

**THE “METHODIST” STUDENT CRISIS IN NEUCHÂTEL, 1820-1826:
JEAN-HENRI GRANDPIERRE AND
SAMUEL-AUGUSTE DE PETITPIERRE**

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It has been argued that the established clergy in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, were particularly threatened by a group of young clergy identified as “Methodists” during the 1820s. The first group of “Methodists” in Neuchâtel presented difficulties for the Class.¹ The situation became more complicated as the next cohort of theological students progressed toward preparation for ordination. In 1818, Jean-Henri Grandpierre and Samuel-Auguste de Petitpierre were admitted by the Class as theological students.² There they joined Alphonse Frédéric Diacon, Edouard-Henri Petitpierre, and Gustave Petitpierre, whom all had been accepted slightly earlier. All of these students became problems for the Class. All of them became known as “Methodists” during their period of theological formation. They were students during a time of “Methodist” crisis in Neuchâtel as the Class struggled with a particular group of young clergy: Frédéric-Guillaume Clottu, James (Jacques Auguste) du Pasquier, and Abraham-François Pétavel.³ They would have understood the negative consequences of being identified as “Methodists” for their careers.

This essay focuses, albeit not exclusively, on two of this second cohort: Jean-Henri Grandpierre (1799-1874) and Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre (1800-1831). It describes the process of their theological formation and transition from conforming Reformed theological students to adherents of a theology and spirituality described by their contemporaries as “Methodist.” In a city where there were no Methodist missionaries or congregations, what did it mean to be described as a Methodist? What was their theology? It is argued that although their theology was congruent with Wesleyan

¹ The “Class” or “Venerable Class” or “Company of Pastors” were self-designations of the guild of Reformed clergy of the city of Neuchâtel, who maintained theocratic control over much of the life of the city from the Reformation to the early nineteenth century. The fear of losing that control was the reason for attacking the “Methodist” young clergy and theological students.

² *Actes de la Classe* 15, 496 (490): “Jean Henri, né le 19 Février 1799, fils de Mr. Jean Ulrich Grandpierre, Bourgeois de Neuchâtel, & Samuel Auguste, né le 17 Juillet 1800, fils de feu Mr. Samuel de de Petitpierre, ancien, Maître bourgeois de Neuchâtel, ayant été examinés sur les langues latine & grecque, sur les principes de l’hébreu, & sur la Philosophie rationnelle & trouvés suffisamment instruits ont été admis à l’unanimité au nombre des Étudiants en Théologie. Les règlements ont été lus & Mr. Le Doyen les a exhorté à s’y conformer.” Note that the social status of each was noted in the *Actes*.

³ See David Bundy, “Should the Methodists Get All the Credit? The Methodist Crisis in Neuchâtel, 1820-1830,” *Methodist History* 54.3 (April, 2016): 180-191.

Methodist theology, they are more accurately to be described as part of the evolving “Réveil” in Francophone Europe, with significant connections to the Moravian and Pietist traditions rather than directly to the Wesleyan Methodists.

Theological Study: Neuchâtel, Zürich and Tübingen

The struggling College of Neuchâtel received new life in 1813 with the appointment of Abraham François Pétavel (1791-1870), the first doctoral graduate of the new University of Berlin, as professor of Greek and Latin.⁴ At this time each student was expected to spend 30-35 hours per week in class with a professor who was their teacher for the year. Jean-Henri Grandpierre, a student from about 1814 to 1817 reported his experience. His professors: the first year Professor Frédéric Louis Convert, from France, harsh and exacting, taught French and Latin; the second year teacher, Bersot, was remembered as more humane; the third year was taught by Würflein, a learned and able teacher of Greek. Finally in the fourth year, there was Pétavel, whom he had first met as a seven year old tambourine player in a military youth band with Pétavel as his captain.⁵ Pétavel, later “my Christian and honorable friend,” became a role model for generations of students.⁶ Pétavel later became, in 1820, one of the persons referred to by contemporaries as Methodists.

