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R. M. HARE

*White's Professor of Moral Philosophy
in the University of Oxford*

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Editor's Foreword

Professor Hare is the foremost exponent of the ethical theory known as prescriptivism. This theory of the logical character of moral speech-acts finds definitive expression in Hare's two books *The Language of Morals* (1952) and *Freedom and Reason* (1963). These books have aroused the interest of all modern moral philosophers and, by action or reaction, have been amongst the most influential of contemporary writings on ethics. In the present volume and the three other collections of Hare's papers which appear in this series some matters dealt with in Hare's books receive fuller consideration and some matters not treated there are discussed.

Probably the most interesting controversy in modern moral philosophy is that between those who believe Hare's views to be in the main right and those who have reacted fiercely against them and who are coming to be known as descriptivists. The present collection of papers, along with the other three, is an essential source for anyone who wishes to understand clearly and fully what is involved in prescriptivism *versus* descriptivism.

W. D. HUDSON

University of Exeter

Preface

The present volume is one of several in which I am collecting the more substantial of my published papers, together with some hitherto unpublished material on related topics. Apart from minor editorial corrections, the papers are printed as they first appeared, although I might now express myself differently. In making these papers more accessible, I hope that I may serve the convenience of those who share with me an interest in these fields; and with the same purpose I have added to this volume a bibliography, as complete and accurate as I could make it, of all that I have published in philosophy. I am grateful to the original publishers of the papers now reprinted for giving their permission where necessary; details of first publication will be found in the bibliography under the year appearing after the title of the essays in the table of contents. I am also most grateful to the General Editor of the series, and to its publishers, for their help and encouragement.

R. M. HARE

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