

FROM FACT TO VALUE

by

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B.A., University of British Columbia, 1963

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
M.A.

in the Department

of

PHILOSOPHY

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required
standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April, 1965

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Date March 17, 1965

ABSTRACT

It is my aim to present an argument against the view that there is a strict dualism of FACTS on the one hand and DECISIONS or DEMANDS on the other and to show that there are cases in which an OUGHT can be derived from an IS.

I begin by examining the nature of facts in order to determine what they are and what connection there may be between them and events, situations or states of affair. I next examine the question as to whether there is warrant to stipulate a philosophically technical sense of 'pure fact' or the 'merely factual' and give consideration to the relevance of the concepts of explanatory power and objectivity to this question, concluding that these concepts do not appear to furnish such a warrant.

There follows an argument in support of my opinion that statements of fact presuppose viewpoints which are shared amongst men, thus presupposing in turn some form of community. By discussing several statements of fact and showing their dependence upon institutions or societal arrangements I attempt to support my denial of the claim that specifically MORAL premisses are ALWAYS required in order to derive demands or decisions from statements of fact.

In considering several objections which a dualist might raise against my argument I deal with the question of genetic explanation of moral codes, with some of the possible OUTSIDER positions in respect of moral decisions or demands and with the requirement that rules of formal logic be observed in arriving at moral conclusions.

Since I am not denying the strength in the dualist's position in insisting upon an analysis of statements of fact in an attempt to establish 'pure fact' or the 'merely factual' I next examine a restricted form of a dualistic view which deals with the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive contents in statements of fact. This shows that there are indeed sentences cast in the form of statements of fact which seem to have predominantly prescriptive content, and I concede the value of a dualistic analysis to bring this out.

I claim that this does not militate against my argument as presented, that there are objective statements of fact from which by virtue of the viewpoint underlying them moral demands or decisions can be derived and that it would be extremely difficult to make intelligible the claim that they were not statements of FACT.

In a speculative postscript I touch upon the problem of overriding moral demands.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

If it had not been for Dr. Barnett Savery's flattering comments on my assignments in the introductory course some seven years ago and if I had not enjoyed the kind interest and encouragement of every member of the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia during the ensuing years, I doubt that I would have persisted in my studies. As they know, I had no intention to become so involved and to earn academic degrees.

I very much doubt that my contribution to the store of philosophical knowledge and insight has been significant, but I have immensely enjoyed grappling with the problems which I encountered, and for this I thank all of my mentors sincerely.

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"In every system of morality which I have hitherto met with, I have always remarked, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surprised to find, that instead of the usual copulation of propositions, IS or IS NOT, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an OUGHT, or an OUGHT NOT. This change is imperceptible; but it is, however, of the last consequence. For as this OUGHT, or OUGHT NOT, expresses some new relation or affirmation, it is necessary that it should be observed and explained; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it."

David Hume: A TREATISE OF HUMAN NATURE,
Book III, Part I, Section I.

"I believe in a dualism of facts and decisions or demands (or of IS and OUGHT); in other words, I believe in the impossibility of reducing decisions or demands to facts, although they can, of course, be treated as facts."

Karl R. Popper: THE OPEN SOCIETY AND ITS ENEMIES,
Volume 1, Note 11 to Chapter 3.

It is my aim in this thesis to challenge the view of an unbridgeable dualism of the IS and the OUGHT, which is expressed in the preceding quotations. Whether I shall be able to show that an OUGHT can be deduced from an IS, in the sense of strict logical deduction, I am not sure. It is, I believe, sufficient for my purposes if it can be shown that an OUGHT can be derived from an IS, and I propose therefore to argue in favour of this relation, leaving the question of a strictly logical connection for subsequent consideration.

I am uneasy about Popper's apparently equating the dualism of decisions or demands and facts with the impossibility of reducing the former to the latter. That he holds this view seems to be quite clear, since he rephrases his thesis, after adopting L.J. Russell's terminology, as "proposals are not reducible to facts (or to statements of facts, or to propositions) even though they pertain to facts."⁽¹⁾ If the possibility of this reduction is a necessary condition for a successful argument against the strict dualism to which he and others adhere, then my purpose may well be unachievable, but I fail to see why the establishment of a connection between proposals and propositions must fail unless a proposal sentence can be reduced to a proposition sentence without losing any of its meaning.

In using the terms 'proposition' and 'proposal' it must be noted that the former has a well defined use as a technical term whereas the latter is quite vague. Nevertheless, there seem to be advantages in employing the term 'proposal', as long as it is understood that I shall be using it merely as a short expression to stand for a suggestion that a certain line of conduct be adopted. As Popper

points out, if we use words such as 'norm', 'demand' or 'decision', one may be led "to support those who say that these things are beyond discussion (either above it, as some dogmatic theologians or metaphysicians may say, or – as nonsensical – below it, as some positivists may say). (2) On the other hand, everyone would agree that proposals can be discussed and particularly, that they can be adopted or rejected.

It is usually the case, when proposals are discussed with a view towards their adoption or rejection, that such discussions are conducted in terms of facts or alleged facts. It is clearly the aim of proponents and adversaries alike to get facts recognized and accepted, since this is considered to be not only relevant but indeed determinant towards adopting or rejecting proposals, as it indeed very often is. No dualist would deny this. For instance, when Popper says that proposals 'pertain to facts' he is thinking especially of alterable facts of social life. Obviously it is important to have these facts straight, as it is even more important to have the facts straight which make it possible to alter these facts of social life to those to which it is desired to alter them. That a proposal to alter some such facts is not derivable from these same facts is surely unobjectionably clear. But it seems to me that it is one thing to say that proposals cannot be derived from certain facts or from facts in respect of which they are made or from facts which are relevant towards achieving the proposals' purposes, but an entirely different claim to say that proposals cannot be derived from any facts whatsoever, and this surely is the dualist's position.

Is it not the case that, even when proposals are under discussion which are of the nature of moral demands and implicitly or explicitly express a moral OUGHT, very often facts are produced or attention is drawn to them or attempts are made to have facts recognized and accepted? Clearly this is done in the

full expectation that something follows from such facts, and I do not believe that they are considered to be of the nature of initial conditions from which, together with a suitable premiss containing an OUGHT relationship, the desired inference is to be drawn. Rather they are deemed 'to speak for themselves'.

To this the dualist may object that, in order to understand his position, clarity about the term 'fact' must be achieved. He may not deny that it is used in ordinary discourse, and quite intelligibly so, in a wide range of cases in some of which it may be held that demands or decisions are derivable from them, but he may point out that in such cases an analysis of the facts or alleged facts would show that they were not 'pure' facts. If this were his objection, his position would demand a technical sense of the term 'fact', and I will refer in the sequel to it as 'pure fact' or the 'merely factual'. The dualist's thesis would then be that from 'pure facts' or the 'merely factual' no moral demands or decisions can be derived without an additional premiss containing a moral term. If this is a fair presentation of the dualist's stand, I propose to attack it by discussing two questions about facts:-

- (1) Are facts in any sense 'things in the world' and if so what type or kind of 'things in the world', and if they are not, what are they?
- (2) Are there differences between facts, whatever facts may be, such that it can be determinately proposed that some should be accepted as 'facts' in a technical sense of 'pure facts' and others not?

We rarely, if ever, seem to speak of particular things in the world as facts. Such expressions as 'Mr. Smith is a fact', 'this chair is a fact' or 'houses are facts' sound forced and strange and it would appear to be very difficult to know what to make of them. This is one point made by Mr. Strawson in support of his claim that facts are pseudo-entities. (3) Yet I can imagine a meeting between Hitler and some of his advisers discussing strategy, during which someone may have said 'but the Maginot Line is a fact'. For this to make sense there must of course be a context, but given the context, the sentence is perfectly intelligible. It serves to draw attention to the Maginot Line's being there, to its existence if you like, so that it is a fact to be taken into account. But is it the Maginot Line which is the fact to be taken into account, and is it not rather the fact 'that the Maginot Line is there' which has to be taken into account? Linguistically, the expression 'but the Maginot Line is a fact' is correctly rendered by 'but it is a fact that the Maginot Line is there' (and not a myth or a dream). The use of the sentence 'but the Maginot Line is a fact' is performative, which can be seen if it is considered that what is intended by its utterance can also be achieved by 'remember the Maginot Line' or even simply by 'the Maginot Line!' given the necessary tone of voice and possibly some accompanying gesture. Therefore, 'but the Maginot Line is a fact' does not appear to be a statement at all. I cannot think of any case in which one would or could say of a particular thing that it is a fact without also being able to show that no proper statement has been made. I somewhat hesitantly conclude that the term 'fact' cannot be elucidated when considering its application to particular things, if by particular things we mean what we commonly

call single objects (including persons). I am uneasy and hesitant about this, because at first blush one might have been tempted to say that if there are any 'pure facts', they would exactly be such 'objects' or something like them. I hope that further investigation will permit the return to this problem.

Mr. Strawson counts as things-genuinely-in-the-world besides things and persons also events. We would ordinarily not speak of events as objects. What are events? Whatever else they may be, they are occurrences or 'things that happen' (Concise Oxford Dictionary), that is to say happenings in the world which can be seen, experienced, witnessed, etc. We can say 'did you see this event?' but not 'did you see this fact?'. However, we do on some occasion use 'did you witness this fact?' as in some sense equivalent to 'did you witness this event?'. Thus there are occasions when an event is said to be a fact, but the IS here is not that of logical equivalence, of course. Certain conditions have to be met before an event can be said to be a fact, and it seems to me that on all such occasions nothing more is implied than that it is a fact that the event took place or simply that the event took place as described. All this shows at the moment is that, even if it should be correct in certain circumstances to say 'this event is a fact' and even if it is granted that events are things-in-the-world (although the meaning of this is somewhat obscure and bears investigation), it does not follow that facts are things-in-the-world.

Mr. Austin contends that Mr. Strawson would admit that also phenomena, situations and states of affairs would be things-genuinely-in-the-world but adds significantly "whatever exactly that may mean". (4) Whether or not Mr. Strawson would admit this, I do not know, but it seems to me that he might and still contend

that facts are not. Mr. Austin quotes Mr. Strawson thus: (5)

"What makes the statement that the cat has mange true is not the cat, but the condition of the cat, i.e. the fact that the cat has mange. The only plausible candidate for the position of what (in the world) makes the statement true is the fact it states; but the fact it states is not something in the world."

