

say deliberately and in the fear of God that as for me I would accept the union, and I would accept it upon the proposed Basis. And I humbly advise our Conferences and people, in view of all the interests involved, to accept it, and to prepare in the love of God and the brethren to meet its issues. Nevertheless I am, as I trust we all are, with our people in their constitutional procedure, and am resolved with them to maintain Episcopal Methodism separate and distinct, or to carry its fundamental and central principles into the united Church, under solemn league and covenant in constitutional action there to be perpetuated.

It is objected we are giving up everything : we are giving up the General Superintendency. I reply, the Basis preserves as solid, though not so extended a General Superintendency as our own. Again, that we are giving up the Episcopacy. I reply, that we are preserving it, except the life tenure and the special consecration to the office. In these matters we are preserving the unity of the Church, and the supremacy and authority of the General Conference, in some regards even above what we have now ; we are preserving the supervision of the work and the agency of the General Conference in all connexional and general work, and the power of the General Conference for the Church to conduct the ordinations and preserve the sacraments, which is the pith and core, the meaning and extent of our Episcopacy ; and all of which are the cardinal principles of Episcopal Methodism. Again, that we are giving up our Traveling Presiding Eldership. I reply that the General Conference in Hamilton left that with the Annual Conferences, to station the Presiding Elders, just where the Basis will likely leave it. Indeed the General Conference in Hamilton brought down our Episcopacy, our Itinerant General Superintendency, and our traveling Presiding Eldership very nearly to the level of the Basis, of Union. So that we in these regards have neither very much to boast of, to give up, nor to defend. Again, that we are giving up our diaconate. I reply, that is about the only distinctly constitutional possession we have left to give up. The disciplinary "divers orders" of ministers, and as we are to-day, the admission of laymen in equal numbers to the Annual Conferences, present the two main difficulties to my mind, and the two main objections to Union—the former constitutional, the latter practical. Yet the Holy Scriptures allow large range for variety in Church government, and Methodism has wonderful powers of adaptation. Again, that we are giving up the ordination of our local preachers. I reply this is a provision of former times, not how necessary, the propriety of which among us is gravely doubted ; and which, with or without Union, may not be long retained. Again, that we are giving up our veto power in the Quarterly Conferences. I reply that we are substituting a better veto power in the General conference, and more, according to the genius of Episcopal Methodism in establishing undoubted the supremacy of the General Conference, and enabling it within itself to complete its legislation. Again, that we are giving up our magnificent property. I reply, that in an honorable and honest Union, according to the Basis by which only can we be bound, we are keeping all our property, and getting besides three dollars to every one we now own. Again, that we are dishonoring the old men, the dying fathers, in giving up the polity and principles for which they suffered, toiled, and contended. I reply, that we are paying them the highest honor, preserving most effectively their energy and life work, and erecting to their sacred memory the grandest monument by carrying their principles into the United Church, and planting the essential constituents of their polity in the richer soil and larger fields of the one humble, earnest Methodism of the wide Dominion. And all the Churches can make the same or similar replies and allegations in their proper degree and sphere. Wherefore, as we stand to-day I see no reasonable way but to adopt the proposed basis of Union, let the other Churches do as they will. If they adopt it in godly sincerity let us be ready in godly sincerity to unite with them. If they reject it, it will bring relief to many of our minds, but I had rather they reject it than we, with the eyes of this Dominion upon us, and of the whole continent, and of both hemispheres, and of Christian and godly men of all ages, and of the angels, and of God. And may the God of all grace and peace by His Holy Spirit guide us to the wisest, soundest, and safest conclusions, to the praise of His Holy Name.