

to the Conference, which perhaps the President would kindly allow him now to read.

The PRESIDENT: Certainly.

The Rev. Mr. PUNSHON then read the letter, which excited great interest. The speaker resumed: The missions to the Red River had had to go through a year of trouble and peril. Nearly one-third of the Indians had been swept off by the small-pox, and although the missionary's family had not altogether escaped, the missionary had been sustained by indomitable faith, and rejoiced in the fidelity of the native converts and in their triumph in danger and death. There were many difficulties, as they might imagine, in the way of the conversion of the Indians. The Indian was once monarch of the plains, and he could not be expected to cherish a very friendly feeling towards those who had superseded him. He was fast fading away, and being helped to his decay by the worst white man's habits, he could not be expected to be very friendly towards those by whom he had been corrupted and ruined. Besides, there were among the Indians many dissensions—some of them hereditary—which were mischievously fostered by the advocates of a cunning policy of extermination. Between the two opposing parties the missionary could scarcely escape blame or injury. The Indian preferred the life of Nimrod the hunter to that of Noah the vine-dresser, and lately the buffalo had seemingly almost vanished from the prairies, and many of them connected this threatened famine with the presence of the missionaries in their midst. Thus the missionaries had to be wise as serpents, harmless as doves, which reminded him that a colored preacher said, in commenting upon that passage, that they must take care to mix the ingredients right—say in the proportion of one pound of the dove to an ounce of the serpent. The missions in British Columbia, which he had recently been privileged to visit, were established some sixteen years ago. They were started by the Canadian Conference, sustained by the moral support and by the financial support—only by a little of the latter, however—of the Conference at home. The first batch of missionaries was headed by the Rev. Dr. Evans, ex-co-delegate of the Canadian Conference, of whom such respectful mention was made in last year's address, and who was worthy of all that they could say in his favour, for as a Western presiding elder remarked of the late Dr. Newton, "He is a happily put up man." He (Mr. Punshon) had been privileged in connection with the Indian work—the needs of which specially impressed him—to ordain a minister for that special part of the work, the first Methodist ordination, but not the last, he hoped,