On this Mr. Austin comments that it seems quite plain to him

- (1) that the condition of the cat is a fact;
- (2) that the condition of the cat is something in the world;

and he seems to imply with his question "how can Strawson have come to say that the condition of the cat is NOT something in the world?", that it follows from these two premisses that the FACT is something in the world. Whether or not he wants this inference to be drawn, I am not sure, but it does not seem to me to follow.

It seems to me to be Mr. Strawson's point that facts are asserted or stated about something in the world. Accordingly, it would on this view be incorrect to assert that a fact can be DESCRIBED because then a fact would presumably be something in the world which the description would more or less accurately fit. On the other hand, it is surely quite intelligible to consider whether or not a statement does justice to the facts, and as Mr. Austin contends, the use of the expressions 'correspond with the facts' or 'fitting the facts' does not leave either speaker or hearer with any metaphysical doubts. So, for instance, does Moritz Schlick defend his claim that statements can be compared with facts:-

"I have often compared propositions to facts I found, for instance in my Baedeker the statement: "This cathedral has two spires", I was able to compare it with 'reality' by looking at the cathedral, and this comparison convinced me that Baedeker's assertion was true." (6)

But this explanation does not show that the fact is in the world in the way that the two-spired cathedral is, and I do not think for a minute that Schlick wanted to

contend that it was. It would be straining language to say that the two-spired cathedral is a fact, except in circumstances which I have tried to illuminate with the example of the Maginot Line. Therefore Schlick could hardly have meant that he compared the proposition 'This cathedral has two spires' with the 'fact of the two-spired cathedral'. What he obviously did was to look at a certain structure in order to determine whether the description 'This cathedral has two spires' fitted it. His account appears to me to accord well with Mr. Strawson's claim that the use of the word 'fact' is in the nature of a linguistic device.

Now it is interesting that the question of facts arises most significantly with statements of a descriptive character. (It may be claimed that there are other instances, such as for example mathematical facts, or more generally, facts expressed by analytical propositions, but it may be asserted with some justification that these are facts in quite a different sense. At any rate, my examination is not concerned with them). Consider the following propositions:-

- (1) This cathedral has two spires;
- (2) No cathedral has fifty spires.

If these two propositions are to be compared with facts, and if the first accords with the 'fact of the two-spired cathedral' (a notion which I have tried to show to be obscure and against which I have already argued), what would be the fact-in-the-world in the second case? No single inspection of a fact would do, and the fact would only emerge after every single cathedral in the world had been inspected. Then, in some manner and at a certain time, a 'fact' would be-in-the-world (if facts are to be things-in-the-world). It is quite implausible that the then established fact-in-the-world is the 'fifty-spired no-cathedral'. What would have been established could well be called a state of affairs, and if the proposition

'No cathedral has fifty spires' accurately describes that state of affairs, then that state of affairs could be said to be a fact. And it seems to me that this is simply another way of saying that the particular state of affairs is accurately described.

It seems to be the case, as Mr. Strawson contends, that the notion of 'fact' is intimately connected with descriptions or descriptive statements or propositions. If on the one hand facts were things-genuinely-in-the-world-out-there totally divorced from descriptions, and on the other hand there were descriptions which describe them, then there would be a one-to-one correlation between facts and their descriptions. An event or a state of affairs is frequently described in quite different and even divergent ways, and all of these descriptions may well be quite correct. Now one who holds that facts are things-genuinely-in-the-world apart from descriptions and that an event or a state of affairs is such a fact, would have to say that each of the different or divergent descriptions - if correct - must describe a different and distinct fact, whereas I would want to say that each of the different or divergent descriptions states a different fact about the event or state of affairs. If there were these different and divergent facts-out-there, there would also have to be different and divergent events or states of affairs somehow embodied in the one event or state of affairs which is so variously - and ex hypothesi correctly - described. What we do, however, is to recognize different aspects of an event or state of affairs, whereas one hardly speaks of different aspects of a fact. What makes a fact, I would like to say, is the aspect with which an event or state of affairs is viewed, and this becomes evident in the description given.

I would be hard put to it to make sense of 'fact' apart from descriptions, and it is therefore that I am troubled by Mr. Austin's statement "that there may very well be facts that nobody knows or ever will know". (7) I agree that there may very well be SOMETHING in the world about which nobody may ever make a statement or which nobody may ever include in an account, but I am inclined to hold that whatever these SOMETHINGS may be, they are not FACTS. If a fact is an accurate description of something, then it has no status apart from that description, and it is how that description is made which is at least co-determinant as to what the fact is.

In order to elucidate this, let the fact that the cat has mange be considered once more. Supposing that nobody had ever looked at cats with a view towards determining something about their condition, and supposing further that no one ever will look at cats in order to find out anything about them, then the fact of the cat's having mange would be one of which Mr. Austin might say that nobody knows or ever will know it. This is entirely so and I agree with him. But it is taken for granted then, I believe, that there have been or will be statements made which contain the word 'mange', such as for instance, that certain animals have it, or at least it seems to be taken for granted that some statement of medical fact has been or will be made. If we suppose, however, that no statement of medical fact has been or will ever be made, I find it difficult to make sense of the notion of there being a medical fact (and it seems to me to be clearly a medical fact that an animal has mange) that nobody knows or ever will know. In order that a statement attributing the condition of mange to an animal may be made as a statement of fact, there must be - apart from possibly many other conditions which have to be met - also a

medical viewpoint. Whatever the fact may be if there is no medical viewpoint, and it is surely easy to think of many descriptions of the cat's condition, it is NOT mange.

Whatever the fact or facts may be in respect of anything, if there is NO VIEWPOINT AT ALL, I cannot even imagine. I would say that whatever there might be without a viewpoint ordering it - and I am most certainly not denying that there be anything - it is not FACTS. I do not find it in the least disturbing that we cannot say anything about the world without so to speak interfering with it, interfering in the sense of assuming or positing or creating an order. I am not thereby claiming that we can be simply arbitrary, and am inclined to agree with the opinion (expressed, I believe, amongst others by Mr. Popper) that in the natural sciences at least, our descriptive statements have continuously gained in explanatory power and in this sense may be deemed to have stated ever more accurate facts.

If my analysis of the logic of the term 'fact' is accepted as being plausible then in a very strong sense facts are not things-genuinely-in-the-world as some form of given raw material, but rather that they result from ordering such raw material - whatever it may be - under viewpoints. Facts are wedded to propositions because it is through propositions or descriptive statements that a viewpoint is implicitly put forward. But facts are also wedded to things-genuinely-in-the-world since it is upon these that the viewpoint operates. What then are we to say of the perfectly intelligible expression: 'correspond to the facts'?, an expression for the abolition of which I certainly do not wish to argue.

One thing may be said, and that is that the difficulty about the ontological status of facts applies equally to events, situations or states of affairs. I have already remarked that all of these can be and are variously described. Now

it may be conjectured that because an event or situation or state of affairs may have different aspects such that different descriptions can be correctly given dependent upon what particular features are picked out and included in the account, there must be OUT THERE everything making up the event, situation or state of affairs from which we select this or that item. But I contend that events, situations or states of affairs can no more be READ OFF than facts can be and that we do not simply pick out items from what-there-is to make up our account. We describe events, situations or states of affairs by bringing our conceptual apparatus to bear upon what confronts us in the world.

It is of course the case that not just any description will do of which it can be claimed that it states or asserts a fact, and it would appear to me that what is or is not accepted as a statement of fact has to do with some form of consensus of opinion among men. This may seem to put the position of the discoverer or reformer in question, because what he essentially does is - I would say - state new facts. I do not think that this need be denied at all, although I admit that I am in considerable doubt as to being able to assert that someone might state a fact without anyone else's EVER agreeing. I am inclined to think that this cannot be done and that this would strain the logic of the word 'fact' beyond its intelligible use. What usually does happen is that the discoverer's or reformer's statements or propositions become statements of FACTS only when they are absorbed into a body of knowledge, presupposing at least some form of community. In this manner the role of the discoverer or reformer is rescued and, it seems to me, indeed made intelligible.

I consider myself justified to say now that there is nothing wrong or spurious with the expression: 'correspond to the facts' and that the use of this

expression does not commit one to having to accept an ontological status of facts as genuinely-in-the-world. In the same sense that facts are not genuinely-in-the-world, events, situations or states of affairs are not genuinely-in-the-world. What counts for a fact also counts for a correct description of some event, situation or state of affairs, and what counts for such a correct description presupposes a SHARED VIEWPOINT. If, not counting myself, one half of the people on earth held that the sun revolves around the earth and the other half held that the earth revolves around the sun - and all other things being equal (which in this context may mean that it literally made no difference which view were held) - then I would be at a complete loss to make any sense of the question: 'which is the fact, or TRUE fact?'. But I would be in an equally bad fix to describe the event or state of affairs of the relative motions of sun and earth. Of course, it is just because it DOES make a difference that statements asserting something come to be stating FACTS.

If the analysis so far has succeeded in throwing some light on the connection between facts and events, situations or states of affairs, can something now be said about what 'pure facts' might be?, and towards this end it may be fruitful to revert to particular things or single objects.

III

I have already remarked that the concept of 'fact' does not appear to be applicable to particular objects. Facts, as I have tried to argue, are wedded to propositions, and words are not propositions. But when a proposition asserts a fact then it purports to, and when it states a fact then it does, say something about the world which holds of certain things. Even 'no cathedral has fifty spires' states a

fact about cathedrals and spires even though there be no fifty-spired cathedrals. 'The political climate is unfavourable for the passage of this piece of legislation' states a fact, although a very complicated one, about certain people at a certain time, whatever else it may be about. I think it is relevant to the question of what it is to know facts to consider at least briefly the relation of language to the world. Christopher Blake draws attention to the "fundamentally erroneous idea that something which is known corresponds to something else which it is known about", so that "thinking about such notions as factual truth seems to be dogged by a certain picture of the things which are said truly somehow mirroring that (the physical aspect of the world) to which they refer." (8) It is possibly too dogmatic a claim to speak of fundamental error, but that there is a genuine question, I should like to bring out in the form of a very brief story.

