

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

ON SOME CONDITIONS OF PROGRESS IN PHILO-
SOPHICAL INQUIRY.¹

THE circumstances of our last annual meeting have made it inevitable that one thought should have been dominant in all our minds as we reassembled this year. The association devoted the greater part of its sessions a year ago to doing honor—an honor unprecedented in its history—to an eminent and beloved colleague. Now we can only take some poor consolation from the fact that that due tribute was paid before it was too late. American philosophy has lost one of its greatest figures; and from the circle of our own fellowship has passed one of the most loyal, kindly and richly-endowed human beings whom any of us have known. Josiah Royce contributed to philosophy with an intellectual power, and an incomparable learning, that evoked our admiration and our pride; yet it was not this solely, nor perhaps this chiefly, that gave him the place he had among us. It is an ironic example of the paradox in the present position of our study that some of us have felt compelled to dissent sharply from the conclusions which to him seemed most fundamental, most important and best assured. In spite of such dissents, there are few who have busied themselves with philosophy in America during the past thirty years who have not learned much from him. But it was the man himself that meant most to us, as an embodiment of the philosophic temper and an example of the philosophic life—in the completeness of his

¹ Delivered as the presidential address before the sixteenth annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association, December 27, 1916.