

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

SUGGESTIONS TOWARD A THEORY OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL DISCIPLINES.

IN the *Psychological Review* (Vol. III, pp. 357-70), Professor Dewey maintains in his discussion of the Reflex Arc that the sensation appears always in consciousness as a problem; that attention could not be centered upon a so-called element of consciousness unless the individual were abstracting from the former meaning of the object, and in his effort to reach a new meaning had fixed this feature of the former object as a problem to be solved. The illustration used is the well-worn one of the child and the candle. He has burned his fingers before in dealing with a moving bright object, and he has played with bright objects. There are then at least two tendencies to action, that of withdrawing the hand from the object that burns, and that of reaching out for a plaything. In the conflict between these two tendencies the bright yellow dancing something is shorn of its objective meaning in the child's former experience, and he is trying to learn what it is. While it is thus deprived of its objective value, while it is no longer a stimulus to action, it may become a sensation. But with knowledge of its real nature it ceases to appear in this form in consciousness. It can be sensation no longer until it again becomes the center of a problem episode in experience. I may have carried Mr. Dewey's doctrine beyond the statement given in the article on the Reflex Arc, but I think that the statement represents what Mr. Dewey would admit. At least such a statement is possible from the standpoint which Mr. Dewey takes, and admitting it for the sake of discus-