A very long time ago there lived in a forest a group of not-quite-yet-human beings. They were frequently attacked by beasts of the forest, and the fear this engendered was given vent in shouts or yells, which for a long time were quite involuntary and unintentioned, but following which the entire group always ran for their lives. Then at some stage (and the necessary physiological, psychological, evolutionary and other pre-conditions for this to happen are here disregarded) a specific sound, let us say 'beast', was shouted purposefully whenever an animal of the forest approached, and the group scattered. This, we may say, was then a word. What did this word stand for? Well, in a way it stood for animals of some kind or maybe animals of all kinds, but it also stood for a complex situation signifying what we would now call 'danger'; it might also have stood for 'run' or 'flee'. Let us take our story a little further. It was found that running away upon hearing the

shouted word 'beast' did not always prevent disaster. (Some animals could run faster!). Accidentally at first, some of the group climbed trees, others ran into a cave, and it was found that the former saved them from some animals, the latter from others. Now the language changed, and the shouts became either 'beast-tree' or 'beast-cave', but the language consisted of only the compound words 'beast-tree' and 'beast-cave'; in other words 'tree' and 'cave' by themselves were never used at this stage. Now what did 'tree' and 'cave' in the compound expressions 'beast-tree' and 'beast-cave' stand for? Well, in a way they stood for some things like trees and caves, but only in a very special way, as the invariable conjunction with 'beast' shows. They could have stood for 'escape route' or 'sanctuary' in our present-day language. The point I wish to make is that quite plausibly 'tree' and 'cave' by themselves stood for nothing at all and hence were never used as independent words.

If we were to comment on this story that trees and caves were there then as they are now, whether or not our not-quite-yet-human beings used the words 'tree' and 'cave', then we would be quite correct, but the intended point of the story is to make intelligible and persuasive the notion that to them the things 'tree' and 'cave' were not what they are to us, and that in this sense they were NOT trees and caves. Although this brief digression does by no means deal even remotely in anything approaching an adequate manner with the problem of the correspondence theory of language, it does indicate the relevance of a conceptual framework towards the use of words even for naming particular things or single objects. It furthermore seems to me to show that the attempt to elucidate the concept of 'pure fact' somehow or other in connection with such single objects fails. Even for naming particular things we cannot do without a viewpoint and also particular

things do not seem to me to be SIMPLY THERE. Rather, they can be very different things, dependent upon viewpoints.

I may now extend my conclusion regarding the status of facts and say that to know facts does not appear to me to be essentially different from knowing things, events, situations or states of affairs in the world, and that it is therefore that we may quite legitimately use the term 'fact' in discourse as we do, without creating an ontological problem.

If facts then are what propositions state when they are correct descriptions, could the dualist now argue convincingly that there are propositions which state pure facts or the merely factual and that for the purpose of clarity a philosophically technical application of the term 'fact' should be restricted to this class of propositions? In order to examine this I propose to consider two criteria which may be advanced as distinguishing such merely factual propositions. These criteria are explanatory power and objectivity, and the claim may be:-

- (1) that certain descriptive statements have in the course of time gained immeasurably in explanatory power;
- (2) that these statements are distinguished by being OBJECTIVE.

IV

Since the science of Physics has been singularly successful in explaining physical events and since its explanations are deemed to be specifically objective, it may be fruitful to consider some aspects of physical explanation. Ernst Cassirer coined what I consider to be a felicitous phrase when he said that "the system of physical knowledge is distinguished from a mere rhapsody of perceptions." (9) Even in the simplest physical experiment, universal conditions are presupposed

which cannot be READ OFF. The very concept of measurement implies a serial order which it would appear to be impossible to observe as a self-evident feature in no matter how many individual instances in a manifold. In order to measure we have to work with certain constants and these do not appear to be given, they are not copiable from sense impressions. "Each change in the system of scientific concepts places in a clear light the permanent structural elements to be ascribed to this system, as it is only under the assumption of these elements that it can be described. If we take as given the whole of experience, as it is represented in any definite stage of knowledge, this whole is never a mere aggregate of perceptual data, but is divided and unified according to definite theoretical points of view", without which ... "no single assertion concerning facts, in particular no single concrete measurement, would be possible." (10)

In order to understand and to explain, then, we employ rules of connection, and the laws of physics are such rules of connection. They are formulated, but this is of course not to say that they are arbitrary. Their validity rests with their successful use in explaining physical events. Little as I grasp Einstein's General Theory of Relativity, it seems to me that its central import as a law lies in its holding for every observational point of view. It achieves this in part, so I believe, by replacing substantive elements previously held to be irreducible by the unity of certain functional relations. It is these functional relations which determine OBJECTIVELY physical events. It seems to be this objectivity in physical explanation which gives the explanation such convincing force, but then this objectivity is of a very special kind. It is not in terms of things or objects in space and time, but might be described as 'determinability according to law from any observational position'.

What is expressed in the law(s) is a rule of the understanding, and this in my opinion is grounded in a particular viewpoint, in this case the viewpoint shared by the community of physical scientists. A rule of the understanding is not arbitrary since it cannot be independent of what is to be understood, and this (in physical science) is in the world out there, but already in determining what is to be understood a viewpoint is implied, involving some selection from amongst data and a demand to adopt one intellectual representation rather than another. In a manner which I find it difficult to make clearer, a judgement is involved here, possibly even a decision. And it appears to me to be unobjectionably clear that from a sufficient number of statements of physical facts I can validly derive the laws which have been employed in making these statements, and therefore the rules of understanding expressed in the laws and the viewpoint in which these rules are grounded. And if I am right in claiming that in the adoption of a viewpoint there is implied some form of judgement, maybe some form of exercising a preference, then from statements of physical facts I can derive judgements about the nature of the physical world.

Now if the dualist wishes to insist that the term 'fact' in the sense of pure fact be restricted to descriptive statements having the nature of statements of physical facts, and in particular having the same criteria for explanation and objectivity, then we are in a bad fix indeed when it comes to making statements of fact about the behaviour of human beings. But before discussing this, let it be observed that we are also in somewhat of a fix when it comes to making statements of fact about physical THINGS, because - if my account is correct - the peculiar objectivity attained in physical description is possible only through abstracting

everything PHYSICAL from things and replacing it by functional relations. (A four-dimensional space-time manifold is certainly no THING). And as soon as we descend into the world of things, even the physical scientist has to introduce a different concept of objectivity, brought out by terms such as 'position of the observer', 'normal conditions prevailing' etc. In other words, OBJECTIVITY is now contrasted with SUBJECTIVITY, and I suspect that the warrant for speaking in the world of things of objectivity without any particular doubts and reservations is, that it is relatively easy to secure general consensus about a NEUTRAL observational position. At any rate, the dualist does not object - I believe - to statements about physical things in some relation to each other being statements of fact.

When it comes to statements about human behaviour, some hold that it is impossible to be objective. It is my opinion that they must be clearly wrong. What they claim is that objectivity can never be attained because the observer is himself human and therefore can never get himself out of the picture. This claim uses the contrast of objective versus subjective but in such a manner that there is no true alternative. In other words, if objectivity is ruled out ab initio we have a classical example of offending the principle of non-vacuous contrast. I am inclined to believe that when it is claimed that statements about human behaviour cannot be objective, what is meant is that they cannot have scientific objectivity, and that the model for scientific objectivity is that of the physical sciences. But we have seen that the objectivity of pure physics is of a peculiar nature and that, if facts are stated about things, a shift in the use of 'objective' occurs. In this shift the concept of neutrality is relevant, a sort of IMPERSONAL attitude. Now

some such attitude is also relevant in being objective about human behaviour, and if this is more difficult, it nevertheless is not ruled out in principle. If it were, then for instance the judgement that some reporters are more objective than others would be entirely unwarranted. In fact, we know very well what it means to be objective in many areas of discourse about the behaviour of human beings and we can cite criteria to support our claim. These are not essentially different from the criteria for neutrality in the observation of physical events as happening with and to things. In neither case can one be neutral in the sense of having no viewpoint, and it is clearly the case that some shared viewpoints prevail with regard to human behaviour. The real difficulty seems to me to lie in the implicit claim in the view of the dualist that the rule of the understanding applied in the physical sciences has some sort of privileged status, in other words that this is in some sense the SUPREME rule. What I believe he has in mind is the powerful sort of explanation which is achieved in pure physics by abstracting from all things and objects. On this view no REAL explanation about human behaviour is possible until we reach a similar state of affairs in accounting for human behaviour.

Peter Winch points out that whereas in the physical sciences the explainer sets out to explain the extra-human world around him (and the physical events to be explained are not deemed to have viewpoints), when we come to explain human behaviour, we have to deal with two sets of rules (or at least two rules), those or that adopted by the explainer for his understanding, and those or that governing the behaviour to be explained. (11) We are now faced with a dilemma! If we want to say that human behaviour is to be explained under rules of the understanding expressed in laws of the physical science model with their

convincing forcefulness, can we avoid subsuming the rules governing the behaviour to be explained under such laws? And if we are prepared to do this, then what becomes of the argument that there is an element of choice or decision involved in the concept of 'viewpoint'? It seems to me that we will be driven, if we insist on only one SUPREME type of rule of the understanding, namely that employed in explaining physical events, to have to hold as illusory any explanation which contains terms which we consider specifically applicable to human action, such as 'choice', 'decision', 'alternative', 'obligation' etc. It may be argued that this conclusion need not be drawn, that if only we KNEW MORE we could satisfactorily explain human action under rules of the understanding expressed in laws of the physical science model which do not contain these specifically anthropomorphic terms, whilst still retaining explanations which do contain these terms as limiting cases under the more general laws. This seems to me to be very unpalatable.

Everyone knows what a joke is (if he has a sense of humour, that is!) and sometimes, when a hearer does not get the point, an attempt is made to explain the joke. However, whenever a joke is explained it ceases to be a joke. Somehow, whatever it was that made it a joke disappears in the process of explanation. For one thing, the element of surprise is gone. Is the element of surprise then illusory?, but was it not just that (at least in part) which made the joke?

'De gustibus non est disputandum!', - a saying which is distinguished by being largely ignored, since do we not ceaselessly argue about taste and try to mold taste and make others see as we see? Unless we are completely deluding ourselves, it must be possible to look at something in one way rather than in another, that is to change viewpoints. In what sense can we say that viewpoints are

determined? Obviously on the one hand by what there is to be seen, but surely also by how it is looked at, and whilst there are limits to this, there are alternatives among which one can choose.

