

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

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### BERGSON AND PRAGMATISM.<sup>1</sup>

IN view of the differences of opinion among the increasing number of expounders of Bergson, and with Professor Lovejoy's "Thirteen Pragmatisms" still in mind, one may well have misgivings about an attempt to discuss the relations between Bergson and pragmatism within the traditional limits of the period allotted to this paper.

As for Bergson, I think most of us will agree that "the elements are so mixed in him" that one may well say that he bids fair to become a mild rival of Kant in commentary possibilities. A Bergsonian Caird or Vaihinger will have no difficulty in pointing to a regress in Bergson which, if not quite so 'transcendental' as in Kant, is no less 'regressive.' And sooner or later, some one is sure to suggest that Bergson, like Hegel, should be read backwards.

The doctrines of Bergson's philosophy which are commonly supposed to contain its chief points of contact with pragmatism are: first, its instrumental theory of Knowledge; second, its anti-intellectualism which is a corollary of the instrumentalism; third, its evolutionism.

Of these proposed articles of alliance between Bergson and pragmatism, most attention has been given to the first two; to the instrumentalism, and the anti-intellectualism;—to the latter especially by James. But, in my opinion, it is Bergson's evolutionism which pragmatism may receive with the most unhesitating hospitality, while it is precisely his instrumentalism and anti-intellectualism that diverge most widely from what

<sup>1</sup> Read as the President's Address before the annual meeting of the Western Philosophical Association, at Chicago, April 5, 1912.