object does not exist. To say that it is a legend, however, implies neither its existence nor its nonexistence. Thus, if I say that I will show that the given is a legend, it must not be anticipated that I will attempt to prove that there is a given. My aim will only be to argue that it has not been shown to be a myth.

Robinson notes that EPM contains explicit arguments against "several views which are based on the acceptance of a given", and that "an argument against the given as such" has to be derived from Sellars' "more particular arguments", such arguments being derivable by 'easily justifiable generalizations' ([1], p. 83).

Robinson's orderly procedure is to construct some formal definitions concerning the notion of givenness, having culled the materials for the definitions from ideas which are either explicitly in or directly implied by the text of EPM. The remarks in EPM which he finds 'particularly salient' are

...the point of the epistemological category of the given is, presumably, to explicate the idea that empirical knowledge rests on a foundation of non-inferential knowledge of matter of fact. ([2], p. 128)

...they all, i.e. forms of the myth of the given have in common the idea that the awareness of certain sorts — and by 'sorts' I have in mind, in the first instance, determinate sense repeatables — is a primordial, non-problematic feature of 'immediate experience'. ([2], p. 157)

Robinson's formal definitions of the key concepts are
Def. I. Something is given (is a single given item) if and only if (i) it is a primordial awareness of sorts, and (ii) it is required to explicate a foundation view.

Def. II. An awareness is *primordial* if and only if there are no necessary conditions for its occurrence except (i) conditions which follow analytically from the concept of an awareness of sorts; (ii) having a sensation or image; and (iii) conditions which are also necessary conditions for having sensations or images.

Jointly, Def. I and Def. II comprise Robinson's attempt to capture Sellars' portrayal of the notion of givenness. Next, Robinson sets forth a specific argument by Sellars against the givenness of sense-contents. Then he attempts to construct from Sellarsian materials an argument against the Given as such by generalizing the specific argument. Though Robinson does not seem to be aware of the fact that Sellars' specific argument is a *reductio* aimed at showing the internal inconsistency of classical sense-datum theories, Robinson does realize the importance of pursuing the strategy of rejecting as unessential to some type of Givenness epistemology at least one of the generalized counterparts of the premises of the specific argument. If successful in such an attempt, Robinson would thus have made his case for the reasonableness of not rejecting (as mythical) the giveness of sense-contents. This point would block a generalization to the mythicality of the Given as such. One of the key components of Sellars' specific argument is

> If (e) sensing is analyzable in nonepistemic terms, then (g) (Some) epistemic facts can be analyzed without remainder into non-epistemic facts.

Sellars' *reductio* works by first obtaining (e) from earlier steps, negating (g) as an independent premise, and obtaining the negation of (e). Robinson attempts to counter the argument by refuting 'not-(g)'. He first shows that (continuing his numbering) a certain proposition

> (11) "X makes a primordial use of a concept" entails "X immediately subsumes something under a concept"

is constructable from assertions and arguments explicitly made by Sellars, and that (11) is a necessary condition of 'not-(g)'. Second, he focuses on the obviously necessary condition of (11), viz.