Until the 1830s, Neuchâtel theological education was based primarily upon the work of J. F. Osterwald (1663-1747) published by his students⁷ and J. A. Turretini (1671-1737).⁸ For example, in 1818, ministerial student Jean-Henri Grandpierre was obliged to interact with, and agree with Osterwald’s treatise for his study on the ministry.⁹ The lack of study of more recent scholarly issues in theology left the students ill-prepared for university level work, a level of certification increasingly demanded by the bourgeoisie.¹⁰ This lack of formation was clear when students began to study abroad. On December 1, 1819, Grandpierre was belatedly approved to study theology in Zürich (he

⁴ On Pétavel, see Gottfried Hammann, “Abraham François Pétavel (1791-1870),” in *Histoire del’Université de Neuchâtel* (Neuchâtel: Gilles Attinger & Hautrive, 1988), 1:360-381; and “Abraham-François Pétavel” *Véritable Messager Boiteux* (1872), 41-44 (obituary).

⁵ Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 258-260. On the marching band experience, see Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 256-257.

⁶ Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 260.

⁷ Jean-Frédéric Osterwald, *La liturgie, ou La manière de célébrer le service divin, qui est établie dans les Églises de la Principauté de Neufchatel et Vallangin* (Basle: chez Jean Pistorius, 1713); *idem*, *Morale chrétienne* (La Neuveville: chés Jean-Jacques Marolf & fils, 1740), *idem*, *Catéchisme ou Instruction dans la religion chrétienne* (Neuchâtel: Chez Abraham Boyve & Comp., 1747).

⁸ Jean-Alphonse Turretini, *Oratio de componendis Protestantium dissidiis* (Regensburg: Krüttinger 1707); and, *idem*, *Disputatio Theologica* (Genève, Jean de Tournes, 1661).

⁹ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Exercice du [Sain]t Ministère à Henri Grandpierre. Étudiant en Théologie*. Ms. Défap, 9581. He was required to interact with Jean-Frédéric Osterwald, *De l’exercice du ministère sacré* (Basle: J. Brandmuller, 1739).

¹⁰ See the comments of Henri DuBois, *et alia*, *L’Enseignement de la théologie à Neuchâtel*, 6.

and Samuel-Auguste de Petitpierre were apparently already there), which was less infected by the Réveil than Geneva, Bern, or Lausanne. The study in Zürich was considered a failure by both. They found themselves well trained in Greek and Hebrew but unprepared for the scholarly study of theology though they did improve their knowledge of German.¹¹ It is important to note that during the first years of study under the supervision of the Class, there was no indication of "Methodist" tendencies among these students. Certainly they would have known of the controversy swirling around Clottu, Pétavel, and du Pasquier.¹²

The young men walked from Zürich to Tübingen to continue their studies. There they found the professors interesting and personable. Grandpierre remembered fondly, among other things, the lectures on the Pauline *Epistle to the Ephesians* by Johann Friedrich Flatt (1759-1821),¹³ as well as the relationship he established with Professor Johann Christian Friedrich Steudel (1779-1837).¹⁴ The Neuchâtel students attended worship at nearby churches, and were befriended by student led Pietist conventicles (like the earlier Pietists, also like the Methodist class meeting); Grandpierre was intimidated by their ability to pray aloud spontaneously.¹⁵ It was Steudel who suggested they visit, on their return to Neuchâtel, the Moravian community at Königsfeld, who provided letters of introduction. The experience at Königsfeld was transformative. They were warmly and graciously received, participated in worship, observed the lives of the community members, and found their spiritual home: ". . . we said to one another: we have found here a Church of true Christians; . . . this is how they should be and live. Let's finish our ordination examinations at Neuchâtel, then, we will return here to settle in this refuge of peace and spend here the rest of our days."¹⁶

Grandpierre and colleagues returned to Neuchâtel with certificates of study from Zürich and Tübingen which they presented to the Class on October 3, 1821, and with a commitment to the religious experiences and practices of the Pietists/Moravians. At Neuchâtel they found that in June, 1820, the process of theological education had been tightened by the Class. It was not to raise standards, but to require more public presentations before the Class. Because of the "Methodist" crisis provoked by Clottu and du Pasquier, who had studied at Geneva, the Class wanted additional exposure to the thinking and behavior of each student. The students agreed to postpone their ordinations and to study a year in Neuchâtel but with a reduced

¹¹ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 261.

