

teaching, as a part of the very foundation of the system. Our Lord said: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you;" and we read in Ephesians that Christ "loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water—*by the Word*." Teaching washes the mind—as water washes the body. Every sermon is an effort so to wash the minds of hearers. And since it has pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe, the "washings of teaching" do come next to faith in God, in the plan of salvation.

THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN.

Attention was called to the subject of "Woman's Ministry" in last month's issue of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

Woman's work and status in secular professions has been so long discussed in almost every phase, that it has ceased to have whatever charm there may be in the novelty of such a matter. It would not be a great marvel to any one if, in your pages, the question should be barely "discussable," even to the extent of allowing judgment to go by default. The church is undoubtedly very conservative when any matter touching herself is concerned. It is so much easier to preach liberty and fidelity to principle than to practise either of them or both. Women, we believe, have the spirit of the age upon their side at this moment, and the spirit of the age is not greatly in danger of defeat.

They have entered the profession of law; have entered the profession of medicine; have entered the service of the State in several departments, and that they should enter the Christian ministry is not vastly amazing to those who have moved with the times, and are moved, not by the dead letter, but by the living spirit of truth, and the everlasting laws of righteousness.

Women are members of the church, and in the full exercise of the Christian franchise. They are members of the Congregational Union, and possess all the privileges of members, and if Dr. Stevenson's noble words stand for ideas, and are not to be taken as a mere display of oratorical fireworks, when he said, "We have no creed, no confession, no cate-

chisms. We are orthodox and we are free. We can go to battle without fetters upon us, and should, therefore, be enabled to take our stand nobly in the struggle which is already upon us," if these words have meaning, and in any real sense represent the Congregational body, it is not conceivable that the churches or the Union can go out of their way to formulate some new dogma or invent "a sex line" to keep women—otherwise qualified—out of the work of the Christian ministry.

Women are human beings of the mother sex, no great disqualification one would think for preaching Jesus Christ—"the carpenter, the son of Mary." They are the equivalents of men, and many believe more than their equivalents in a moral sense. "There can be neither Jew nor Greek," according to Paul; "there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female, for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus." (R.V.) Whether Paul was a bachelor or not, the wise ones among your readers will no doubt be able to tell us. It is, however, certain that women were among his chosen friends and colleagues, and even "of note among the apostles."

Was it not in their dual capacity that our first parents received the lordship of the world? And is it not in the unity of the second Adam that He has promised to abide with us always, even unto the end of the age?

It is needless to enter upon the question controversially at present, or even mention such women as Miriam, Deborah and Huldah, types of womanly strength and courage, or the devout and faithful women of our Lord's day, who, notwithstanding eastern customs, followed Him, ministered to Him of their substance, and were His friends and devoted followers, even when the men of His company forsook Him in ignoble panic, and left Him to the bitter cross.

We sometimes hear of this or that sphere "unsexing" women. Whatever that choice phrase may mean, "one thing we may be certain of—that what is contrary to woman's nature to do, they never will be made to do by simply giving their nature's free play. The anxiety of mankind to interfere in behalf of nature, for fear lest nature should not succeed in effecting its purpose, is an altogether unnecessary solicitude. What women by nature cannot do, it is quite superfluous to forbid them from doing; what they can do, but not