

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

THE OBSOLESCENCE OF THE ETERNAL.¹

NO contingent aspect of reality, doubtless, is likely to seem less deserving of recognition from philosophers than an anniversary. The habit of contemplating the universe under its eternal aspect is scarcely compatible with much respect for the accidents of the Gregorian calendar. Yet, since this discourse is chiefly to argue for the practice of viewing things *sub specie temporis*, some deference to chronological considerations may for the nonce appear not altogether incongruous. Our association, at all events, actuated by human and by pedagogic, if not by philosophic, motives has chosen to devote a large part of the present meeting to commemorating an anniversary and to taking an account of half a century's progress. The association assembles to-day for the first time in the city in which Kant, Fichte, and Hegel were first fully naturalized in America; in which began the movement to which the revivification of philosophical study and teaching in our colleges and universities must in great measure be traced back; in which was published, I suppose, the first American magazine devoted to technical philosophy; where were associated for a time a remarkable group of men, of high gifts and high enthusiasms, who later came to be, in widely scattered places and in very diverse ways, the influential missionaries of views of life and ideals of culture that were all based in common upon an idealistic metaphysics. St. Louis, perhaps, more than Boston or Concord, is the native home of speculative philosophy, in the strict sense, in America; and the history of the movement that began here exhibits a decided tendency of what are called

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