

less company of professors here on earth, but rather let us rejoice in the gracious forbearance and long-suffering mercy of God, Who, though we have grievously sinned against Him, and have frequently fallen away, yet is ever ready to hear the contrite sinner's cry, and extend to him His pardon and forgiveness.

We must not expect to find an ideally spotless Church on earth. By parable and teaching our Saviour pointed this out, and each man from the depths of his own heart can understand how true are the Apostle's words "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

A VI-SION OF RAIKES.

Wearied of Centenary Committees and of discussing Centenary Meetings I sat down in my arm-chair and fell half-asleep. I had not been many moments in this half-conscious condition, when a pleasant-looking man, dressed in the garb of a hundred years ago, stood before me.

"Mr. Raikes," I said, as soon as my astonishment would let me speak.

A slight inclination of his head assured me that it was he, though indeed, being well acquainted with his portrait, I felt no doubt of it from the first.

"Pray be seated," said I. But he remained standing and continued silent.

Rather confused by this silence, and noticing that his expression was grave, almost to sadness, I said, "You are probably aware that the hundredth anniversary of the work you started in Gloucester is to be

celebrated very generally throughout the country this year."

Another inclination of the head.

"Does this not gratify you?" said, I, somewhat warmly; "is it no source of pleasure, nay even of pride, to you, that the work begun a hundred years ago has spread to every village in the country? Do not the thousands of schools, filled every Sunday by hundreds of thousands of children, testify to the success of your work?"

"Success!" said he with an air of doubt; and after a pause, looking still more grave, he slowly repeated the word "Success."

"How many hundreds," I replied, "now in Paradise, first heard the Gospel message in the Sunday-school?"

"Oh, true!" said he, as a smile momentarily brightened his face. Then relapsing into his former gravity, he continued, "But how about the young men and women, the old men and women of the present generation—were they not in Sunday-school?"

"Doubtless," I answered, "you have hit upon the weak point of the system."

"Weak, indeed," he replied. "How can you expect it to be otherwise while you permit your scholars to drop away from your care at the most critical period of their lives? Considering the lack of properly organised machinery for retaining them, the wonder is that a larger number of your scholars are not lost to the Church."

"'Tis true, 'tis pity; and pity 'tis true.' But what would you suggest," I inquired, "to remedy this sad state of things?"

"Could you not make special arrangements for the young people