

consider a pure and godly unifying of Methodism highly desirable, and therefore recommend the General Conference to appoint a Committee to consider and formulate a Basis of Union with the Methodists of the Dominion, or of the Continent, or any branch or section thereof, and to authorize the Bishop to unite in any joint call that may be made for such purpose." Here the desirability is emphasized, and the belief in the practicability more than implied, and means are devised to further it. The report adopted by the General Conference of 1878 declares as follows:—"That, concerning the subject of Methodist Union, your Committee in the present stage of the discussion upon the question and the present attitude of the Churches with regard to it, deem it sufficient to re-affirm the action of the Napanee General Conference of 1874 to this extent and effect, viz: "We consider

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and recommend this General Conference to appoint a committee of ten, to remain in force and effect till the next General Conference with powers to correspond with other Methodist Bodies on the question of Methodist Union," etc. The question, then, either as a matter of finesse and claptap, or of earnestness and godly sincerity, has been before the Church, and Methodist Union has been distinctly favored. The Annual Conferences have had abundant time to protest, to declare against the expediency, the desirability, and the practicability of Union. So also have the Lay Electoral Conferences, the Quarterly Meeting Conferences, the Societies, the Classes, and all our constituencies. Which of them, how many of them, have spoken or affirmed against the desirability or the practicability of an Organic Union of the Methodist Churches of this country? Our Church has but one voice on this subject. We believe our General Conference to have been honest when it said:—"We firmly consider a pure and godly unifying of Methodism highly desirable, and appoint a committee to consider and formulate a Basis of Union with the Methodists of the Dominion." We believe the other Conferences and Bodies that have spoken upon this subject to have been honest, and they have spoken as late as our last Electoral Conferences, which, in effect, said "that any Basis of Union to be acceptable to our Church must embrace the Itinerant General Superintendency." Our position, then, as a Church, on the desirability and practicability of Methodist Union has been clear, unchanged, and unmistakable. Wherefore, the men that have advocated measures looking toward a Union have been consistent with our Church action, and perfectly in order. To say the least of it, whatever our desires in the case, they have been as consistent with our Church action as those of us who have been indifferent to Union or opposed to it. There was a time when the Quarterly Meeting Conferences, the District Conferences, the Annual Conferences, and the Lay Electoral Conferences might properly, in the exercise of their rights, have declared against the desirability, the feasibility, and the advisability of Methodist Union. But as constituencies and sub-constituencies they sent on their representatives to the General Conference, our Supreme Court and Legislature, which declared positively and repeatedly for Methodist Union as to its advisability and feasibility. And so far as the constituencies and sub-constituencies spoke upon the subject they have spoken in confirmation of the mind and action of our great representative body, the General Conference. Wherefore, this General Conference, in its former sessions in Hamilton, was clearly within our constitutional lines and along the course of our declared policy in moving forward its Committee, with powers and privileges to find, if possible, in consultation with the Committees of the other Methodist Churches of the country, a Basis of Union that might be worthy of the consideration and adoption of this Conference and of our Church and all the Churches concerned. The consideration of the report of this Committee is the chief business of this adjourned session of the General Conference. The question that now arises is, "Is the Basis submitted by the Committee under all the circumstances acceptable? Shall we approve the Basis of Union now submitted, and be prepared to consummate a Union with all the Methodist Churches of the country upon it? Or shall we reject the Basis and decline to unite upon it? The question of the advisability of Union in general is not before