

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

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### IDEALISM AS TAUTOLOGY OR PARADOX.

IT almost seems as if in America as well as in England a new spirit were stirring in philosophy. Is it the case, or is it only the too sanguine hope of those who do not know, that throughout all the noisy controversy from which we have just emerged, between 'pragmatic' and 'absolutist' versions of idealism, there have been a number of quiet, unobtrusive thinkers scattered here and there in America, unknown even to each other, who have been silently acknowledging their own difficulties with idealism of *any* sort; and who are now about to wake up and join hands? If so, every friend of courageous thinking will feel it to be a matter for congratulation. This realistic movement, if such it verily is, may well change the tone of current philosophical discussion into something less popularly interesting and more truly important than it has been for more than a decade. Idealism is still the storm center of a vigorous controversy. But it would seem, now, as if the idealist would be confronted with a kind of opposition such as his pragmatist brethren could never offer him; an opposition which for good or ill will throw his own position genuinely into relief. For the spirit of realism is the spirit of logical rigor. It may be trusted to 'beat the matter out,' and not weakly drift to a point where it may propose to 'agree to differ.' It is the spirit which is resolved to think and believes that it may know. Whether the idealist has sufficient faith in his own message to rejoice in a genuine re-birth of that spirit may be a matter of doubt. One thing seems certain. If the movement ever comes, the philosophical world will have its opportunity. It will have the chance to measure the idealist's doctrine against something else which is definite and is