

*THE TRUE CENTRE.*

Nothing but the fact that She is the Apostolic Church of England under God's care and keeping can account for the other fact that notwithstanding the wilful ignorance of her just claims on the part of the great majority of her nominal adherents, she has maintained her position in the most dangerous days, and is now looked upon as the historic and nearest representative of the Primitive Church in all Christendom. Nothing but this can account for the bold revival of her claims to real catholicism and consequent progress within the last fifty years.

For, even now, how few are there amongst nominal Church-people who really understand and can clearly explain the ancient word "Catholic," with all that it embraces as well as all that it rejects. How many of them are there, who, in repeating the three ecumenical Creeds, profess to believe in the Catholic Church and the Catholic faith when in Church, and yet at all other times assign this word Catholic to the Romish Church, and therefore secretly dislike it,—greatly to the advantage of Romanism and to her proselytizing amongst weak-kneed Protestants. For the most of these understand Protestantism to consist in denials and negative teachings,—so much so that they lose the ancient christian verities, and gradually tend towards infidelity. "A man is known by the com-

pany he keeps," and thus it happens that in many countries the word 'protestant' means infidel, because all infidels profess themselves protestants.

Rome owes her success in proselytizing very largely to this cause. A man bewildered amongst many counsellors is more apt to listen to claims confidently put forward than to those who assert no such authority, and content themselves with mere denials. She also is largely assisted by the so called history taught in our public schools, and too often in Church of England schools, in which the Romish Church is exclusively mentioned as the Catholic Church, and Romanists are similarly credited as 'catholics.'

Again,—not one out of ten nominal Church people knows the faith and practice and ritual of the Primitive Church, nor the undeniable claim of the Church of England to be its nearest and clearest representative at the present day. The great majority of Protestants cannot tell you the true origin of the Church of England. They are not ashamed to betray their ignorance by ascribing it to King Henry VIII, who always was a Romanist, and committed his first and incestuous marriage with the sanction and rites of that Church. They are ignorant of the fact that the Church of England was planted in the first century, hundreds of years before Augustine and his monks brought Romanism to that country.