If science were to establish that what we call choice is in every case inevitable, then I submit that we could not use the word 'choice' any longer significantly, at least not in its present meaning, but what meaning it could then possibly have, escapes me. I cannot see how explanations with the term 'choice' in them could continue as limiting cases under rules of the understanding which eliminate just exactly what making a choice now means to us, namely the possibility of alternatives. As Dostoevsky has the underground man say it:

"Indeed, if there really is some day discovered a formula for all our desires and caprices - that is, an explanation of what they depend on, by what laws they arise, how they develop, what they are aiming at in one case and another and so on, that is a real mathematical formula - then, most likely, man will cease at once to feel desire, indeed, he will be certain to. Besides, he will at once be transformed from a human being into an organ-stop or something of the sort; for what is a man without desires, without freewill and without choice, if not a stop in an organ? What do you think? Let us reckon the chances - can such a thing happen or not?" (12)

It is as though the difficulty with explaining human behaviour were one of lifting oneself by his bootstraps. He who tries to explain human behaviour is himself human, and when he tries to understand he must concede understanding to others, and when he explains according to principles and rules he must concede to others the faculty to formulate rules. This is perfectly true, but from this it does not follow that one can in principle not explain human behaviour nor render an objective account. That the explanations may be different, employing different terms (in particular what we may call 'mentalist' terms), and that the objectivity may be more difficult to achieve, may be conceded, but we do know what constitutes

the one and we do have criteria for claiming the other. Furthermore, if one were to make the claim that human behaviour is in principle not explainable because of the recognition that human beings are rule-making beings, and this claim may be seen to be implied in juxtaposing the physical scientist's standing so-to-speak outside his subject and the explainer's of human behaviour standing so-to-speak on the inside, then one would be involved in an absurd position. Because, if the fact that human beings think for themselves makes it impossible to render objective explanations of what they do then that same fact makes it also impossible to render objective explanations of the physical world around us. As I have tried to show, it takes a SHARED VIEWPOINT to do so and this implies knowing something about the rules of the understanding adopted by others.

I therefore claim that on the grounds of explanatory power and objectivity there is no warrant to restrict the term 'fact' in philosophical investigation to correct descriptions of things, events, situations or states of affairs not involving human beings. This would amount to a claim that correct descriptions cannot be given as soon as a human being is placed in an event, situation or state of affairs; in fact one could not make any description at all. This is plainly absurd, and no dualist would hold this view. 'John is Bill's father', 'Chinese New Year is debt-settlement time', 'He is a Chang from Fatshan' are statements of fact if it is indeed the case that John is Bill's father, that debts are settled at Chinese New Year and that such and such a man is named Chang and his native city is Fatshan. We know how these facts can be checked and verified. I have chosen these particular facts because I propose to deal with them, and I do not suppose that anyone would claim that these are not facts. Before doing so, however,

I wish to refer to some facts (or perhaps better: alleged facts) which cause trouble. For instance, Karl Popper claims that "the decision to oppose slavery does not depend upon the fact that all men are born free and equal, and that no man is born in chains." (13) I feel that the word 'depend' in this sentence is ambiguous. If the sense is that the decision to oppose slavery cannot be derived from the fact (if it is a fact) that all men are born free and equal etc., I will want to argue against this, and this will be my aim in the following, but here I merely wish to draw attention to his apparently having no hesitation to call it a FACT that all men are born free etc. If he had argued that this is not a fact, in other words that the description (if it is a description): "all men are born free and equal etc." is not a correct description, or perhaps that it is not a description at all, then the onus would be on an objector to argue convincingly that it is a description and furthermore a correct one. But when it here is a question of whether or not something is a fact, it is not whether it is or is not so in a technical sense of the term 'fact' but simply whether it is or is not a fact plain and simple.

Whereas in the instance just discussed the denial that the statement is a proper statement or that it correctly states a fact can be buttressed by strong arguments, I am in considerable doubt as to whether the fact that 'there is evil in the world' can be similarly attacked. I would want to argue that 'there is evil in the world' is a statement and that it correctly states a fact, but am not at all sure that I can do so satisfactorily. Let me try! If 'there is evil in the world' states a fact, then it must be possible to make statements of fact that such and such an action or state of affairs is evil. The emotivist holds that whenever we say 'this (whatever it may be) is evil', we are not making a statement at all but merely

express something like 'I do not like this (whatever it may be), - please do not you like it either!' But if that is so, then 'there is evil in the world' cannot be a statement either. However, what it then would be, the emotivist does not seem able to explain at all. If he were to say that it means simply something like 'I do not like evil, - please everyone else, do not you like it either!', then this makes sense only if something IS evil, that is, IS evil as a matter of fact, and this the emotivist denies. He is driven - I believe - to hold that 'there is evil in the world' has no meaning or sense, and this I find extremely unconvincing. I would want to reply: 'Of course there is evil in the world, and furthermore you know it!'.

Here is another attack! - The statement 'this (whatever it may be) is evil' is not a statement of fact, but rather a value judgement. Well and good; let it always be a value judgement by somebody about a certain action or state of affairs. Then 'there is evil in the world' is also a value judgement, but about what? Would it be convincing to claim that 'there is evil in the world' simply is short for 'people judge all kinds of actions or states of affairs to be evil'? Surely 'there is evil in the world' is a much stronger claim than this!, in fact it claims to state a FACT, and I cannot for the life of me see how it can be denied to be a statement of fact. If it is a statement of fact then something follows from it, but this - of course - is the argument which I shall now have to attempt to make convincing. In order to do so I wish to start with the (possibly) more straightforward facts mentioned earlier.

Until some thirty-odd years ago it was an established practice in the Chinese business community that at Chinese New Year in each year debts were settled. (I do not know whether this still is the custom in Chinese business communities wherever they may be. As a matter of fact this was even then not a hard and fast rule buttressed by legal sanctions, and so many exceptions occurred that it could probably be asserted at some time that the rule was no longer being followed, or that it was an unreliable guide, or that a particular system was being replaced by another one, or that the Good Old Days were over). But let us assume - and this is probably correct - that for a substantial period of time this practice was followed and the rule furnished a reliable guide. During that period of time from the proposition that 'Chinese New Year is debt-settlement time' I - as a trader in China - could validly derive numerous proposals, such as: 'let us not deliver these goods to Chang Yen until after Chinese New Year'. Why not? - Because he is heavily in debt and may not be able to weather Chinese New Year. It is easy to imagine a great number of proposals for action to be taken or not to be taken because 'Chinese New Year is debt-settlement time'. This appears to me to be a clear and unobjectionable example showing that from some statements of fact I can validly derive some decisions or demands. To use Hume's terminology:

From the propositions:-

- (1) Chinese New Year IS debt-settlement time;
- (2) Chang Yen IS heavily in debt;
- (3) It IS now two weeks before Chinese New Year;

I can derive the new relation or affirmation:-

- (4) We OUGHT NOT now deliver these goods to Chang Yen.

Admittedly the list of propositions may be incomplete but if so, then more IS-

statements are required. I claim that a missing premiss is not likely to be: 'Whenever there is danger of losing money, we ought not . . .' because very often we do just this in spite of the danger of losing money, because of other reasons. A correct premiss with an OUGHT might well be: 'Whenever there is danger of losing money, we ought to be careful', but the decision to deliver or not to deliver the goods is only made after we have been careful, and the demand for care is a demand to take all facts into account when deliberating, it is not a demand for a particular action. If the OUGHT premiss is quite general then it is only trivially pertinent to a decision, e.g. 'we ought to maximize our profits'. This is not to claim that triviality ipso facto rules out a premiss as irrelevant, and perhaps it would have been more correct to call this premiss otiose since it does not tell me anything which the statement of fact that 'we are engaged in the enterprise of business' does not tell me. I hope to clarify and substantiate this claim in the course of my argument.

In any event, if an OUGHT-containing premiss were to state all of the general conditions which together with certain initial conditions would yield by strictly logical inference the specific action demanded, then it is probably quite impossible to devise such an OUGHT premiss. In trying to formulate such a sufficient premiss I would in fact do exactly what I am doing when trying to arrive at a sound business decision from the facts given me. What I am doing is using my knowledge of a certain business climate including rules observed therein, my knowledge of the character or habits of a certain customer; I assess the risks of a certain transaction to him and to me, I might venture upon a measure of prediction concerning his likely actions under certain circumstances, I consider possible consequences, and then make a decision. The one thing I do not do is to examine

an OUGHT premiss, subsume all the facts under it and then deduce a decision. But I most certainly derive my decision from numerous facts, and when it turns out that I made the wrong decision, it will be so because some fact or facts were overlooked or not taken into account, either through lack of care or lack of possibility to know them. I can ex post facto explain what went wrong by pointing out these facts; I can ex post facto justify my decision by pointing out that I could not have known these facts. I cannot either explain or justify my decision with the help of logical rules of deduction.

The claim that a schema such as I have considered is an enthymeme seems to me to break down if it is not possible to cite the OUGHT premiss which it is presumed to be missing, or if this can only be produced after the decision has been made. It may now be claimed that I have after all shown that decisions are autonomous and must be independent (to use Popper's term) of facts because I cannot show that a particular decision *MUST* follow from the facts. Be it noted that the demand that a decision must logically follow may possibly be a mistaken demand. If a decision must follow from anything, it is no longer a decision, one might say. What plausible account can I give, then, of the relation between facts and decisions? I have already pointed out that, given more or different facts my decision might have been different. This could not be the case if decisions were independent of facts, but is not very helpful because a wrong decision would also result if under a general OUGHT premiss some factual IS premisses stating specific initial conditions were missing or were mistaken. But given correct and complete IS premisses, do I still require an OUGHT premiss? The dualist contends that I do, but he seems not to be able to make this contention convincing as I have tried to show. Well, he might say

that this must be so in principle, even though it can possibly not ever be actually done. But then this would begin to look to me like a case of *petitio principii*. He assumes what he is trying to prove, because - as I have contended - I can always construct a sufficient OUGHT premiss after I have made my decision, but I am in grave doubt that this can be done beforehand. On the other hand, underlying all of my business decisions there is something like the general purpose of doing business at all, some concept of the nature of the enterprise which embodies broad guidelines to action (e.g. 'we ought to maximize our profits'), and obviously this affects my decisions which are made so-to-speak in a specific climate. It seems to me to be the case that the nature of the enterprise is exhibited in the way in which the FACTS are stated. 'Chang Yen is heavily in debt' is a statement of a business fact, if you like, and so is 'Chinese New Year is debt-settlement time', and the viewpoint exhibited in these and numerous other business facts limits the range of possible decisions and accounts for reasonable or warranted decisions in certain circumstances. I should like to draw an interim conclusion to the effect that I can derive decisions from facts because in stating the facts and selecting the facts I have applied a viewpoint which not only conditions the possible range of decisions but also provides a guide towards warranted decisions.

