

that our travelling Presiding Eldership is no part of the Itinerant General Superintendency, made provision for stationing the Presiding Elders, and reduced the powers of the Bishop in this regard to the Chairmanship of the Advisory Committee, which appoints the Presiding Elders. This is of course a complete reversal of some of our former ideas of Episcopal Methodism, making the Presiding Elders Annual Conference men, to be possibly stationed instead of General Superintendency men, always to travel their Districts, and is a wonderful limitation of the powers of the Bishop in his capacity as General Superintendent. But so far as I see, if the General Conference has the power and right to accept, constitute, perpetuate, and even within certain restrictions to abolish the Episcopacy and the Itinerant Superintendency, it must have the power and right to say

WHAT KIND OF EPISCOPACY AND SUPERINTENDENCY

it will have, and with what powers it shall be clothed. It must have the power to say what shall be essential to the Superintendency and what not: what shall be an attachment, and what not. If it make the law, and there is no court above it to interpret the law, it must decide what it means by its enactments, and by the principles of the economy it has established. The same General Conference limited the power of the General Superintendent to station preachers so as in an important sense to reduce him to a mere Chairman of the Stationing Committee, and certainly most seriously to interfere with his former *transfer* power, if not wholly to destroy it. For if he cannot station a man without the express consent of the Presiding Elders by a majority duly secured on motion, how is he to know when he lifts him from one Conference that he will get the privilege of setting him down in another? From the General Superintendency we have to-day the General Superintendency of the Basis of Union is not very wide apart. Indeed it is not difficult to maintain that within the sphere of its operation there is a stronger General Superintendency in the Basis of Union than in the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada as we are now. For by right of constitution and consequent Discipline, the General Superintendent of the Basis presides in all General Conference Boards and Committees, which is a right he does not by any means enjoy under the mere provisions of Discipline among us.

Had these sweeping and radical changes been brought about by the men advocating Union, some perhaps would have said they were designedly breaking down our polity in order to break up our Church and dissolve us into Union. But so far as I have observed, men of professedly other views as to the proposed Union, of especially asserted high opinions as to the Episcopacy and strong attachment to it have been at least as forward as any in these radical and almost revolutionary changes. Possibly there was a judicial blindness that we might be prepared for events to come. The brethren went out not knowing whither they went. It may be their eyes were holden. So far as I am personally concerned, I do not see that there is enough difference between the General Superintendency of to-day among us, and the General Superintendency of the Basis of Union to make a stand upon against Union. Were it what it once was, the case would be decidedly different. But when I compare what we now have with what is in the Basis, I am of the opinion that the Basis does not materially alter the plan of our present Itinerant General Superintendency: much less, to use the language and meet the restrictive demand of Discipline, does it destroy it? So much for the General Superintendency. Let us now look at the other point, the Episcopacy. Both our Book of Discipline and the facts of the case in history and practice distinguish clearly between the Superintendency and the Episcopacy: the former having existed in Methodism before the latter was thought of: the former relating more particularly to the stationing of the preachers, and the temporal affairs of the Church: and the latter to the ordination of the ministry and the perpetuation of the Holy Sacraments.

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