

III. CANADA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The Headship difficulty prevents the Presbytery of Durham from agreeing to the Basis. The vote stood 9 against and 5 for. The congregations in the same Presbytery returned 5 for and 3 against.

THE REV. MR. KNIGHT AND THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Our readers will remember that we published an excellent article in the February number on this important case. The following was taken from the *Glasgow Weekly Herald*, as showing the position of the case as it now stands:—

On Monday evening a meeting of the members and adherents of St. Enoch's congregation was held, for the purpose of hearing a statement from the Rev. Mr. Knight, who, it will be recollected, seceded from the Free Church of Scotland in consequence of the action taken against him by the Presbytery of Dundee.

Mr. Knight made a long statement, in the course of which he said—I have purposely abstained from trying to influence you, the members of St. Enoch's congregation, in your decision. In a matter so solemn I have never argued the question of your duty with you individually since we left the Free Church, in order that I might leave everyone perfectly free to the exercise of an independent choice. When I have spoken of the subject I have not concealed my own convictions; but I have tried rather to ascertain your feelings than influence or sway them to a decision. I may say, as the result of all my inquiries, that I find the convictions entertained by the congregation to be almost universally the same as my own. Many who are convinced that this is the best step for us to pursue are in principle opposed to Established Churches. There are some members of this congregation Voluntaries in principle, and there are others who altogether adopt and maintain the Established principle. I do the latter myself emphatically; but the question before you just now is not, Are Established Churches the best that could be conceived? but it is, What is the best existing Church with which you who left the Free Church can now connect yourselves? I feel persuaded that, whether the days of Established Churches are numbered or not—whether disestablishment comes soon or late—the particular section of the Church in Scotland which is most worthy of the support

of all patriotic and Christian Scotchmen is the Establishment; for in it there is a greater rising tide of Christian earnestness and devotion, more catholicity, freedom, and peace than elsewhere, and, with the protection of the law, greater security for justice. We have a Church bound by the same standards as those by which we were bound in the Free Church, but we have a better security that justice will be done in the interpretation of these standards. I have called you together to tell you of my own personal intentions, but not to induce or persuade you to follow me unless you concur in principle and in sympathy, for nothing could be more unworthy of your minister; yet, as we have been comrades in adversity and united in past trial, I trust we may be wedded together in the fellowship of a united life. . . . It has been my happiness to preside over a congregation which understands what the duty of a Christian minister is as to his public action, when once his course of conduct has become clear to his own inward eye. While, therefore, I cheerfully left the Free Church, taking the chances of the future, and trusting to that Providence which is ever with us to guide, I feel quite unequal to face the responsibilities of an isolated position, unless driven into it by the refusal of that Church with which I seek to become identified. I am not too unreserved in now telling you that I am convinced that isolation is best for myself as well as for you. It would be a position of aloofness from brethren in all the Churches; for while many of them have assisted me as yet, I could hardly ask or expect the continuance of this aid were I to keep apart from every existing Church in Scotland. I have been entreated by many brethren in the Church which we have all left, by friends within it in this town, and friends at a distance, not to remain out in the open, for your sakes and for my own; and I feel that I could not carry on and carry out the solemn purpose of the Christian ministry in this community as an outsider. I am not averse to face the difficulties of an unknown position, or the contingencies of an untried one, so far as mere personal labour is concerned, were I distinctly shut up to it; but the burden of undivided responsibility or a responsibility shared only by the elders and deacons of a congregation, is vastly greater than when a Church takes the additional oversight and protection of a congregation through the Presbyterian form of government. More than this, if we are to learn any lesson from the past, I wish to repeat that I know the experience of these movements away from existing Church fellowship within recent years to have been bad for the Christian