

THE  
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

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THE PROBLEM OF TRANSCENDENCE.<sup>1</sup>

IN the year that has passed we have lost in the death of a former president of this Association one who in the eyes of the world had come to stand for American Philosophy. Professor James was the most widely known, and at the same time the most universally beloved American philosopher. There was none who did not come under the spell of his personality, none who did not look forward eagerly to a work from his pen. There was such a sense of reality and life in all that he wrote that reading his works had, in a peculiar sense, the charm of personal intercourse. It was meeting the man himself and sharing in his life and outlook. He was not one of those who content themselves with reporting what some one else has said about what some one else has experienced and taken for reality. With marvelous skill he portrayed the situation as he himself confronted it, and in doing so enabled his reader the better to discover the facts of his own inner life.

I am reminded that when we met a year ago we had to mourn the loss of another distinguished American philosopher. No two men could be temperamentally more unlike than William T. Harris and William James. The one lived serenely secure, on the heights, contemplating in the sweep of his vision all time and all existence, holding in his hand the golden key, the solvent formula, of all of life's problems; the other dwelt ever in the valleys, in the market place, in the bustle of finite things, seeking ever new experiences, his interest centered in the unique, the dramatic, the elusive, distrustful of all comprehensive formulas

<sup>1</sup>Delivered as the presidential address before the American Philosophical Association at Princeton University, December 27, 1910.