About thirty years ago I was the Branch Manager in Canton of a HongKong trading concern. It was my first position of independent responsibility and being quite young, I was very anxious to make a go of it. Very shortly after assuming this position, the principal Chinese member of our staff who carried a post with considerable financial responsibility became involved in a complex situation with the result that there was some question as to whether company funds had or had not been misused. This was

extremely embarrassing to me, particularly since I considered myself to be so-to-speak on trial as a manager, and I was quite unsuccessful in my attempts to get the Chinese gentleman concerned to give an accounting of the funds in question. His name was not Chang, and he did not come from Fatshan, but the name Chang and the home-city Fatshan will do to illustrate my point. After some searching I came to know of a gentleman of considerable reputation who lived with his family in one of the suburbs of Canton and who was a Chang from Fatshan; in other words there were the two facts of his coming from the same city as my Chang and his being somehow related to him. I approached this gentleman, probably through some introduction of which I no longer recall the details, and I also can no longer remember just exactly how our conversation went, but I am sure that the essentials are included in the following abbreviated dialogue:-

V.E.F. : Permit me to introduce myself; my name is V.E.F., I am the
Canton manager of B & Co. and Mr. Chang is our Compradore.
There seems to be some trouble about some collection of funds
(and here followed an account of what happened).

Chang : This is most unfortunate, and I presume that there is some good
reason why you are telling me all this.

V.E.F. : Yes; you see, he is a Chang from Fatshan!

Chang : Oh; I see!

and to make a long story short, suitable arrangements ensued, face was saved all round and my position was secured. The point of the story is that the statement of fact that 'he is a Chang from Fatshan' was deemed sufficient to carry in its wake a number of actions.

I made the statement of the fact that 'he is a Chang from Fatshan' in the full expectation that this fact would establish an obligation for the man I approached, and he acknowledged his position of involvement forthwith. Note that he may not have known my Chang too well and that the kinship may have been quite distant; I do not recall these details, but I do know that I considered no other fact relevant than the one that both gentlemen were Changs from Fatshan. I have related an incident which I experienced, but in order to get the issue clearer, I now wish to state that in many cases it would have been sufficient to say: 'he is from your village!', and that this fact alone would have established an obligation-pregnant situation. Now if someone came to me, relating circumstances in which a fellow-villager of mine (assuming I had been born in a village) was culpably involved and then capped his story with the statement 'but he is a fellow-villager of yours!', I might consider this intelligence with interest, possibly even with sorrow and compassion such that I might be inclined to make some ex gratia contribution, but I would not consider myself to be under any particular obligation. If then the statement of fact that 'he is from your village' is a statement of the same fact (*mutatis mutandis*) whether made by me to Mr. Chang or by someone to me, then indeed there is another premiss (or other premisses) required such that in the one case an obligation-pregnant situation obtains but not in the other. I agree that for ME to expect that pointing out the fact to Mr. Chang that 'he is from your village' would have certain consequences, it was necessary that I should know more, such as Chinese customs, habits, moral convictions or the like, and call these additional premisses if you like. But for HIS recognizing the obligation-pregnant situation, no further premisses were required, nor for that matter would they be for another Chinese.

Now is this so, because in Mr. Chang's case or that of other Chinese such other premisses must be considered to be tacitly presupposed?, so that they could not possibly consider the stated fact as grounds for some particular action without assuming it under a maxim, rule or principle as a major premiss, whether actually stated or not? Admittedly such a schema would explain the conclusion, but it is not the simplest explanation and I do not see why it should be considered to be the only acceptable one. If one were to apply the principle of Occam's Razor, it would certainly be simpler to say that the fact: 'he is from your village' is a different fact for Mr. Chang or his Chinese fellow-men than it is for me, that amongst other differences which there may be, it includes for him or them an obligation-pregnant situation, but not for me. And this is indeed my opinion.

If Mr. Chang were to come to me with a problem similar to the one which I brought to him, if he were to cap it with the statement of fact 'but he is from your village' and if I knew what this fact meant for him, but he did not know that we look upon the matter differently, what would I then tell him? It would certainly be an explanation of my refusal to do anything about the matter simply to point out that we do not hold that one ought to assume obligations for a fellow-villager. If, however, I wanted to make clear to him that I recognized the discussion as being a MORAL one, I would have to do more, and I do not think that it would necessarily constitute a sufficient explanation to cite customs, rules or convictions, since he might well question them as to being MORAL. But if on the other hand I took the time to give him a number of facts about our way of life, that is if I gave him a sufficient number of true propositions about us, without using any sentence including an OUGHT, I could - I firmly believe - get him to see our VIEWPOINT, and if he

came to acknowledge it as a MORAL viewpoint I would have given him a full explanation. If, however, I am able to render a full explanation for an action or the refusal to undertake an action, by doing nothing else but making statements of fact, then it seems to me that from statements of fact there ARE derivable decisions or demands.

I want to support this claim by now considering the statement of fact that John is Bill's father or put otherwise, that John and Bill are father and son. If in the following, parts of my argument are similar to those advanced by Mr. A.I. Melden, then this is because I have held views similar to his for some time and have been impressed by his exposition. (14)

VI

Mr. Melden coined a felicitous expression when he wrote of actions which are obligation-meeting. This permits him to show that a number of actions may be obligation-meeting without any particular one of them being obligatory. At the risk of making an artificial distinction between duties and obligations, which are frequently used as interchangeable terms, I propose to use the term 'duties' for the whole body of possible actions which in Mr. Melden's terminology would be obligation-meeting. I would then wish to say that DUTIES are complementary to RIGHTS, and that RIGHTS and DUTIES are inherent in certain positions, situations or states of affair. If then a CLAIM is made that a particular action be performed, it is made pursuant to a RIGHT, and if someone is OBLIGED to perform the action it is because he has a DUTY to do so. One result of such a distinction is that in principle I can have rights without ever making a specific claim thereunder and that in principle I can have duties without any particular action pursuant thereto being obligatory.

Nothing more hinges on my use of 'rights' and 'duties' than to make plausible that RIGHTS and DUTIES are inherent in societal arrangements and that they are implicit in certain statements of fact. In order to develop and support this thesis I want to consider the statement that 'John and Bill are father and son' which I claim to be such a statement. John has certain rights vis-à-vis Bill because he is his father, and Bill has certain duties to John because he is his son, and on the same grounds Bill has duties and John has rights. I believe that these are full and complete explanations, and because they are, a claim under such rights for certain action and the corresponding obligation to perform it needs no connection via a general moral premiss. On this point Mr. Melden writes:-

"Surely such a premise is otiose; it remains unstated not because as in an enthymeme it is obvious enough, but because the connection has already been established by understanding that his parents would be distressed. To say that one's father would be distressed is not to say that one's immediate male ancestor (or the individual who provided the necessary means of fertilizing the ovum from which he developed) would be distressed; although unless some such account were true of the person referred to, he would not be described properly as his father. To be one's parent, whether mother or father, is to be a good deal more than one's immediate forbear (indeed, any item of biology pertaining to embryological development is not part of the meaning of 'parent'), and if by 'parent' one meant simply what is meant by 'immediate forbear', then so far there is no connection between the wishes of one's parent and what one is morally required to do. Indeed, so understood, there must remain an unbridgeable gap between these descriptions." (15)

Supposing we found somewhere a group of people having the custom that babies were named upon birth, that a record were kept showing which man had fathered which offspring, but that the babies were immediately removed and subsequently brought up communally and there were no family life whatever. Would it be possible in that community to say 'John and Bill are father and son', presuming of course that the birth records showed that John had fathered Bill? In what context could such a

statement be possibly made? - I cannot think of any, although I can think of occasions when Bill might say 'John was my father', that is when he was called upon to indicate his lineage (in a strict biological sense). I find it much more difficult to think of Bill's saying 'John IS my father'. Now it is significant that it seems to be very difficult - if indeed possible - to think of contexts or occasions in which certain statements of fact can be made in certain systems of societal life. At the very least we can say that 'father and son' does not mean for them what it means for us. And this is merely again a reminder about the difficulty inherent in what 'matters of fact' might be.

"Moral philosophy has no monopoly on the misconception concerning the use of the term 'matter of fact', namely, the supposition that there is some absolute or intrinsic matter-of-factness about some matters and that the descriptions given of these pure matters of fact enjoy this same privileged status as proper descriptions. Further, the matter of genealogical fact cannot be the unblemished or pure matter of fact we are looking for, since the lineal relations represent complex matters of social fact Should we not go one step further and speak about the matters of purely embryological fact in order to obtain the required purity of fact? But if we do this, we shall gain a matter of fact only at the expense of changing the subject, for we shall no longer be discussing fathers and sons, nor rights and obligations And while this embryological account applies no doubt to persons we call fathers. . . this is not the matter of fact with which we, as distinct from embryologists, are concerned when we describe a person as a father." (16)

I have already argued that no matter of fact can be stated without a viewpoint underlying the description given, and what is a matter of fact in one context may not only be not so in another but may well be entirely unstatable in such other context. I claim that when we say 'John and Bill are father and son' we are stating a matter of fact in a context and presupposing a viewpoint, in which being father and son does not only mean a biological relationship but also includes a relationship of rights and duties, and that from this there can be derived claims and

obligations, or decisions and demands.

In his paper 'How to derive 'ought' from 'is', John R. Searle draws attention to DIFFERENT TYPES of 'descriptive statements'. (17) He gives examples of these two types:-

First type: my car goes eighty miles an hour;

Jones is six feet tall;

Smith has brown hair.

Second type: Jones got married;

Smith made a promise;

Jackson has five dollars;

Brown hit a home run.

He points out that both types are statements of objective facts, but that statements of the second type "state facts whose existence presupposes certain institutions: a man has five dollars, given the institution of money. Take away the institution and all he has is a rectangular bit of paper with green ink on it. . . . Similarly, a man gets married or makes a promise only within the institutions of marriage and promising." (18)

A similar point is made by Maurice Mandelbaum when he aims to show "that one cannot understand the actions of human beings as members of a society unless one assumes that there is a group of facts which I shall term 'societal facts' which are as ultimate as are those facts which are 'psychological' in character. In speaking of 'societal facts' I refer to any facts concerning the forms of organization present in a society." And again: "In all cases of this sort, the actual behaviour of specific individuals towards one another is unintelligible unless one views their behaviour in terms of their status and roles, and the concepts of status and role are

devoid of meaning unless one interprets them in terms of the organization of the society to which the individuals belong." (19) Note that he refers to these 'societal facts' as being as ultimate as 'psychological facts', and I daresay he would have no objection to consider them to be as ultimate as 'physical facts'. (His use of the term 'ultimate fact' is unfortunate in that the concept of 'ultimacy' introduces unnecessary complications. If we replace 'ultimate' by 'objective' and speak of 'objective facts' instead, such complications are avoided. I have already dealt with the concept of 'objectivity' in the relevant sense which is the same sense in which Mr. Searle speaks of his two types of statements as being statements of objective facts.) Note also that he draws attention to status and roles and compare this with my claim that rights and duties are inherent in certain positions, situations or states of affair, and that they are implicit in certain statements of fact. I would want to say that the statement 'John and Bill are father and son' is an 'institutional fact' (in Mr. Searle's terminology) or a 'societal fact' (in Mr. Mandelbaum's terminology), and that it is a statement of objective fact.