¹² See David Bundy, "Should the Methodists Get All the Credit?" 187-189 *et passim*.

¹³ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 265-266. For J. F. von Flatt's perspective and approach, see his posthumously published *Vorlesungen über die Briefe Pauli an den Timotheus und Titus, nebst einer allgemeinen Einleitung über die Briefe Pauli* (Tübingen: L. F. Fues, 1831).

¹⁴ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 266. On Steudel, see Isaak August Dorner, "Zum Andenken an Dr. J. Ch. F. Steudel," *Tübingen Zeitschrift für Theologie* 9.1 (1838): 1-42.

¹⁵ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 269.

¹⁶ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 271.

number of presentations.

As soon as the Grandpierre, Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre, and Alphonse Diacon returned to Neuchâtel with Edouard-Henri Petitpierre and Gustave Petitpierre, they began to meet in conventicle and to organize other conventicles. Grandpierre went door to door evangelizing. They were encouraged by Pétavel (especially) but also Clottu, du Pasquier and Henri Fleury, as well as Pastors Alexandre Chavannes of Lausanne and Antoine Galland of Bern. They were aware of the ministries and writings of the Genevans Malan, Bost, and Gaussen.¹⁷ This was, of course, reported to the Class.

The examinations for the year of study were taken in April, 1822. That of Grandpierre was reported as “Sufficient” (“but one would have wished that that which he had learned had been better assimilated, and that he would have reflected more, which he appears not to have done on the things which he studied”).¹⁸ Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre received a “Very Good” and Diacon a “Sufficient” (“one would have wished that he had demonstrated more clarity and precision in his ideas”).¹⁹ Immediately after the report of the examination results, the Class instructed them: (1) avoid all relationships with “Continental Missionaries” or with separatist ministers, especially César Malan, Félix Neff and Ami Bost;²⁰ (2) conduct no para-church meetings for worship at which laypersons are present; (3) and because it would be irritating to some and raise fears that they intended to separate from the national church, the students were strongly advised to avoid praying or worshipping privately together, even though it was admitted that this did no one harm.

No initiative was taken to ordain the students. In November, 1822, the Class delayed (again) discussion of their ordination until April.²¹ Then in February, 1823, a new program of study, including readings, examinations and assigned lectures before the Class, was instituted specifically for Grandpierre, Diacon, Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre, and Edouard-Henri Petitpierre. The added set of examinations were to cover:

- April 2 – Languages, Church History;
- April 17 – Criticism, Practice of Ministry;
- May 1 – Theology, Public defense of theses and a public lecture;
- July 1 – The “Grande” (Great) examination.²²

This appears to have been entirely unprecedented. No record has been found

¹⁷ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 272-274.

¹⁸ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 29, 1 mai, 1822: “. . . mais on auroit désiré que ce qu’il a appris fût mieux digéré, & qu’il eût réfléchi d’avantage qu’il ne paroit l’avoir fait sur les choses qu’il a étudiées.”

¹⁹ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 29, 1 mai, 1822: “. . . on auroit désiré cependant que ce qu’il eût montré plus de netteté & de précision dans ses idées.”

²⁰ This regulation indicates the fear of the church in Neuchâtel being torn apart like that of Geneva. On Geneva, see the useful essay of Timothy C. F. Stunt, “Diversity and Strivings for Unity in the Early Swiss Réveil,” in *Unity and Diversity in the Church*, 351-362.

²¹ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 56, 5-6 nov. 1822.

²² *Actes de la Classe* 16, 71, 5 fév. 1823.

in the *Actes de la Classe*, before or after this time, of such requirements being made of other theological students. Grandpierre understood these as efforts to delay their ordination.²³ On June 3, 1823, Grandpierre and Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre presented lectures on the differences between Christian and pagan morality, while Diacon and Edouard-Henri Petitpierre spoke on the Holy Spirit.²⁴ On July 1, 1823, the Class unanimously received the report that the examinations were successful. The motion to ordain passed by majority vote and the ordinations were scheduled for August.²⁵ This decision indicates that there was significant sympathy for the young "Methodists" among the Neuchâtel clergy.

