

hear the discussions, that they might be better qualified to judge of the merits of the proposed union; and such was the anxiety of the Conference that all things should be done openly, and that the members of the Church should be fully informed of all points in the scheme, that the laymen were freely admitted into the Conference-room—contrary to the usual practice of the Conference at that period—during the whole time in which the question of Union was under discussion.

On the first day of the Session the President of the Missionary Board laid before the Conference the correspondence which had taken place between the Board and the *English Missionary Committee*. The correspondence was read, and referred to a Committee of nine, chosen by ballot, consisting of Revs. John Ryerson, James Richardson, (now Bishop of the M. E. Church in Canada), Wyatt Chamberlain, Franklin Metcalfe, Egerton Ryerson, P. Smith, (late Bishop of the M. E. Church in Canada), William Ryerson, T. Madden, and W. Brown. After a consideration of the question, which continued till the fourth day, the Committee presented their Report, in the form of a Preamble and Resolutions, recommending a Union, on certain terms, with the English Conference. The Conference immediately took up the Report, and after a full discussion of all the points involved, the Resolutions were adopted by a very large majority. There was one Resolution which, as it involved the relinquishing of Episcopacy, required the sanction of the General Conference before it could become law. Accordingly, the President was requested to call a Session of the General Conference, which he did, naming six o'clock of the following Monday morning as the time of meeting.*

It may be necessary here to explain the difference between the Annual and the General Conference. The *Annual* Conference was composed of all Travelling Preachers who had travelled *two* years, and had been received into full connexion; the *General* Conference was composed of all Travelling Preachers who had travelled *four* years, and been ordained *Elders*. There were present, however, at the Hallowel Conference, no less than seventeen Travelling Preachers who had been received into full connexion and *elected* to Elder's orders, but had not been *ordained*, because there was no Bishop to ordain them, and the Discipline, at that time, did not admit of ordination in any other way. It was felt to be a manifest injustice that these brethren should be excluded from the General Conference on the sole ground that the ceremony of ordination had not been performed; hence, when the Conference assembled on the Monday morning, its first act was to pass as follows:—“Resolved,—That the first answer to the second question of the third section of the Discipline be expunged, and the following inserted in its place: ‘The General Conference shall be composed of all the Elders and Elders-elect, who are members of the Annual Conference.’” It should be remarked that the admission of these brethren did not affect the final vote, for one of

* This was perfectly constitutional, because the Discipline of the Church provided that the General Superintendent might call a meeting of the General Conference at any time, at the request of the Annual Conference.