Now I find it extremely interesting to see Mr. Popper, the professed and confirmed dualist, argue for the priority of man as a social being such that he considers it to be not only an historical but also a methodological myth to cling to a theory of a pre-social human nature explaining the foundations of society. He deems this to be hardly worthy of discussion because "we have every reason to believe that man or rather his ancestor was social prior to being human (considering, for example, that language presupposes society). But this implies that social institutions . . . must have existed prior to what some people are pleased to call 'human nature' . . ." (20) I am not concerned at the moment with a consideration of this line of argument, except

to point out that Popper himself draws the conclusion from his view thus:- "One of the consequences of this is that the moral values of a society - the demands and proposals recognized by all, or by very nearly all, of its members - are closely bound up with its institutions and traditions, and that they cannot survive the destruction of the institutions or traditions of a society." (21) It seems to me that with this line of argument, Mr. Popper breaches his own wall of separation between 'propositions' and 'proposals'. I see but a short step in explanatory power from 'closely bound up with institutions and traditions' (disregarding the extreme vagueness of the notion of something's being 'closely bound up' with something else) to 'derivable from statements of institutional or societal facts'. And if I am correct in this, then the dualist's position becomes somewhat shaky. I have already argued against the position that some statements of fact deserve a privileged status. I still have to examine more closely the argument that granted the objective status of statements of fact, no evaluative statements can be derived therefrom, although my line of reasoning so far probably implies reasonably clearly my view on the matter. I would first like to summarize my conclusions from my arguments up to this point.

There are no 'pure facts' in the sense that there is something definite and unquestionable out there in the world of which a description is a READING OFF. No fact can be stated without applying a viewpoint to whatever may be GIVEN. What counts for a statement of fact also counts for a correct description of some event, situation or state of affairs, and what counts for such a correct description presupposes a shared viewpoint; therefore a statement of fact presupposes some form of community amongst men. There is no warrant for considering certain statements of fact as being privileged in respect of objectivity and explanatory power merely

because such statements are about physical or psychological events deemed to lie PASSIVELY before the observer. The notion of viewpoint implies some form of judgement or preference in the adoption of an intellectual representation and the selection of data. From a sufficient number of statements of fact there is derivable the viewpoint which underlies these propositions and therefore the judgement implied in it. A great many statements of fact about the behaviour of human beings and about the relations in which they stand to each other presuppose positions in some form of organized community amongst men without which such statements of fact cannot be made. They are nevertheless statements of objective facts. The viewpoint underlying such statements of fact about human beings implies the notions of status and role and therefore of rights and duties from which claims and obligations arise. From a sufficient number of such statements of fact it is possible to derive the viewpoint which underlies these propositions and therefore the judgement as to status and role and thus rights and duties which in turn furnish the rationale for demanding certain types of action. In this manner I claim that it is possible to derive OUGHT from IS, to derive PROPOSALS from PROPOSITIONS, to derive DECISIONS and DEMANDS from FACTS and to derive EVALUATIVE STATEMENTS from FACTUAL STATEMENTS. This is not because we argue logically from moral premisses via factual initial conditions to moral demands, but rather because a moral viewpoint is built into the statements of certain facts about human beings and that such statements of fact cannot otherwise be made. This is not in principle different from a view of the physical world being built into the statements of fact about the physical universe around us.

VII

I now wish to deal with the objection that whereas all I have argued about facts may be accepted, nevertheless a moral demand can never be derived from facts without an intervening or a superimposed specifically MORAL premiss. It is my opinion that this view hides an inconsistency, in other words I deny that my argument about the nature of facts can be accepted and the derivation of demands or decisions from them denied, without being inconsistent. Mr. Popper writes that ". . . to put this matter more precisely, if we consider a fact as alterable - such as the fact that many people are suffering from diseases - then we can always adopt a number of different attitudes towards this fact: more especially, we can decide to make an attempt to alter it; or we can decide to resist any such attempt or we can decide not to take any action at all." (22)

I agree that we can make these three types of decisions and that there may be cogent reasons for any one of them in given circumstances. There may be many and weighty reasons why we would resist an attempt to do something about specific diseases or about some diseases in specific circumstances, but what would the reasons be which would support an attempt to resist doing something about any and all diseases? The only case I can think of would be the belief held by certain groups of people that diseases are visited upon us by a supernatural being whose command it may be that they are to be accepted without any attempt towards changing the state of affairs. This may then be a specific attitude adopted towards diseases from which a decision to do nothing about them can only follow because the premiss is implied: 'God has so commanded'. It is my point that the specific premiss is required precisely because without it, not only could the

conclusion not be drawn but precisely the opposite one WOULD be drawn. This is so, I maintain, because our common attitude towards diseases is not something which we have so-to-speak whilst standing apart from the phenomenon of disease; it is rather already implied in our calling anything a disease and a fortiori when we say (as Mr. Popper also does) that people SUFFER from diseases. If the belief which I have just described were universally held, then the word disease would have a different meaning from the one it now has, if it were used at all. The reason for the group's being able to propound its specific belief is that a sufficient number of other people are using the term 'disease' with the meaning it has and this includes our ordinary attitude towards it from which in turn it follows that something should be done about it. It is when someone urges that nothing should be done about it that we want to know 'why?'

I propose to develop my argument more clearly by using the statement of fact that 'John and Bill are father and son'. I then claim that John has a duty to feed, house, clothe and educate Bill and has a right to demand from Bill certain behaviour, that conversely Bill has a right to being fed, housed, clothed and educated and a duty to act in certain ways; that on certain occasions specific claims can be made pursuant to these rights and that specific actions become obligatory pursuant to these duties. Furthermore I claim that all of this is implied in stating that 'John and Bill are father and son' and that therefore I can derive the requisite demands or decisions from this FACT. The dualist objector as a rule has little to say about rights and duties in this context and his objection may be rendered thus:- From the statement of fact that 'John and Bill are father and son' no such decisions or demands can be derived without major premisses stating that

fathers ought to act in a certain manner vis-à-vis their sons and sons ought to act in a certain manner vis-à-vis their fathers. Be it noted in passing that whereas it is relatively easy to formulate a major premiss for the father, such as 'fathers ought to feed, house, clothe and educate sons', it is much more difficult to do this for the son. Sons ought to do 'what?', obey their fathers? (this requires quite a bit of a qualification), behave dutifully towards their fathers? (this may be begging the question), be good sons? (exactly!). Be that as it may, let us analyze the dualist's position.

I am taking my dualist friend for a walk in the middle of the winter and we encounter the five-year old son, Bill, of a mutual acquaintance of ours, John, walking in the street, inadequately dressed and obviously distressed by the cold. We have seen this happen many times before and we know that John is not in financial trouble, in fact we know that he can afford to dress Bill so as to protect him adequately from the winter's cold. The following dialogue ensues:-

I : What a father that fellow John is, letting his son walk around in the winter like this!

D: It looks as though John has no feelings at all.

I : What has that got to do with; surely he ought to clothe Bill adequately whatever he may or may not feel.

D: Oh, - why?

I : Because he is the father, isn't he?

D: Look, - I feel sorry for the child too, but just because John is Bill's father does not entail that he has to clothe him adequately. You must be of the opinion that fathers ought always to clothe their young sons adequately.

I : Of course! , that is in part what being a father means, isn't it?

D: I disagree. From the fact that John is Bill's father, you cannot possibly derive anything about what John should or should not do for Bill.

I : What do you mean then, when you speak of fathers and sons?

D: These words simply denote a biological fact, namely that John was - let me say - co-instrumental in bringing Bill into the world.

I : Well, all right, let us accept that for the moment; but who should then look after young children?

Here my dualist friend may give a number of different answers of which I wish to consider the following:-

D (1): I was really only drawing a logical error to your attention; I happen to hold that fathers ought to look after their young children. All I wanted to make clear to you was, that unless one did hold this, one could not say of fathers that they ought to do anything for their sons.

D (2): The Government should look after them.

D (3): No one OUGHT to look after them,

Apart from the fact that answer D(3) is incomplete, let me concede that it is unfair to put D(2) and D(3) into my friend's mouth. Fortunately he is at my mercy, and I wish to bring out some points which may shed some sidelight unto the problem.

D(1) makes a logical point about language, in fact it states the dualistic position as a demand for logical entailment. Now if it is deemed necessary that the conclusion 'John ought to look after Bill' be established as logically deducible from

suitable premisses, and if 'John and Bill are father and son' means nothing beyond John's having been co-instrumental in bringing Bill into the world, then indeed it is necessary to add a premiss, e.g. 'fathers ought to look after their sons'. I have argued that 'John and Bill are father and son' simply is not merely a statement of biological or genealogical fact. I would point out to my dualist friend that in his use of the terms he could not convey that any kind of relation obtained between fathers and sons beyond a strictly genealogically linear one, without adding further descriptions and that, if he added a sufficient number of descriptions fully to account for the intricate relationship obtaining between fathers and sons, I could derive from this set of descriptions such concepts as status and role, interdependence, and rights and duties, and this without his giving me any sentence containing an OUGHT. If he then argued that from rights and duties there is still an unbridgeable gap to a demand for actions of a certain kind, then I would wonder what possible sense one could make of the concepts of rights and duties unless they included the notion that under the appropriate circumstances (and by this I do NOT mean the uttering of OUGHT-containing sentences) they gave rise to and support obligatory action.

I might ask my friend whether 'father and son' and 'sire and colt' have in every way the same meaning excepting only that we use the one set of words for human beings and the other for horses. If he were to reply in the affirmative, what are we to make of the perfectly intelligible sentence 'he is like a father to him' (where he is not his father), and what would we say to the unintelligible sentence 'he is like a sire to him' (where he is not the sire who co-produced the colt)?

Admittedly this argument may not be accepted by my friend as conclusive, and he could still claim that I had not shown a logical entailment from IS-containing

to OUGHT-containing sentences. I defer a consideration of this objection until after having dealt with answers D(2) and D(3).

