

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

CHANGE AND THE CHANGELESS.

I.

WITH few exceptions, philosophers have pronounced holy ban upon change. They have driven it forth from the halls of the gods and compelled it to wander disconsolate on a shard-strewn earth.

“ Seemed to the holy festival
The rash word boded ill to all.”

Where its defenders have appeared, the very vehemence of their loyalty has been testimony to the indignity.

Ordinary thought has approved the summary expulsion. For most men, at most times, *reality*, — behind, or above, or beyond our experience, wherever or however it was thought to be, — has meant the permanent as against the transient. Indeed, even at the present day, deeply as we are possessed of evolutionary conceptions, we still hold the ‘fundamental,’ the ‘essential,’ to be the over-and-above, the eternally-beyond all change. And on the whole, there seems good ground for a certain summary dismissal of change as too poor for reality. That my experience, for example, ‘grows’ from day to day, that in meeting the situations of my life, I become increasingly intelligent, may, indeed, be encouraging; but it surely cannot argue in me perfection of being. That after certain years, my power of insight diminishes, that I grow more helpless of judgment and of control, must still less argue perfection of being. To be sure, striving and partial attainment may be better than complete absence of effort; but it is a question whether it is better than a life where, by reason of completeness of being, striving has no