

22 Hyde Park Gate  
London S.W.

24.8.91

Dear Sir,

I venture to write to you in order  
to express the very great pleasure with  
which I have read your 'Geschichte  
der Ethik'. I am encouraged to  
do so by finding that my name  
is not unknown to you; and I  
have been gratified by ~~finding~~ the use  
which you have been able to make  
of my 'English Thought in the 18th  
Century'.

I have read throughout with  
admiration of the spirit in which  
your book is written & of the skill

in editing the 'Dictionary of National Biography'. I have  
been compelled to give up that work, which was becoming  
too much for my strength. I have, however, still strength  
enough to devote myself to a literary scheme, which  
I have for some time contemplated: viz. <sup>as in fact</sup> a history  
of English Utilitarianism, &c. Bentham, the Mill &c  
which will be to some extent a continuation of my  
work upon the 18th Century. I mean to include  
brief accounts of the other schools of (Oxford,  
Lisbon &c. : though I shall make the Utilitarians  
the main subject of the book, as, in my opinion,  
they have really been the most important  
influence in our national development. - I have  
already written an opening chapter or two upon  
Bentham. Your remarks upon him & upon  
Mill have already suggested some valuable hints.  
What I wish to ask is this: Could you refer  
me to any German <sup>criticisms</sup> criticisms of our English  
writers, which would be of use to me? ~~As~~ I  
know, of course, some of the most obvious <sup>authorities</sup> ~~names~~  
and I find various references in 'Mind'. But it

with wh. you have brought out the  
leading principles of the great writers  
upon ethics. It is gratifying to an  
Englishman to see that a German  
writer, with thorough knowledge of  
his national philosophy, can do  
complete justice to English thinkers.  
Wherever I have been able to  
judge of your work in the  
light of similar studies of my  
own, I have found it thoroughly  
satisfactory. - I am in very  
complete agreement with you; &  
hope to derive help from your  
work hereafter.

This, indeed, is one of my reasons  
for writing. Of late years, my  
energies have been almost absorbed



Thanks me that with your complete knowledge, you might be able to give me some hints, as to the really instructive writers. I beg that you will not take any great trouble in the matter; but if any suggestions occur to you, they would enable me to make my account more complete; and I should be very grateful.

I will add one or two trifling <sup>superfluous</sup> remarks which occurred to me in reading your book.

1. You say (I. 408) that in your opinion I have set too high a value upon Butler. I rather incline to agree with you. But

inference - deduction  
conclusion

Calvinism

an inference from a  
preceding proposition

curiously the transition from Calvinism to a justified &  
determinism. It is, I fancy, a kind of corollary to  
Spinoza - or rather a <sup>half-way</sup> reflection of Spinoza.

3. In speaking of Feuerbach, it might be worth  
observing that his 'Essence of Christianity' was  
translated into English about 1848 by <sup>Marshall</sup> ~~Marshall~~  
Coats <sup>as</sup> u. the great novelist 'George Eliot' who  
was in later years a quasi. positivist. (note  
was made known to English readers about  
the same time by G. H. Lewes, afterwards her  
(so-called) husband - Their <sup>activity</sup> activity in this  
<sup>direction</sup> direction did something to rouse the English  
mind from that singular philosophical slumber  
of wh. you speak so precisely forcibly

4. The book upon the 'Utility of Religion' (II. 606) was  
written from Bentham's MSS by the historian  
Grote (see <sup>from</sup> ~~from~~ Robertson's life of Grote  
in the dicty of National Biography). I have seen  
Bentham's MSS in the British Museum; and  
a comparison with Grote's book shows that

I was influenced by the fact - whatever  
its <sup>explanation</sup> influence - of the singularly  
strong impression made by Butler  
upon English writers. Looking at  
Butler's writings themselves, one is  
rather puzzled to account for this;  
but the fact seems to show that  
there was something unusually  
suggestive in his thought, <sup>superficial</sup> superficial  
illogical as he often is.

2. I think that in another edition  
you might find room for <sup>Edward</sup>  
brief notice of Jonathan Edwards,  
whose writings upon the freedom  
of the will certainly had a  
great influence & who was a  
very acute <sup>reasoner</sup> reasoner & representative

The editor must have done nearly  
as much as the original author;  
indeed, as far as I could judge, a  
good deal more.

I have, I think, two copies of the  
book & I should be glad, if so,  
to send you one of them. I am  
writing, however, from the country  
(though I give you my London  
address) & shall <sup>not</sup> be at home  
till the end of October. I will  
then see whether I have the  
book, & will be much at  
your service. It is a characteristic  
bit of Benthamism, though



perhaps rather overvalued by itself

I have tried your patience  
enough & you see that my  
motive for writing has been  
purely egoistic; though I  
hope that you will also give  
me credit for the altruistic  
desire of wishing to <sup>please</sup> please  
you by showing that you  
have another grateful  
reader.

Yours very sincerely  
Leslie Stephen

Stephen