

Hotel Steinbck Portorina Saize 114

22 July 1882

My dear Professor Reichmüller,
You must have been surprised
at my not answering your kind
letter sooner, but the fact is I did
not get until this morning. It
went through a regular *Odyssey* from Florence
to Pisa where I was staying in June
and finally to Portorina where the hotel
address not having been given, it remained
at the post-office as in a *Calypso's* island
for three weeks. I was very glad to get
the photograph with its expression so strongly
marked of bright and keen intelligence. The
same special qualities which it suggests to me
I can best convey by the German words
Steinbckheit (is that a word?) and
Kühnheit. It seems strange enough that
the shape of the nose should have anything
to do with the cost of the intellect

yet I believe it is a fact that many
speculative persons have a more particularly
broad at the bottom giving the feature a
triangular appearance in the front face.
Has your attention been called to a discussion
on thought-reading which recently took
place in England? It began with an
article in the Nineteenth Century for June
last (I believe) containing a series of experi-
ments made by Anne Savans on a family
of children who possessed the gift of discovering
what a number of people were thinking
about - as a word or name - to an extra-
ordinary degree. The good-faith of the
parties concerned was placed beyond all
doubt, and the very mistakes made were
just such as would arise not from random
guessing but from imperfect apprehension
of the thought, as if for instance my own
name were the word chosen and one
child were to give it as Bent rather
as Wren and so on. I have not seen

it mentioned whether any of the experiments
were performed in the dark, but some
ought to be so performed in order to discover,
if possible, whether the expression of the face
is any assistance to the thought-reader. Our
English Spiritualists hold that there is direct
contact of mind with mind in these ex-
periments. Others offer a not very intelligible
theory of brain-waves as they call them.
On any theory why should children have
the power more than grown-up people?
(Last May I met Prof. Lewis
Crappell, of St. Andrew's University, in
Florence. I told him about your Lt.
Fehden and he said he would read it.)
Edwin Wallace's last book I have not seen,
but his sketch of Aristotle's Philosophy
(noticed in my two papers on the subject)
did not give me a very high idea of his
critical capacity. In particular his views
on the creative powers seemed to me all
wrong (Averroist pantheism), and his ac-
count of the Politics a rather ludicrous

Attempt to make out Aristotle a mild
liberal of the modern Oxford type.

My great anxiety at present is that my
book may be printed too fast, for it is
not all written yet, and they are rapidly
gaining on me. However I have nearly
finished Platonic. I found that the
simplest and most natural way of explain-
ing his philosophy was to give an analysis
of the essays written before he made Proclus's
acquaintance. It seems clear to me that
these were not written (like his later essays)
in reply to specific questions, but were so
many chapters in a consecutive exposition
of his system, and they also seem to me in
style and thought greatly superior to his later
writings. (At Ber I employed a
few leisure moments in reading your
discussion on Plato's doctrine of immortality
in the Republic. It struck me that they
amounted to a good exposition of the
personal theory on Platonic principles;

But whether Plato himself would have
agreed to this is another question. I could
not help thinking that some of your distinc-
tions were too sharp and modern to be
imposed on his speculations. Consider
how little we know of even Kant's real
opinions with regard to the Ding an sich
and God and a future life. I fully
believe that pantheism is the limit (in
a mathematical sense) of Deism, and
I have intimated this opinion which I per-
ceive I can remember has arrived at inde-
pendently, in my chapters on the subject,
but I question extremely that Plato ever
touch'd the limit himself.

You were quite right in setting me
down as a Lyric rather than a dramatic
poet. But I have never been able to
write a simple song that could be sung.
My pieces are more of a reflective, ^{and} lyric
description. I do not publish them because
there are not enough to make a fair size.

volume, and because much better volumes
than mine appear every year in England
and remain unread. But when
I go back to Bee in September, I will
send you two or three of those I like best.

Here in the Upper Engadine
we have I believe a climate like that
of your Finland. The last few days
I have been exceptionally warm, and
the thermometer indoors marks at this
moment the wonderful height of
13 R. I have some thought of
going to Athens next winter, but
if there is any chance of your being
in Florence before Jan 15 I should
delay my departure until then.

I shall be staying here until the
end of August; through September
Hotel Belleone Bee Suisse; then
Pension Luccheri, Florence.

Yours very sincerely
Alfred Berra

— Carte postale

Union postale universelle. — Weltpostverein. — Unione postale universale.



SUISSE. SCHWEIZ SVIZZERA.



An Herr Professor Feichmüller

Station Korb, Balthische Bahn



Monplaisir Russland
Korob

Hotel Heintzsch Poststrasse 12 Aug. 1882 115

Many thanks for the Metaphysik which arrived
safe yesterday apparently straight from Dresden.
I have as yet only had time to read the Preface &
contents, but I have almost done writing and shall
shortly be able to devote most of my time to it. Your
favorable opinion of Hegel (xiv notes) rather surprised me
but perhaps you had admitted "modern" to very recent
times. I shall probably remain here till the end of the
month, then my address will be Hotel Bellevue Bex
Schweiz. Yours ever. A. W. Blum