

WESLEYAN METHODIST MAGAZINE

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WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA.

QUARTERLY TICKET FOR MAY, 1862.

Considerable obscurity rests on the origin of the Wesleyan plan of giving to the membership of the Church a ticket, at each quarterly visitation of the classes. About the year 1699, Dr. Woodward published an account of a number of religious societies, which had their origin in 1667, principally in the ministrations of the pious Dr. Horneck and Mr. Smithies, of London. These societies were in the habit of holding weekly meetings, and similar tokens, it is supposed, were given to the members.

Several of these societies Mr. Wesley found existing in London, and in Bristol, when he began his career. And to them he makes frequent reference in the first part of his journals. They were exceedingly useful for some time—but had greatly declined in religious vigour and zeal. About the time Mr. Wesley commenced his labours in London, one of these societies at St. Ives, in Cornwall, gave proof of renewed religious vitality and power, and when the Methodist preachers visited St. Ives, they were cordially received by its members. In Smith's "History of Wesleyan Methodism," we have a copy of a ticket dated Sept. 4th, 1739, given near Penance, most likely by this or some similar society, to one of its members, and this was before any Methodist minister had visited the west of England. The first Methodist Society was formed in the latter end of the year 1739, and consisted of twelve persons. In Mr. Wesley's Sermon "On God's Vineyard" he says, "Twelve came the first Thursday night, forty the second, and soon after a hundred."

The year 1742 forms an important period in the history of Methodism; the division of the society into classes shows the wisdom and foresight of its founder, as it brought the whole of his rapidly-increasing societies under order and watchful discipline, and furnished opportunity for that individual religious instruction so essential to spiritual progress and efficiency, while