Grandpierre was ordained on August 6, 1823, and the same day accepted an invitation to Basel via Henry Fleury (a Réveil leader in Neuchâtel) to be the assistant of Jean Henri Ebray (1769-1840),²⁶ pastor (1808-1838) of the Église Française de Bâle (French Church of Basel).²⁷ There he lived for a time with Alexander Vinet with whom he established a life-long, albeit sometimes strained, friendship.²⁸ In December, 1826, he was named director of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, successor to Antoine Galland, mentioned above.²⁹ Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre (1800-1831) was permitted to go to Nîmes as Assistant Pastor.³⁰ He was recalled (1827) and assigned to a position in Neuchâtel.³¹ He was a key organizer (with Pétavel and du Pasquier) of the Neuchâtel Mission Society.³² In January, 1824, Edouard-Henri Petitpierre was approved to go to the French church in Leipzig as an assistant, but instead went as Assistant Pastor at the Wallon

²³ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 276-277.

²⁴ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 92, 3 juin 1823. See similar examination structures, but with theological questions focused on Réveil issues in the exams given missionary candidates for ordination in Paris, with Grandpierre asking the questions in Jean-Henri Grandpierre, "Examen des trois élèves destinés pour le Sud de l'Afrique," *Journal des missions évangéliques* 3 (1828): 350-353.

²⁵ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 97, 1 juil. 1823. Another business item was the ongoing struggle with Clottu.

²⁶ On Ebray, see L. Junod, *Histoire de l'Église Française de Bâle* (Lausanne: Impr. Georges Bridel, 1868), 42 (Grandpierre was mentioned as one of Ebray's assistants); and especially Émile Villars, *Service funèbre célébré dans l'Église Française de Bâle pour la sépulture de Mr. H. Henri Ebray, Réverend Pasteur de la dite Église* (Bâle: Impr. J. C. Neukirch, 1840).

²⁷ Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 279-280; *Actes de la Classe* 16, 99, 101, 6 août 1823.

²⁸ Eugène Rambert, *Alexandre Vinet* (1912), 87, 101, 123-4, 126, 192; Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, Encrevé, 395-396, 398-399.

²⁹ "Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris," *Journal des missions évangéliques* 1 (1826), 288 [departure of Galland; naming of Grandpierre]; "Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris," *Journal des missions évangéliques* 2 (1827), 336-350 [report on Grandpierre's installation]. On the theological paradigms sustaining the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris, see David Bundy, "Pietist and Methodist Roots of the Société des Missions Évangéliques de Paris," *The Asbury Journal* 70 (2015): 28-54.

³⁰ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 208, 21 juil. 1824. From there he corresponded with Alexandre Vinet. See Eugène Rambert, *Alexandre Vinet* (1912), 105.

³¹ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 241-242, 5 jan. 1825; *Actes de la Classe* 16, 381, 11 juil. 1826.

³² Alphonse Diacon et Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre, *Discours prononcés à Neuchâtel aux Assemblées générales de la Société des missions en 1827, 1828 et 1829* (Neuchâtel: C. Gerster, 1832). See *Archives du christianisme* (1831), 567.

Church in Amsterdam.³³ He died in Dortrecht in February, 1827.³⁴ Gustave Petitpierre was accused of involvement in “conventicles”; his bourgeois status caused great concern to the Class and the matter appears to have been dropped.³⁵ He became a publisher of religious literature and Sunday school advocate in Neuchâtel.³⁶ Alphonse Diacon went on to study in Berlin, eventually becoming a professor at the College de Neuchâtel where he translated August Neander into French and established a reputation as a preacher.³⁷ He was a supporter of Réveil organizations, especially the Neuchâtel Mission Society.³⁸ None of this group initially received a pastoral appointment in the Canton of Neuchâtel. The dispersal enhanced their access to the developing of the international Réveil network of the 1820s.

