

sistent with the love of God. For the true Gospel of Methodism in its essential qualities, as distinguished from the accidental form in which it appears, we must turn to the hymns of John and Charles Wesley. In the only absolutely original hymn from the pen of John Wesley which we possess are these significant words :

"Thou by Thy word upholdest all,
Thy bounteous love to all is showed."

Charles Wesley, again, whose hymns have done more to spread and to popularize the tenets of Methodism even than the prose writings of his brother, expresses the true significance of the Methodist movement in the well-known and favourite hymn,

"See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace !
Jesus' love the nations fires,
Sets the kingdoms on a blaze."

Yes! it was the love of Jesus which kindled that fire of Methodism which swept round the world, which has become proverbial, and which never burned more brightly and more intensely than it does to-day. The love of God, we cannot repeat it too often, was the chief and invariable theme with which the Wesleys and their helpers revolutionized the British Empire. It is a very touching and instructive fact that as Wesley lay dying he made great exertions to speak to Joseph Bradford, and for some time his strength was so far gone that he could not make himself heard. But at last, by desperate efforts, he conveyed to Mr. Bradford his fervent desire that a sermon which he had written on "The Love of God" should be scattered broadcast and given away to everybody. This was Wesley's last gift to the British people and to the human race—a sermon on "The Love of God."

When Wesley began his work England was an unhappy nation, cruelly governed by cruel laws. But the amazing and unprecedented growth of gentleness and humanitarianism, and the profound sympathy now universally felt for the poor, the friendless, and the fallen, are the direct result of that Evangel of Love which Wesley lived and practised. As the result of that work, consciously or unconsciously, all the great and characteristic theologians of every Church, our own President, the Bishop of Durham, Dr. Marcus Dods, and others, have devoted their prime to the exposition of St. John. Robert Browning has given us the Johannine Gospel in verse. Sir Edwin Arnold, in the exquisite volume, "The Light of the World," which he has just published, gives similar prominence to the sweet and gracious humility of Christ. All these are the direct result in public life and in serious literature of the fact that the Johannine Gospel found its first popular exponent in John Wesley. The passionate love for the suffering and outcast exhibited by the Salvation Army is another striking indication of the great truth to which we have referred. We ought not to close this reference to the most conspicuous feature of the Methodist movement without once more quoting the beautiful story of the little boy, who, on his deathbed, said that his greatest desire was to go to "Mr. Whitfield's God." Happy beyond all expression are those preachers of the Gospel who succeed in persuading even timid little boys that death itself has no terror for those who go to the God whom they preach. And the greatest glory of Methodism shall ever be that it inscribed the distinctive teaching of St. John upon the hearts of the "common people."

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THEN sow ; for the hours are fleeting
And the seed must fall to-day ;
And care not what hands shall reap it,
Or if you shall have passed away
Before the waving cornfields
Shall gladden the sunny day.