

THE DIACONATE, OR HALF-ORDINATION.

The restoration of the diaconate, or the giving of a probationer the half-ordination, empowering him to baptize and marry, and to assist the elder at the sacrament, at the end of two years well endured probation, with a seat in the Annual Conference, would, while it would seem like a concession to our Episcopal brethren, be a valuable administrative arrangement in itself, for which I could furnish something like Wesleyan precedents and many reasons for its probable usefulness.

A MERE OUTLINE.

Now all these proposals could be amplified illustrated and argued or defended at much greater length, if I did not think that a mere outline exhibition of my plan, besides being simplest, is best at this stage of proceedings. When I find any part to be misunderstood or challenged, it will be time enough to explain or defend.

COMPROMISES ABOUT EQUAL.

According to the scheme which I have sketched above there would be concession and compromise about equally exercised on all sides: the present Methodist Church of Canada would be conceding lay-co-operation to a much greater extent than now in the District Meeting, and the same in the Annual Conference in lieu of its present mixed-committee system; the Primitive Methodists would be giving up one-half of their lay-delegates; and all those bodies which have full lay-delegation at present would be surrendering several things to pastoral authority and ministerial prerogative which ministers do not enjoy among them now. I do not say anything about our Episcopal brethren surrendering the matter of lay-delegation in the Annual as well as General Conference, for they have it under consideration; but our brethren of the Evangelical Association, if they came into the measure, would be surrendering that which they have not yet conceded to the laity—a representation in Conference; and the Episcopal Methodists would be surrendering their Bishops, proper, for General Superintendents, elected for a term of four years; and they would be giving up their travelling Presiding Elders, unless in rare cases, as a temporary expedient for supervising the newer parts of the work, more likely to be supplied with a younger and less experienced ministry. The diaconate, perhaps, might not be much cared for one way or another on any side; but all the other bodies besides themselves would be adopting what they have not been much—or lately—used to, a General Supervision instead of an Annual and Local Presidency.

UNIVERSITY

** If any considerable number of Methodists in any locality, upon the perusal of it, approve of this scheme, let them call an unofficial meeting and express their approval. This might be done in sections, by those of the several bodies apart; or done by a mass meeting of all sorts of Methodists together. This will give impetus to the union movement, and show the state of public opinion.

Shorthill