

portant changes, they received striking testimony from the lips of St. Jerome. He says, 'The right of the laity to baptize has often been recognised in cases of necessity; for every one may give that which he has received.' We read in the 'Commentaries' attributed to Ambrose, that in the beginning all taught, and all baptized, on every opportunity.'—*Pressensé*.

"This notion of a peculiar people of God (*κληρος του θεου*) applied distinctively to a particular order of men among the Christians, is wholly foreign to the original Christian mind."—*Neander*.

"The spirit and practice of the Apostles thus favoured a certain kind of popular self-government, and the harmonious, fraternal co-operation of the different elements of the Church. It contained no abstract distinction of clergy and laity. All believers are called to the prophetic, priestly and kingly offices in Christ. The bearers of authority and discipline should never forget that their great work is to train the governed to freedom and independence, and by the various spiritual offices, to form gradually the whole body of believers to the unity of faith and knowledge, and to the perfect manhood of Christ."—*Schaff*.

Never since apostolic times was the idea of the priesthood of the people so fully recognised as in early Methodism, and never did greater success attend any church organization. "All at it, and always at it," is a phrase which was employed, not inaptly, to express the common activity in Christian labour. The social means of grace, especially the class-meeting, furnished opportunity for the manifestation of the peculiar gifts of every member. Adaptation to any special work was noticed, and from the recruiting field, exhorters, local-preachers, and itinerants were selected, who, yielding to the call of God and of the brethren, went forth to spread the triumphs of the cross. The itinerant ministry, if it could have existed at all, would never have been able to accomplish a tithe of the work of evangelization, had it not been sustained and aided by the systematic employment of these other agencies.

It must be admitted that there is still need, pressing need, for the services of these various classes of Christian labourers. In our towns and cities, and throughout our scattered country districts, there are families and communities which cannot be regularly and effectively reached and benefited by the Gospel without them. And there is a great deal of latent power in the Church which is comparatively ineffective. How can this latent power be evoked and made serviceable in the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom? How can the talent which lies dormant