The Theology of the Neuchâtel Réveil “Methodists: Grandpierre and de Petitpierre

The demand of the Class for additional theological education, lectures and examinations indicates their concern about the theological thinking and practices of spirituality of the young “Methodist” Neuchâtel theologians. Publications by Jean-Henri Grandpierre and Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre from the period provide evidence of the theological perspectives of the young “Methodists.”

Grandpierre preached a farewell sermon at Basel on December 24, 1826, some three years after his ordination.³⁹ The sermon, based on Acts 20:25-27, was an intensely personal, somewhat self-righteous statement of his mission “to announce the counsel of God” and his theological commitments. It focused on the goal of his preaching (“we have preached to you the truth which alone may save your souls”).⁴⁰ He insisted on four points as follows. First, there is a separation between people and God that must be breached. Second, salvation is available to all through faith in Christ, and through the

³³ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 126, 8 jan. 1823. See *Bulletin de la commission pour l'histoire des églises wallones* 3 (1888), 45.

³⁴ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 417, 20 fév. 1827.

³⁵ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 244-245, 5 jan. 1825.

³⁶ He translated (at least) one item from English: *Du Repentir Envers Dieu*, trad. de l'anglais par Gustave Petitpierre; ouvrage dont les notes et la préface ont été dictées par le Sauveur (Lausanne: Imprimerie Pache, 1854).

³⁷ August Neander, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du christianisme et de la vie chrétienne, ou, Recueil de traits et de documents remarquables, tirés des annales de l'Eglise*; trad. de l'allemand par Alphonse Diacon (Neuchâtel: C. Gerster 1829 [Vol. 1] and Neuchâtel: J.-P. Michaud, 1842 [Vol. 2]). Alphonse Diacon, *Sermon prêché à Neuchâtel le 15 octobre 1847, jour de la fête du Roi* (Neuchâtel: H. Wolfrath, 1847).

³⁸ Alphonse Diacon et Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre, *Discours prononcés à Neuchâtel aux Assemblées générales de la Société des missions en 1827, 1828 et 1829* (Neuchâtel: C. Gerster, 1830).

³⁹ J. H. Grandpierre, *Sermon d'adieu, prononcé dans l'Eglise française de Basle le 24 décembre 1826* (Basle: Librairie Schweighauser, 1827). Later Grandpierre regretted the tone, if not the content of the sermon. See Jean-Henri Grandpierre, *Les Souvenirs de quelques années de ma vie*, = Encrevé, 403-404.

⁴⁰ J. H. Grandpierre, *Sermon d'adieu* (1827), 7: “Nous avons prêché la vérité qui seule pouvoit sauver vos ames.”

Holy Spirit assurance of salvation is available and the same Holy Spirit witnesses to one's adoption into the family of the children of God.⁴¹ Third, this must be followed by a "new life" of love of God, service to God and others (good works). Fourth, sanctification is the interior transformation that results in a style of life consistent with one's faith commitments: "[God] makes a great change, a complete change in the inclinations, the will and the habits of the converted soul, which is daily by the grace of the Holy Spirit rehabilitated into that state of justice and innocence in which it was first created."⁴² These he considered the "fundamental basics of the Gospel."⁴³ Good works ("*bonnes oeuvres*") were insisted upon. Christianity was not conceived as a nominal commitment but a life-changing, total commitment to the divine program for the regenerated human being. This was the goal of Christian faith wherever found; evangelism and mission were not to be limited to conversion but should lead the believer into sanctification which included service to others.

