

THE METHODIST CHURCH.

THE Origin, Design, and General Rules OF OUR UNITED SOCIETIES.

EXTRACTED FROM THE RULES OF OUR CHURCH.

(1) In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley, in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, as did two or three more the next day, that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together; which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on *Thursday*, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them (for their numbers increased daily), he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them; and they always concluded their meetings with prayer suited to their several necessities.

(2) This was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY, first in *Europe* and then in *America*. Such a Society is no other than "*a company of men, having the form, and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.*"