

From all this it is clear that we make ordination the special duty of a Bishop, that the Elders can ordain even a Bishop himself, and that if the two words, "ordination excepted," were omitted, which the General Conference is competent to do, the Presiding Elder, though unordained as a bishop, might, besides performing all the other duties of a Bishop, ordain candidates to the sacred ministry. Whence it would appear that special consecration is not indispensable to the spirit, essence, power, purpose and effect of our Episcopacy. It is the Elder's seal to their election and appointment, and not the communication of a spiritual and divine efficacy.

The question is, Is the Episcopacy done away?

IT MAY BE GREATLY MODIFIED,

but is it abolished? If it is the election that carries the Episcopacy, then Episcopacy is in the Basis of Union, at least in some degree. If it is the consecration to the office that carries the Methodist Episcopacy, then our Episcopacy is not necessarily in the Basis of Union, and may be said to be done away. If the Episcopacy stands upon both the election and the special consecration, then at least one of its supports is left, and that likely the stronger support, the Bishop-elect being already an ordained elder. But if, as our authorities maintain, the Methodist Episcopacy is not an order, but an office in the Presbytery, and if, as John Wesley clearly understood it, the end and aim of that office is to perpetuate in the Presbytery and in their behalf the line of ordinations, and the ministerial office in the Holy Sacraments, conducting these ordinations and authorizing these Sacraments under the sanction and direction of the entire body of the Presbytery, and in the name or the whole Church, then the Methodist Episcopacy is not done away in the Basis. Its gist, aim, purpose, and results are secured and preserved in the Basis, though there be no stipulation that there be any special consecration or ritual induction to this office. It will be for this General Conference to say whether in its opinion the Episcopacy is done away by the Basis, for that decision will affect the vote to be taken in the Quarterly Meeting Conferences. But for myself, though neither the name Bishop, nor the life term of the office, nor the special ceremonial consecration to the office is found in the Basis of Union, while these are evidently important modifications of our Episcopacy, holding as I do that the Bishop is in orders but a Presbyter, and is by office considered apart from the General Superintendency, the agent of the General Conference, that is, of the Church, in the preservation of the line of ordinations, and of the purity, efficiency, and sufficiency of the Holy Sacraments, I do not consider that our Methodist Episcopacy is by any means in constitution, nature, force, and effect done away in the Basis of Union. If I thought that the General Superintendency was gone, and no vestige of the Episcopacy left, I could not raise, I would not raise either hand or voice in favor of the Basis of Union now submitted to this body, and possibly to the Church for approval. And I am persuaded there are many more of my mind in this General Conference. Methodist Union may be desirable for many reasons, but it might be secured at too great a cost.

Once it is settled, if it should be so settled that the plan of our Superintendency is not destroyed; that our Episcopacy is not done away, and the other restrictive rules are not infringed, the vote in the Quarterly Meeting Conferences may be made less exacting; but still great practical difficulties remain, and questions of vast importance for the Quarterly Conferences to consider, should this General Conference deem it wise to send those questions on to those subordinate Conferences. This General Conference will no doubt consider the Basis article by article and item by item, and give its deliverance thereupon. And should the General Conference decide that the restrictive rules are infringed, and so virtually declare against the Basis, it is competent for the Quarterly Conferences to initiate measures and make recommendations in due course. But we will all agree, and no doubt our Quarterly Meeting Conferences will heartily coincide with us, that if the General Conference find anything in the Basis fatal to Union and beyond the reach of this Conference, so far as practicable the agitation on