D(2) does not touch upon the core of our problem at all since the answer simply recommends a new set of relationships. I am dealing with it because I think that it has at least one interesting implication. Relationships, statuses and roles do change and may at times be changed deliberately. Since this is undoubtedly so and since such deliberate changes are probably at least sometimes initiated by someone's (the moral reformer's!) recommending them by the use of OUGHT-containing sentences, the conclusion may be plausible that OUGHT-containing sentences are logically prior in ALL cases of rights-duties relationships.

Now a genetic explanation of at least some codes or rules of behaviour which would insist upon positing as necessary a codifier or rule maker prior in time to such codes or rules, would appear to me to be quite unpalatable and unconvincing. I would hold this to be quite an unwarranted importation from the present into the past, similar possibly to Hobbes' account of 'man in nature'. The claim that it IS necessary to do so strikes me simply as a pre-judgement of the issue at stake. I can imagine easily genetic accounts of equal if not superior explanatory power. This, of course, does not render invalid a LOGICAL priority, but I cannot escape the very strong inclination to hold that the insistence upon such logical priority is in the nature of a *petitio principii*. Why - I ask myself - do we have to insist on a scheme which permits us to draw a neat logical conclusion by a process of logical inference, and why do we insist that, unless we arrive in this manner at OUGHT-sentences, we simply cannot arrive at them? The admittedly speculative hypothesis appeals to me that if we cannot arrive at OUGHT-sentences *ex post facto* so-to-speak, we must

probably could hardly conceive of the possibility of their being posited before the fact. Since the dualist holds to his position on logical grounds, I merely have to point out to him that in the use of language there is presupposed at least some rudimentary form of community of men, and that this means that there must be some form of interrelationship, and if it makes any sense to say so, then this is logically prior to language. At what stage then does there an OUGHT-sentence come to be pronounced? It seems to me plausible that, before this can be done there must already be in use some IS-sentences stating facts about relationships between men, and the very concept of such relationships embodies status or position.

D(3) has been put down in incomplete form because it can be completed in a variety of ways. Depending upon how it is completed it states one of the possible positions taken by the OUTSIDER with respect to moral decisions or demands. The various avenues of escape open to the outsider have been explored and carefully analyzed by Mr. R. M. Hare in his book FREEDOM AND REASON, (23) and I wish to confine my remarks to the position which he formulates in the following manner:

"He either refrains altogether from making moral judgements, or makes none except judgements of indifference (that is to say, he either observes a complete moral silence, or says 'Nothing matters morally'; either of these two positions might be called a sort of amoralism). (24)

Mr. Hare continues that obviously there is no possibility for a moral argument against this position and that this should not disturb us because, as we cannot win a game of chess against an opponent who will not play chess so moral argument is impossible with a man who will make no moral judgements at all. This is quite so, but I should like to consider briefly what is involved in holding this particular outsider position of which I shall mention three cases.

In the first case the outsider understands moral language and knows when

and how others use it and wishes to remain in the community of men in which he finds himself but firmly holds the opinion that 'nothing matters morally'. He may be able to PASS in the community in the sense that it is said of a Negro with light skin colour that he PASSES as a White. But in order so to PASS, the outsider's behaviour must be similar to others within reasonable limits. In other words he must APPEAR to be using moral language more or less as others do. Now if he does so, mind you strictly for prudential reasons, I do not find the case particularly interesting, although it may be so for a psychologist. He may be leading what one may call a different inner life, but his case does not bear upon our problem of deriving moral decisions or demands from statements of fact.

In the second case the outsider also understands moral language and decides rigorously and consistently to refrain from making moral judgements. He realizes and accepts that he is compelled to abjure the protection of morality for his own interests, to use Mr. Hare's words. If it is plausible, as I think it is, that at some stage and in some circumstances - provided he wishes to remain in the community of men in which he lives - he must find himself in a position of making demands of others without the possibility of morally justifying such demands, he would be reduced either to employ power which he may be in no position to do, or to limit his demands to those to which it would always be in the self-interest of others to accede. Apart from employing power, he could not in the strict meaning of the word DEMAND at all, he could only BEG. Now I am assuming this man to be completely consistent so that he practises his rule of making no moral judgements in every situation, and by every situation I mean "every situation in which a moral question arises for him, whether about his own actions or about somebody else's" (25) Without going into the argument in detail, it appears to me that this

man would have to observe silence on a great many occasions; I doubt that he could remain in the community of men in any significant sense and I believe that he would be reduced to the life of a hermit. In fact, I am inclined to say that this man is not dissimilar to the man who holds some moral IDEAL by which he governs his life rigorously and with no exception for himself even in situations where in conforming action to his ideal he brings suffering upon himself. This man would be leading a different life from ours, and his case does not bear upon our problem, because the fact that he REFUSES to derive demands or decisions from certain statements of fact does not show that these CANNOT be derived.

In the third case the outsider does not understand moral language. If we assume a man living among us who uses the same words and sentences as we do but for whom no sentence has moral import, then I believe it to be clearly the case that he would be speaking at least in part a language different from ours. Furthermore I would say that it would be entirely impossible to translate from our language to his in the area of moral discourse. It may well be true that we could teach him logical inference, so that given 'fathers ought to do such and such for their sons' and 'John and Bill are father and son' he could deduce 'John ought to do such and such for Bill', but if there were no way in which we could get him to understand a moral viewpoint, we also could not teach him the full meaning of the sentence 'John and Bill are father and son'. I would therefore conclude that the statement 'John and Bill are father and son' could then not possibly assert the same fact for him as it does for us, and were he to say that from no such statement of fact a demand or decision can be derived, he would be quite correct but this only because he would not be stating the same fact. I do not propose to speculate about

what this man's life in a community of men such as ours would be like even if it were conceivable that he could remain in the community in any intelligible sense, but I do hold that this case bears upon my argument and sheds further light on a class of statements of fact having to do with the interrelationship between men in community.

What is significant about this class of statements of fact is that a moral viewpoint is built into them and that without a moral viewpoint underlying them, these statements can simply not be made such as to state the facts which they do state. It is my contention that with respect to a considerable range of statements of fact, it is possible to derive demands and decisions from them because upon analysis these statements disclose - whatever other viewpoints may underlie them, - a moral viewpoint, and that without this the stated facts would be different. If now my dualist friend, having forgiven me for having placed into his mouth responses which qua dualist he did not have to make, were still to insist that I have not shown a connection of logical entailment from IS-containing sentences to OUGHT-containing sentences, what more does he want and can I satisfy him?

VIII

His claim would then seem to me to rest in the demand that the conclusion be reached logically by taking into account only the FORM of sentences, as can be done for instance by constructing a syllogism. I would then assert that I can abstract an OUGHT-containing sentence from the statement of fact that 'John and Bill are father and son' because of the nature of the fact which the proposition states and which it has been my aim in this thesis to elucidate and make plausible. With this OUGHT-containing sentence I could then set out a syllogism which would satisfy

my friend's demand for FORMALITY. He might then deny me the right to make that abstraction and what this denial may amount to I shall try to elucidate in the sequel. In the meantime I should like to set down two quotations which bear upon the impasse with which we are here confronted:

"The concept GRAMMAR, supported by related concepts, is important in Wittgenstein's attack upon the claim of formal logic to be the sole arbiter of propriety in discourse and argument. The case against the view that logic, in this broad sense, must operate according to strict rules, with no vagueness or imprecision, is presented in a series of remarks in the INVESTIGATIONS (I. 65-103). In the place of the mathematical precision of formal logic Wittgenstein emphasizes 'grammar', which rests upon an agreement in the way people act, upon a form of life." (26)

"If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgements. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so. - It is one thing to describe methods of measurement, and another to obtain and state results of measurement. But what we call 'measuring' is partly determined by a certain constancy in results of measurement." (27)

I do not propose to deal with the difficulties posed by the juxtaposition of GRAMMAR in the Wittgensteinian sense and LOGIC, but it seems to me that both quotations accord with and support my account of viewpoints underlying statements of fact. It has been my contention that IS-sentences are not PURE in the sense of being judgement-free and that no statement of fact can be made nor the stating of facts rendered intelligible unless the notion of a viewpoint is presupposed. Whilst it may be perfectly true that not all viewpoints are consciously ADOPTED in the sense that a deliberate choice is exercised, this can be and is done. It is then not straining language to claim that some form of judgement is embodied in the notion of 'viewpoint'. If, for instance, the community of scientists in a particular field accepts statements of fact which presuppose a viewpoint either wider or in some other sense different from one which was previously underlying other statements of fact, then one

may quite clearly assert that some form of judgement has taken place. This, I am sure, defeats any claim - and I do not say that such a claim has ever been put forward - that statements of fact, ~~if they are~~ clear and unquestioned statements of fact, are free from judgement. If my dualist friend concedes this but claims that one has to distinguish between various types of judgements, e.g. descriptive and value judgements, then he makes a valid point, but if he goes on to claim that statements of fact embodying value judgements are spurious and should be denied what for the moment I shall somewhat vaguely call FACTUAL status, then he may have a point with some such statements but not with all of them. I deny for instance that he can make this point against the statement of fact that 'John and Bill are father and son'. This and a great number of other statements of fact seem to be clearly and unobjectionably statements of FACT and my argument has been that there is no warrant to deny them this status, and yet these statements of fact cannot be rendered intelligible without admitting that they imply value judgements.

I have not made the claim nor do I make it, that ALL statements of fact stating something about human beings are thus value-impregnated nor have I claimed or do I claim that the account of demands or decisions, moral or others, is exhausted by discussing their derivability from statements of fact. My thesis has been concerned with denying that NO demand or decision can be derived from ANY statement of fact. I am of the opinion that I have supported this denial through valid arguments, and if it is now claimed that I have not been able to show a logical entailment even in the cases of those statements of fact which I have put forward as supporting my thesis, then it may just be the case that I may have to do without LOGICAL validity for my derivation, but I insist then upon the validity of my

derivation nevertheless. I may not have satisfied the demands of FORMAL logical entailment, but if it is intelligible - as I think it would be - to use the concept of ENTAILMENT to include a process of valid reasoning in which nothing is contained in a conclusion which is not also contained in the premiss or premisses used in order to arrive at the conclusion, then I claim to have shown ENTAILMENT. Be it noted that I am using the term 'contained' here in quite a broad sense so that it includes more than just the actual presence of the word 'ought' in the premiss or premisses, specifically that it includes an implicit value judgement in a statement by virtue of the viewpoint underlying it. If this is too vague for the formal logician, in particular if the concept of being 'contained' is too vague, then I am quite prepared to agree with him to use the word 'entailment' only for the process of FORMALLY logical entailment and I would then suggest that what I have shown is a DERIVATION, an intelligible and valid one.

