

Edward Caird an Vaihinger, Oxford, 12.7.1900, 4 S., hs., Wasserzeichen: nach rechts gerichtetes Profil einer Frau in ovalem Rahmen, Beischrift Great Seal Parchment, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Bremen, Aut. XXI, 4 a, Nr. 5

Balliol College
July 12 1900

My dear Sir

I should have written before this to thank you for your paper on Paulsen's view of Kant¹ & for the kind expressions with which you accompany it. I have so much to do in other directions at present that I am not able to write about | the subject, as you kindly invite me.

As to my opinion of the controversy – I should better compare Kant to Socrates than to Plato. Socrates like Kant professes ignorance, & wishes to confine philosophy to “human things”; but, also like him, he applied a point of view^a which made possible a great effort of idealistic philosophy (in Plato and Aristotle) to comprehend the world.

It is easy as you show to | adduce many passages in which Kant (like Socrates) speaks of the limitations of knowledge. But

“Methinks the lady doth protest too much”²:

and Kant, especially in his Kritik^b of Judgment, is continually taking new liberties with these limitations, though always with a new assistance of them.

In any case the position of one who holds that mere *entia rationis* are yet “necessary presuppositions of human reason” is a position of instable equilibrium, | which his followers were certain to abandon, some of them in favour of one of these views & some in favour of the other.

I think then that Kant is one of the greatest of Metaphysicians – subject to the qualification that he constantly denied the possibility of Metaphysics.

. . . and^c with kindest regards Yours respectfully^d

Edward Caird

Anmerkungen

¹ your paper on Paulsen's view of Kant] vgl. *Vaihingers Rezension (in englischer Sprache): Immanuel Kant, Sein Leben und seine Lehre. Von Friedrich Paulsen. Mit Bildnis und einem Briefe Kants aus den Jahren 1792, Stuttgart, Fr. Frommann's Verlag, 1898 – pp. XII, 396. In: The Philosophical Review 8 (1899), Nr. 3 von Mai, S. 300–305.*

² “Methinks the lady doth protest too much”] *Ausspruch (Queen Gertrude) in Shakespeare: Hamlet, 3. Akt, 2. Szene.*

^a view] *danach gestrichen*: from which there necessarily

^b Kritik] *so wörtlich*

^c and] *davor ein Wort unleserlich*

^d Yours respectfully] *verschliffen geschrieben*