Twelve sermons of Samuel-Auguste de Petitpierre were posthumously published.⁴⁴ These dealt with theological themes considered primary among Pietists, Methodists, and the Réveil, and are as follows. First, he preached the centrality of the Bible. The Bible is a word from God as one can attempt to prove through miracles, the ongoing fulfillment of prophecy or through natural revelation evidenced by parallels between Christianity and other religious traditions. However, the best witness to the speaking of God is one's sanctification, one's submission to God.⁴⁵ Second, the Christian is individually responsible to thoughtfully read and meaningfully live the Word of God. Third, salvation is only through Christ,⁴⁶ but is available to all who believe; assurance of salvation comes through the work of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁷ Fourth, on sanctification: the Christian is hungry for "happiness and perfection."⁴⁸ Fifth, Christ through the Holy Spirit provides assurance, personal transfor-

⁴¹ Grandpierre, *Sermon d'adieu* (1827), 12-14: "... et avoir reçu de lui par le St. Esprit l'assurance de son salut et le témoignage de son adoption dans la famille des enfans de Dieu."

⁴² J. H. Grandpierre, *Sermon d'adieu* (1827), 12-17. "C'est pourquoi nous vous avons enseigné en quatrième lieu, qu'il se fait un très grand changement, un changement complet dans les inclinations, dans les volontés et dans toutes les habitudes de l'âme convertie, qui est journellement par la grâce de l'Esprit saint réhabilitée dans cet état de justice et d'innocence, dans lequel elle avoit été primitivement créée" (16).

⁴³ Grandpierre, *Sermon d'adieu*, 17: "... les bases fondamentales de l'Évangile"

⁴⁴ Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre, *Sermons sur divers textes de l'Écriture Sainte* (Neuchâtel: Petitpierre et Prince, 1832). The preface (pages v-xvi), unsigned, provides biographical data. It is probably by Gustave or Eugène Petitpierre. There is also a volume of manuscript sermons on *Ephesians*, not included in the published volume, preserved at Neuchâtel, Bibliothèque des Pasteurs, entitled in the catalogue as *Homélie sur la lettre aux Ephésiens, prêchée à Nismes au Petit Temple . . . et à Neuchâtel au Temple du Bas*. These are congruent with those of the published sermons, and will be discussed in a later publication.

⁴⁵ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 1, Heb. 1:2.

⁴⁶ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 3; Jn 3:5; Sermon 4; Acts 4:12.

⁴⁷ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 5, Rom. 1:16; Sermon 7, Jn 3:16; Sermon 12, I Jn 4:8.

⁴⁸ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 1, Heb. 1:2. Quote page 23: "je remarque dans mon âme une soif immense de bonheur et de perfection."

mation, and power for living the sanctified Christian life. Sanctification is synergistic, “I participate in my own perfection,”⁴⁹ which requires responsibly disciplined living according to the biblical paradigms, and which proves the efficacy of God’s speaking. One is not to be a nominal Christian, but to love God and one’s fellow humans completely and to show that love through good works.⁵⁰ Sixth, one is to hold any earthly riches loosely, recognizing that one is a steward for God and has responsibility to use resources unselfishly as directed by God for the Kingdom of God, taking care of the interests of others as if they were one’s own.⁵¹ Thus one can announce “the kingdom of God is near; the Kingdom of God has arrived.”⁵² Seventh, God is to be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth by individuals in the community of the church⁵³ “[God] is owed love without limits, complete submission, entire confidence.”⁵⁴

The theological foci of the “Methodist” Réveil, as reflected in these two young theologian pastors from Neuchâtel, would have found agreement with Zinzendorf and are among the items of Réveil theology as summarized by Daniel Robert and André Encrevé.⁵⁵ There is no language in the text that betrays necessary connections to Wesley, John Fletcher, or the Wesleyan Methodists. The commonalities shared with Wesley and the British Methodists are also found in the Moravians and other Pietists. It is important, and worthy of additional study, to analyze differences and similarities between the Réveil in Neuchâtel and the more shrill, sectarian Réveil of Geneva. The two are certainly related. The differences—which have implications for French and Swiss Protestant history, including mission history—may reflect the eventual attitude of the Class in Neuchâtel.

