

LONDON CHURCH CASE.

The Rev. Dr. Skinner begs to refer the Clerks of Presbyteries and the Ministers of Churches to the recommendation of the Synod on the above case, to remind them that the compromise may fall to the ground if no collections are forwarded to him from churches and friends before the 25th Augt., and to solicit that those who have resolved to aid the Church, will transmit their contributions as early as is consistent with their convenience.

London, C. W., 3rd August, 1855.

THE FRENCH MISSION.

We trust that the Report of the progress made in the working of their Mission during the past year, (an abstract of which was contained in our last month's Supplement) received the attentive consideration of our readers. The Protestants of Canada have a deep interest in this matter. Even if they were not so closely associated with the French Canadian people, in consequence of the union of the Provinces their path of duty would be plain. But, as it is, for their own sake they may not say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" We fully believe this enterprise of our Church to be a vitally important one, and trust that it will receive such a large and cordial measure of support as may enable the Committee to extend its operations. Especially we hope that they may see their way also to assuming the responsibility of securing the services of a minister from Europe of standing, ability, and, above all, earnest piety. We are firmly persuaded that, if they take this step, they will be warmly sustained. We would suggest that, in making their inquiries for the man best suited for so important a position, it would be well for them to have in view, besides the French and Genevan Churches, the Waldensian Synod. It may be that out of that long tried, struggling Church, but which is now happily extending its borders, the Committee might obtain a suitable minister. But, wherever the application be made, we are convinced that the suggestion of the Committee is a deeply important one, and we hope that it may be carried into effect. The period fixed by the Synod for taking up this collection is past, but we trust that ministers will select a suitable day for urging its claims upon the Christian sympathies of their flocks.

MINISTERIAL FITNESS AND SUCCESS FROM GOD ALONE.

A Discourse preached by Rev. Professor Williamson, L. L. D., Moderator, at the opening of the Synod on the 30th May, 1855, in St. Andrew's Church, Montreal.

1 CORINTH. III. 7. "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

An unhopeful spirit, and the undue depreciation and disparagement of the means

and prospects of the nation, or of the Church, or of their own fitness, for the performance of particular duties, by individuals who really have been endowed with those qualifications which they disclaim, are doubtless wrong in themselves, and unfavourable to the pursuit and attainment of any important end. But these are errors which are less frequently to be met with; and against these, therefore, it is less necessary to guard. The prevailing tendency is rather to indulge in an altogether opposite temper. Scarcely any disposition is more ominous of disastrous results to those by whom it is displayed than a spirit of self-exaltation and boasting, whether in nations, or in Churches, or in individuals; and yet scarcely any is more common. The panegyric of the nation is pronounced in strains of glowing eloquence,—the wide extent of its dominions, the excellencies of its constitution, the greatness of its resources, the might of its army and navy, and the skill of their commanders, are celebrated; but God is seldom acknowledged as the only source of its glory, and shield of its renown. The Scriptural nature of the government and standards of the Church, its past trials and labours, and its outward securities and advantages, are dwelt upon with admiring eulogium; its ministers and people are disposed to place much dependence on their own abilities and efforts; but God is too seldom duly recognized as the only fountain of the prosperity both of the Church as a body, and of its members.

That men should look to the power of their own communities or organizations, or to themselves and their own efforts mainly for success in any undertaking, and not to the all-guiding providence and grace of God, is one of the most striking proofs of that ungodliness to which the heart of the natural man is prone. Boasting and self-confidence are evils of the most fatal kind in states, in Churches, and in individuals. But they are peculiarly so in ministers, whose work is so unspeakably momentous, and who in their various duties, both as regards themselves and their flocks, have so many difficulties to encounter, so altogether beyond any mere human might or wisdom to overcome. In this work the ability and success are wholly from God. This is the great lesson taught by the Apostle in our text, a lesson addressed alike to ministers and to their hearers, whom also he sought to turn away from glorying in man. This it was which was impressed on his own heart when he says in the 6th verse, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase," and which he here seeks to impress on the minds of all in the words before us, "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

Though these words were primarily addressed to all those to whom the Apostle wrote, it is evident that the declaration

which they contain more immediately relates to the ministers of the Church, and in this view mainly we now propose to consider them. The conclusion which they state is, in other words, this,—that God is the great and only author of all ministerial qualification and success. It is implied, in the first place, when it is said, "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth," that the qualifications of ministers for their work are only from God and, in the second place, in the words, "but God that giveth the increase," that their success is from Him alone.

1. Suffer me then, my Brethren, to remind you, in the first place, that *the qualifications of ministers for their work are only from God*. Consider on the one hand your high and holy calling, and on the other what is required for its right discharge, that you may better see from the vantage-ground of such contemplations that your sufficiency must be from Him alone.

The office of the ministry may well be termed the highest and most important which man can occupy. As ministers of the Gospel, you are in a peculiar sense the servants of God, to whom has been committed His message of peace and reconciliation, which, ordinarily speaking, can be made known and received only through the special means of the preaching of the Word, for "how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" and you are the ambassadors of Christ, who sends you forth to proclaim in His name to men the Gospel of His salvation, and to beseech them in Christ's stead not to receive it in vain. Your office is, in an especial manner, no less than that of fellow-workers with the Father and with the Son. Your work was a part of the work of the Saviour Himself upon the Earth, and was thus for ever consecrated and honoured, and has, whether under a former dispensation, or under the brighter and fuller manifestation of the Gospel, been the work of Prophets and Apostles, and men of God in every age. Your office is not only thus in the highest degree honourable from the Divine commission by which it has been constituted, and those by whom it has been exercised. It is also, of all others, the most important in its own nature. While other employments regard mainly the body and the temporal welfare of man, yours has for its object the soul, the nobler part of his being, and his only real happiness both here and hereafter. Your work is to instruct the ignorant, to awaken the careless, to bring the sinner to repentance, to speak peace to the weary and heavy-laden spirit, to direct and console the afflicted, to watch over the lambs of the flock with peculiar care, to build-up the people of God in holiness and in comfort through faith unto salvation, and with affectionate and unwearied care to train them up and lead them on to Heaven.