

editions of these Rules were published during Mr. Wesley's lifetime. The first edition did not contain the introductory paragraph, but began with "Such a Society," &c. In the preparation of these Rules the practical character of Wesley's mind and his remarkable faculty of organizing, plainly appear. It was not enough, in his view, to call men to repentance by the preaching of the Word—they must be associated together for instruction and mutual help, and placed under such oversight as would conduce to their growth in grace and knowledge. The result has abundantly proved the wisdom of this arrangement. Whitfield was, in some respects, a greater preacher than Wesley, but he appears to have been destitute altogether of organizing power. No provision was made for the spiritual oversight of those who were converted through his instrumentality, and the fruits of his labors soon disappeared—swallowed up in existing churches, or drifting back into the world. Wesley chose a more excellent way; and the "General Rules" became a bond of association among Methodists the wide world over.

### *The People called Methodists.*

It will be observed Mr. Wesley always spoke of those who composed his Societies as "the people *called* Methodists." It was not a name of their own choosing, nor did Mr. Wesley himself willingly employ it. "I should rejoice," he remarks in one place, "(so little ambitious am I to be at the head of any sect or party), if the very name might never be mentioned more, but be buried in eternal oblivion." The origin of the name is given by Mr. Wesley (Works, vol. v., p. 240, American Ed.), as follows:—

"Let it be well observed this is not a name which they take to themselves, but one fixed upon them by way of reproach, without their approbation or consent. It was first given to three or four young men at Oxford, by a student of Christ Church, either in allusion to the ancient sect of physicians so called, from their teaching that almost all diseases might be cured by a specific *method* of diet and exercise, or from their observing a more regular *method* of study and behaviour than was usual with those of their age and station."

Again, in a "Short History of Methodism," published about 1764, Mr. Wesley gives the names of those who at Oxford began, in 1729, "to spend some evenings in a week together in reading, chiefly, the Greek Testament," and adds,—

"The exact regularity of their lives, as well as studies, occasioned a young gentleman of Christ Church to say, 'Here is a new set of Methodists sprung up,' alluding to some ancient physicians who were so called. The name was new and quaint, so it took immediately, and the Methodists were known all over the University."

Methodism does not afford the only instance of this kind. "The Puritans were so called because they affected a greater *purity* of speech, dress and manners, than was usual." And in the Acts of the Apostles we read that "the disciples were called Christians" [doubtless in scorn] "first in Antioch." In each case a name given as a badge of reproach has been accepted, and dignified, and made honorable. Methodism has now become a numerous family, and its various branches are distinguished by specific titles—Episcopal,