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ETHICAL INTUITIONISM

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W. D. HUDSON, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Exeter

MACMILLAN
London · Melbourne · Toronto

ST MARTIN'S PRESS
New York

1967

© W. D. HUDSON 1967

MACMILLAN AND COMPANY LIMITED

Little Essex Street London WC 2
also Bombay Calcutta Madras Melbourne

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA LIMITED

70 Bond Street Toronto 2

ST MARTIN'S PRESS INC

175 Fifth Avenue New York NY 10010

ISBN 978-0-333-05145-0 ISBN 978-1-349-00347-1 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-00347-1

Library of Congress catalog card no. 67-11400

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PREFACE

New Studies in Ethics, to which series this volume belongs, consists of monographs written by philosophers drawn from universities in Great Britain, The United States, and Australia. The series covers the main types of ethical theory from Greek antiquity to the present day.

The present work deals with the view that men, as such, are endowed with consciences which give them an immediate and unerring awareness of moral values. Can this view be sustained? What opinions have been held concerning the nature of conscience and the content of its deliverances? Does it make sense to speak of knowing by intuition right from wrong, good from evil? Such questions are here discussed with particular reference to the British philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, who gave classical expression to ethical intuitionism.

I asked three friends, Professor D. J. O'Connor, Mrs. Pamela Huby, and Mr. Peter Quartermaine, to read the typescript of this study. I am most grateful for their comments which have, I hope, helped me to make my meaning clearer at certain points. They bear no responsibility for the defects which remain.

W. D. H.