

Nevertheless, the action of the Committee was regarded by many in Canada with feelings of grave apprehension; for they saw in the movement the germ of future troubles. They foresaw that collisions would inevitably occur between the Canadian Preachers and the English Missionaries, and the respective Societies under their care, which would result in heartburnings and estrangements among brethren; while it would put a reproach into the mouths of enemies, and rob us of our hereditary boast,—“The Methodists are ONE the world over.” Can we wonder that, under these circumstances, the question arose in many pious and thoughtful minds, “Would it not be for the interests of religion and of Methodism in these Provinces if a union was effected between the two bodies? We are one in faith, and one in usage, while the differences which exist in our respective forms of government are not of a character that need keep us still apart.” This question soon became the engrossing topic in Methodist circles. It was informally discussed at Official Meetings, as well as among the people at large; and soon there was a general conviction, shared alike by preachers and people, that some such arrangement would be highly beneficial to both Societies.

It will be remembered that, in 1828, the Conference had appointed a Committee of three to correspond with the English Conference with the object of establishing friendly relations between the two bodies. It appears, however, that nothing was done till 1831, when the action taken by the English Missionary Committee induced the Rev. Egerton Ryerson to address a letter to the principal Secretary of the Committee, the Rev. Richard Watson, giving a full statement of the case as it then stood, and also of the views of the Canadian Preachers in reference to the matter. In the following year the Committee sent out the Rev. Robert Alder, as their Agent and Representative, and with him communications to the Missionary Board of the Canada Conference at Toronto. Mr. Alder delivered the documents, and at the same time communicated the object of his mission, namely, to prepare the way for the appointment of a number of English Wesleyan Missionaries among the British emigrants in various parts of the Province. The Board admitted their inability to supply the religious wants of the population, but stated to Mr. Alder, and also to the English Committee, the evils likely to arise from the establishment of two bodies of Methodists in the Province, and suggested the propriety of uniting the means and energies of the two connexions for the evangelization of the Indian tribes and new settlers of the country. The Board also invited Mr. Alder to attend the Session of Conference to be held in about six weeks from that time.

Some account of these preliminary steps having been published in the *Christian Guardian*, the interest felt in the question was increased throughout the whole connexion; consequently, when the Conference assembled at Hallowell, on the 8th of August, all the preachers who had been received into full connexion, (except one or two who were detained by sickness,) were in attendance. Besides these, a number of leading laymen, from different parts of the Province, had come to the seat of Conference, attracted by a desire to