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## THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROTESTANTISM.

### A REJOINDER.



OUR readers will doubtless recognize the above title as that of an article which appeared in a recent number of THE OWL. It was hardly expected when we

wrote that imperfect review of the great question of the Reformation, that it would be the be all and end all of controversy on that subject. It was our object merely to give a brief appreciation of that event from a Catholic standpoint. And as it is a subject upon which neither historians nor dogmatists agree, we were not surprised at finding a criticism of it in a subsequent number of the *Presbyterian College Journal*, of Montreal. But while the event of a criticism did not surprise us, we must admit that we were somewhat astonished at the criticism itself, and the revelation of logic made therein. The author complements our article on its clear and concise manner, which renders it easy for him to examine; nevertheless he has misinterpreted so many portions, has missed the point in so many cases, and has, we think, made such an unfair criticism of it that we deem it worthy to vindicate our premises, and to point out some of the flagrant errors which have formed the standard of the criticism. The article is a somewhat lengthy one, and its details many. But as many of his conclusions are based upon a common principle, we will be able to curtail a great deal by confuting the radical error and leaving consequences to be inferred. Many of the objections involve points too important to be done full

justice in one essay, in which cases our arguments shall be on general lines, and not always fully developed.

The original article had a triple object, first, to prove that at the breaking out of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century affairs had reached a crisis and needed but a trifle to precipitate that movement; secondly, to prove that that movement was the result of vicious principles; and thirdly, that being itself a sedition against lawful authority, it was not capable of effecting a reform in the Church. In the reply which we are considering, this much is clearly comprehended, and, with some inconsiderable caution, the first point is admitted. The burden of the criticism is directed against the second point, to which we shall now turn our attention.

The reader will remember that in the original article four accounts of the Reformation were outlined. The first of these was the one most commonly given by Protestants themselves, that it was the birthday of liberty of thought and conscience; the second was one erroneously held by some Catholics, that it was the result of Luther's disappointment and Henry VIII's divorce; the third, that it was the outcome of a feeling of general repugnance to spiritual authority and of a spirit of independence of some two centuries' growth; the fourth, admitting the efficiency of the two latter causes added a third, namely, the odiousness to Germanic nations of submission to a foreign authority so Romanic as the administration of the Church then was. After sketching these