

THE  
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

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PHILOSOPHY AND ITS CORRELATIONS.<sup>1</sup>

I.

I AM well aware that in a presence constituted mainly of the professors of the art of philosophizing it would be unseemly to doubt the value of that art. But it is open to us all, without implying any reflection on our profession, to recognize the fact that such doubt exists, and that not infrequently in the minds of very intelligent men. Now, without stopping to consider the forms which this doubt is accustomed to assume in the thought of the sceptic, it is my purpose here, at the outset, to concede that philosophy itself is partly responsible for this result, and this admission will be taken later on as an excuse for attempting a fresh definition of the nature and method of what we call philosophical inquiry. In the meantime, if any specifications be called for under the general indictment of philosophy as in part responsible for the scepticism with which its pretensions are assailed, I would say in reply : First, that the philosophizing intellect too often yields to the temptation of over-subtlety in its conceptions and distinctions, as well as to over-abstractness in its data and ultimate aims. If we take into account the first point in the indictment, we are prone to think of the middle ages as the golden period of hair-splitting, and we are accustomed to laugh with a sort of unholy glee over some of the performances of the scholastics. But we are unmindful of the fact that scholasticism still has its cult, and that we are perchance not altogether without

<sup>1</sup> Read as the Presidential Address at the second annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association, December 30, 1902.