

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

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### THE PRINCIPLE OF INDIVIDUALITY IN THE METAPHYSICS OF BERNARD BOSANQUET.

THE task of philosophy, according to Dr. Bosanquet, is to characterize reality, to find out a vital idea or set of ideas wherewith to criticize and organize experience. Such an idea must have in some sense of the words universal application. It is important then to consider what is the type of universality which Dr. Bosanquet takes to be valid. The concrete universal is above all things a name for our most active and adequate, and therefore most normal way of looking at the world. For practical purposes, as for instance in the course of a strictly mechanical pursuit, such as tabulating the results of a statistical investigation, the mind may concern itself with mere generalizations, with repetitions as such. But Dr. Bosanquet has a well-founded doubt as to whether those who reduce all so-called rational processes to the handling of repetitions really have in mind what he himself would call rational experience. Bergson's view of logic,<sup>1</sup> and his consequent falling back upon intuitionism, for instance, seem to Dr. Bosanquet to result from an unaccountable failure to consider conscious process as a whole, from an unwarranted abstraction of reflection out of the whole complex of experience which actually does keep it alive and effectual. Consciousness at work in the world of all our experience, the consciousness that takes us through a wide-awake day of tasks accomplished, beauties enjoyed, human relationships developed, though essentially rational, is not chiefly concerned with abstraction. We do not feel our way along experience with a measuring rod, nor on the

<sup>1</sup> See *Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 54.