From the manner in which I have stated the dualist's position so far - and I believe many dualists do state it thus - it seems to me that the only warrant for his denial of a derivation of demands or decisions from statements of fact rests upon an insistence upon certain rules in the use of language. In a speculative and possibly metaphysical vein I should like to point out to him that it is MEN who use language!, and that it is they who, in a sense and at least in part - as I have tried to show - create the IS. Even if they create the OUGHT in toto, it seems to me that the creative part of the IS is not an activity totally and irreconcilably different from that of producing the OUGHT. After apologizing for this outburst I propose now to deal briefly with a more restricted manner in which a dualistic position could be set out, one of obvious merit.

IX

I have mentioned briefly the possibility to distinguish between various types of judgement embodied in statements, e.g. descriptive and value judgements. Since the term 'value' may be too broad in that there are other than MORAL values, I shall use 'prescriptive' instead. Clearly sentences containing a moral OUGHT are prescriptive. Mr. Hare has analyzed these terms very thoroughly and I shall restrict myself to a consideration of descriptive and prescriptive judgements underlying STATEMENTS and speak of descriptive and prescriptive contents in statements. There are statements of which it may be said that they have only descriptive content, and any scientific statement of physical fact may be taken as a paradigm case for expressing merely descriptive judgement. It may well be possible to make statements involving human beings which also may be held to express merely descriptive judgement and have therefore only descriptive content. I believe, however, that the number of statements of this kind with respect to human beings is far smaller than it may be thought to be, and that a number of words which often are used in such statements should strictly speaking not be used. My discussion of the word 'disease' may be a case in point. Nevertheless I am prepared to concede that there are statements of fact involving human beings which have substantially only descriptive content. It seems to me to be quite clear that from such statements no demands or decisions can be derived. If this were the dualist's claim I would readily concede it but would also point out to him that he is not left with as much as the dualistic position in the usually expressed form implies, in particular that he could not include a great number of statements of fact for which it would be extremely difficult to make intelligible the claim that

they were not statements of FACT.

Nevertheless there is great merit in analyzing statements with a view towards attempting to distinguish between their descriptive and prescriptive contents. If one were to analyze in this manner the statement that 'John and Bill are father and son', one could presumably proceed in a number of ways. For instance, one could abstract the embryological, genealogical or biological facts and would then be able to make statements which would have substantially only descriptive content. Whilst it is my opinion that Mr. Melden is quite correct in holding that we have then been able to make statements of merely descriptive content only by changing the subject, nevertheless it is important that we can make these statements, and there are probably many others which can so be made in respect of 'John and Bill are father and son'. Now all of such statements with merely descriptive content taken together will not, I venture to say, render the full sense of the statement that 'John and Bill are father and son', and it seems to me to be the case that the expression of the full sense of the interrelationship between fathers and sons simply cannot be achieved in statements with only descriptive content. On the other hand, however, the statement clearly has descriptive content (possibly a variety of descriptive contents), and I would say that a statement such as 'John and Bill are father and son' is one of a substantial class of statements, in which the prescriptive content is so closely wedded to the descriptive content, that on the one hand there is no intelligible sense to be made of any claim that the statement - even in its full sense - is NOT a statement of FACT, and on the other hand there is clearly a prescriptive content from which demands or decisions can be derived.

Let us employ the same method of analysis to the statement that 'all men are born free and equal and no man is born in chains' which is also cast in the descriptive form. I do not think that it would be very helpful to consider the bit about no man's being born in chains and I do not wish to engage in a discussion of the difficult and controversial subject of freedom. Therefore let the statement simply be that 'all men are . . . equal . . .'. Now if one were to try to abstract the descriptive content from this statement, how would one begin? To start with some unit of measurement is required in terms of which to elucidate how one man is to be equal with another. This, it appears to me, will defy any attempt as long as it is demanded that a purely descriptive judgement be employed. I do not claim that there is NO sense in which a descriptive judgement of equality may be intelligible and acceptable, but the kind of 'equality' which then results is substantially that of belonging to the same class of beings whose described characteristics must be such that they are general and broad and allow for substantial individual variation and thus inequality. I submit that 'all men are . . . equal . . .' cannot be given descriptive content in the manner that 'John and Bill are father and son' can be given descriptive content. It is true that the prescriptive content is placed in a descriptive form but the form is substantially empty of descriptive content. If then it is still stated to be a FACT that 'all men are . . . equal . . .', then this kind of 'fact' may have to be qualified and I readily concede the merit of the dualist's analysis to bring this out, as I admit that there are probably many similar statements cast in descriptive form which upon such an analysis turn out to be predominantly prescriptive. What I do not admit is that one can accept this type of statement as stating facts without qualification and then also claim that no demands or decisions

can be derived from them. If they are accepted as stating facts such as 'John and Bill are father and son' does, then in my view demands or decisions can be clearly derived from them, as I have tried to show in this thesis.

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SPECULATIVE POSTSCRIPT

Any consideration of man's actions and in particular any attempt at explanation must presuppose a concept of the nature of the human being. Amongst the criteria which have been suggested to distinguish man from the rest of the world, the outstanding one has been REASON. It may be unpalatable, particularly in view of evolutionary theories, that reason should have sprung ex nihilo in man, and I believe that natural scientists have advanced opinions to the effect that at least some form of reasoning is discernible in animals. If this is accepted and if REASON is to be salvaged as a distinctly human faculty, then it must be defined such as to preclude the application of the concept to animals. This, however, would be a purely a priori postulation which may well turn out to be untenable. LANGUAGE has also been proposed as the distinctive accomplishment of the human being. Now as far as language as COMMUNICATION is concerned, some doubt has been thrown upon this notion by the claim of some scientific investigators that animals probably also communicate with each other through the utterance of sounds.

I would like to propose that a particular use of language may well be distinctively and exclusively human, and the likeliest candidate appears to me to be the STATEMENT OF FACTS. To make assertions about the world including

the human being therein may well be a distinctively human accomplishment. I have argued that no assertions can be made without imposing an ordering concept upon the GIVEN, and there seems to be no evidence, so far at least, that any but the human being has engaged in this activity. Now it appears to me to be the case that in the imposition of an ordering concept upon the raw material available to us, we are clearly expressing a viewpoint, and it is my opinion that the central notion in this viewpoint is what is to count for THE SAME.

In a great many statements of fact concerning the human being (and I am even inclined to say, in ALL of them) there is presupposed a way of life of man in some form of community. I believe that any attempt to say something about man in complete abstraction from a community of men must fail and that it can be shown that in any such attempt some notion is implicit which can only derive from the fact that men live together in some form of society or other. I therefore agree with Kurt Baier when he says that ". . . outside society, the very distinction between right and wrong vanishes." (28) In my view the notion of having duties to oneself is derivative from having duties to others. As I have argued the notions of right and wrong are intimately connected with the notions of status and role in a community of men, in fact that they are derivable from them. To make statements of fact about man as part of a community presupposes an ordering concept which implies the application of what is to count for THE SAME or EQUALITY.

If there are overriding moral demands which are held to apply in any type of community or societal arrangement, and I have no doubt that most men do recognize such demands, then it seems to me to be required that one accept the fact that human beings are in some fundamental sense one equal with the other. In view of a

dualistic analysis such as I have outlined in the preceding section we may have to say that IN SPITE of it we accept such fundamental equality as a fact - and I do not mean a qualified fact - and we are therefore making a DECISION to do so.

If I have been able to show in this thesis that there are at least a number of statements of fact (and I think that the number is considerable) which fully deserve of unqualified status as stating facts although having in part prescriptive content, then it seems to me that I have been able to throw some doubt upon the claim that it is necessary (and I take it that it is to be a logical necessity) of positing two human natures lodged in us, the one describing and the other prescribing. The merit I see in the dualistic analysis which I have described, is to put us on guard in accepting statements of fact such that we distinguish clearly those cases in which we deliberately SUBSCRIBE to them.

NOTES

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- (2) *ibid.*, page 234.
- (3) *SYMPOSIUM OF TRUTH*, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume XXIV, 1950.
- (4) J. L. Austin, *PHILOSOPHICAL PAPERS* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), page 104.
- (5) *ibid.*
- (6) Moritz Schlick, *FACTS AND PROPOSITIONS*, reprinted in *PHILOSOPHY AND ANALYSIS*, edited by Margaret MacDonald (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954), page 232.
- (7) J. L. Austin, *op. cit.*, page 116.
- (8) Christopher Blake, *CAN HISTORY BE OBJECTIVE?*, reprinted in *THEORIES OF HISTORY*, edited by Patrick Gardiner (The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), page 339.
- (9) Ernst Cassirer, *SUBSTANCE AND FUNCTION and EINSTEIN'S THEORY OF RELATIVITY* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1953), page 429.
- (10) *ibid.*, pages 266-267.
- (11) Peter Winch, *THE IDEA OF A SOCIAL SCIENCE* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), page 87.
- (12) F. M. Dostoevsky, *NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND*, reprinted in *EXISTENTIALISM FROM DOSTOEVSKY TO SARTRE*, edited by Walter Kaufmann (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 'Meridian Books', 1963), page 72.
- (13) Karl R. Popper, *op. cit.*, Volume 1, Chapter 5, Section III, page 62.
- (14) A. I. Melden, *RIGHTS AND RIGHT CONDUCT* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1959).
- (15) *ibid.*, page 39.
- (16) *ibid.*, pages 72-74.

- (17) John R. Searle, HOW TO DERIVE "OUGHT" FROM "IS", printed in THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, Volume LXXIII, Number 1, January 1964), page 54.
- (18) *ibid.*, pages 54-55.
- (19) Maurice Mandelbaum, SOCIETAL FACTS, reprinted in THEORIES OF HISTORY, edited by Patrick Gardiner (The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), pages 478-479.
- (20) Karl R. Popper, *op. cit.*, Volume 2, Chapter 14, page 93.
- (21) *ibid.*, page 94.
- (22) Karl R. Popper, *op. cit.*, Volume 1, Chapter 5, Section III, page 62.
- (23) R. M. Hare, FREEDOM AND REASON (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), Part II, Chapter 6, pages 86-111.
- (24) *ibid.*, page 101.
- (25) *ibid.*
- (26) Newton Carver, WITTGENSTEIN AND CRITERIA, printed in KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE, Proceedings of the 1962 Oberlin Colloquium in Philosophy, edited by C. D. Rollins (University of Pittsburgh Press), page 56.
- (27) Ludwig Wittgenstein, PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS, translated by G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), Part I, paragraph 242, page 88.
- (28) Kurt Baier, THE MORAL POINT OF VIEW, (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1963), page 315.

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