

REV. W. M. PUNSHON'S ADDRESS.

MR. PRESIDENT, Honoured Fathers and Brethren,—I thank you, on behalf of the Canadian Conference, for the kindness with which you have received and listened to the filial address which, as the representative of that Conference, I have been permitted to bring to you. I would fain on this occasion represent that Conference worthily, for my constituency is so vast, so intelligent, and so worthy of all possible honour, that they deserve representation of the ablest and of the amplest kind. (Hear, hear.) I am painfully conscious that my task is too heavy for my powers, and besides this consciousness, which of itself is sufficiently embarrassing, I am still further embarrassed by the circumstances which surround me, and by the presence in which I am called upon to speak. This meeting is supposed to be, and indeed it is, a session of Conference; but I have only to look upward and sideward to discover that all the hearts before me do not throb beneath clerical vestments. (A laugh.) Now there is a gravity of utterance befitting halls of legislation, and there is a freedom of utterance adapted to popular assemblies, which I am somewhat puzzled to know how to combine. The Canadian Conference sent to England last year a well-loved and eloquent representative, who discharged his duty, as his constituents thought, well; and, as gratitude exists in Canada, and we are not afraid to express it, the Conference recently held has told him so by formal resolution. One of those unseen kings, however, kings of the tripod, who sit in judgment upon the sayings and doings of your august assembly, while acknowledging the geniality and heart of the representative's address, has left on record his conviction that the Canadian representation was not overladen with dignity. Now I am heartily glad to be in such good company, for I am sure to fail in that particular regard. (A laugh.) My heart is very full—(hear, hear)—both towards the Conference proper, and towards those other friends among the laity who are as yet extra-Conferential. It beats altogether too warmly to be consistent with the patrician indifference which I suppose the dignity of a representative demands. (A laugh.) Moreover, if there is a spot upon earth where dignity sits ill upon a man, it is when he plays off its airs at home. (“Hear, hear,” and applause.) I will therefore ask you to excuse me if I lay my dignity where the mace of the House of Commons is laid, under the table—(laughter)—while I speak to you simply as a friend to friends. (Hear, hear.) I