

Now, this false balance is not good.

1st. To go by it, would be to allow the wrong doing of others to make us as bad as themselves : to be overcome of evil instead of overcoming evil with good.

2nd. In using it in relation to fellow-subjects of the great Supreme, we should be presuming on *His* prerogative, and in a sense venturing to attempt, in such cases, to occupy *His* place who proclaims, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

3rd. How could we consistently use it ourselves and at the same time pray to our Maker to deal with us according to some *other* balance? And, what would become of us, if in our highest relations and as to the whole of our endless being, the great God "with whom we have to do" were to act towards us only upon this principle, good for good evil for evil?

Two of the many gifts of "God our Saviour" are the *true* balances in social relations :—"Whatsoever ye *would* that men should do to you, do you even o to them"—"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."

J. E.

SCOTTISH CONGREGATIONALISM.

There are some note-worthy observations in the address of the Rev. Dr. W. Lindsay Alexander, of Edinburgh, which the compiler of your Trans-Atlantic Retrospect designates "a very excellent inaugural address on 'The Past and Present of the Union.'" I do not refer to his lucid sketch of the state of religion in Scotland at the period of the rise of the Congregational Churches there, nor to what he says of the invaluable work which has been accomplished ; but rather to things having relation to the present and the future, by which peradventure we in Canada may be instructed.

The first item unfolds certain changes for the worse, as compared with the course of the fathers.

Many changes have passed upon us—some for the better, others, I fear, for the worse. Not only have we got rid of a great deal of the froth and scum which the fermentation almost inseparable from the formation of new religious bodies threw up to the surface of ours, but changes of a kind materially affecting our substance and working have gradually come upon us. On the whole, whilst I think we have gained more than we have lost, I cannot but express my regret for the departure or diminution of some qualities which I think gave strength and worth to our churches in their earlier history. Am I mistaken in saying that we possess less of a *missionary* character than we had—that it is less the habit of our churches to recognise the diffusion of Christian knowledge around them as one of the *main* ends of their existence as churches—that neither do the pastors nor the private members of the churches give themselves as our Fathers did to systematic and persevering efforts to convey saving truth to the minds of those who are living in ignorance of it, or indifference to it? May I not also say that our churches are less *Congregational* than they used to be? I mean—Is it not a fact that our members generally take far less interest in the business of the church, especially under its spiritual aspect, than their predecessors did, or than the principles they profess to hold bind them to do?—that they have far less intercourse with each other, and take far less care of each other's spiritual welfare than used to be characteristic of the members of our churches in the preceding generation? and that, whilst professing to repudiate the government of the Church by a representative body, they really allow the Church's affairs to be managed by the pastor and a few individuals, who may, or may not, represent the Church's intelligence, but do most certainly wield representatively the Church's power? I must even go further, and ask, have we not, as Churches, lost somewhat of the religious life