The Class decided not to fight the Réveil, but to incorporate the younger persons (and their theology) into itself, as can be seen by the careers of James du Pasquier and Samuel Auguste de Petitpierre. This inclusion was not easy,

⁴⁹ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 1, Heb. 1:2. Pages 24-25: “Lui seul me fournit les moyens d’y parvenir, lui seule m’en donne véritablement l’assurance . . . Il purifie ma conscience par une rédemption miséricordieuse et complète, il fortifie tout mon être, et crée en moi de nouvelles dispositions par le don d’un secours spécial; de sorte que toutes mes facultés sont sanctifiées . . . j’assiste à mon propre perfectionnement, je me sens poussé vers le grand but de mon existence . . . Me voilà donc devenu moi-même la preuve évidente que l’Éternel a parlé avec efficace . . .”

⁵⁰ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 8, Acts 19:1-2; Sermon 10, Mt. 5:47.

⁵¹ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 9, Mt. 16:24.

⁵² Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 2, Mt 10:7. Quote p. 36 “le royaume de Dieu est proche; le royaume de Dieu est arrivé.”

⁵³ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 6, Mt 2:1-12; Lk 2:8-16; Sermon 11, Jn 4:24.

⁵⁴ Petitpierre, *Sermons*, 2, Mt 10:7. Quote p. 42 “Nous lui devons amour sans bornes, soumission complète, confiance entière . . .”

⁵⁵ Daniel Robert, *Les Églises Réformées en France 1800-1830* (1861), 374: (1) The sinfulness and corruption of humans, who are unable to save themselves; (2) Redemption made available through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; (3) Sanctification of the convert made possible through the work of the Holy Spirit; (4) The Scriptures are the inspired word of God; (5) Churches are assemblies of the faithful practicing believers. See also André Encrevé, “Le Réveil en France (1815-1850),” *Bulletin de la Société de l’histoire du Protestantisme Français* 155 (2009), 529-540.

but was possible because, as in the Canton of Vaud, there were sympathizers of the Réveil theology and praxis among the clergy and the bourgeoisie. The overtly negative tone of the Class changed following July, 1824, study days for the Class devoted to understanding “Methodism.” What happened during those days was not recorded, only that they happened and that they marked the beginning of the end of the harassment of the young adherents of the Réveil in Neuchâtel.⁵⁶ The “Methodist” theological students were remarkably patient with the establishment through their entire ordeal. As a result, unity in diversity of clergy and the city appears, for a time, to have won.

How Methodist were the Neuchâtel “Methodist” Theological Students?

The Neuchâtel “Methodists” began to develop conventicles to renew the church. These were initiated without the permission or the knowledge of the local clergy. The new Swiss “Methodism” was not based on Farel, Osterwald, or Turretin; it was the theology and spiritual practices of the Pietists and Moravians with parallels to the Methodists John Wesley and John Fletcher—but with no discernible direct influences from them. This study draws into question the received scholarly wisdom that the Réveil is a synthesis of Pietist and Wesleyan theology. This is a matter that needs further investigation on the basis of a wider sample.

The dearth of direct English Methodist influences belies the fact that other similarities were seen not only by the Class but by others, including scholars such as Alexandre Vinet. It was well-known that the Methodist Church began as a renewal movement (*ecclesiola in ecclesia*) and then separated from the Church of England. The Methodist preoccupations of evangelism, mission, and the doctrine of sanctification or “Christian Perfection” were controversial parts of Methodist identity as was their appropriation of Pietist tools of spiritual formation. Methodist arguments and actions were seen to have fostered disturbing ecclesiastical and social shifts.

The Moravians and other Pietists, who heavily influenced the Methodists, made the same arguments. There were, however, important differences in audience, method, and style. The peripatetic Moravians focused on developing communities of worship, theological reflection, and ministry on the margins of the church; the early Methodists took their arguments to the nominal Christians, with special attention to the poor. Wesley’s critiques of ineffective clergy and churches were also well known in Europe. The Class in Neuchâtel was content in its moderate theocracy and feared that the “Methodists” might change the power situation. They therefore attacked the “Methodist” students as influenced by foreign deviant theological perspectives, in an effort to blunt their critiques of the church and to intimidate them. Repression of the Réveil and exile of clergy participants in the renewal activities from Neuchâtel were weapons used to attempt to rein-

⁵⁶ *Actes de la Classe* 16, 211, 4 août 1824. In July, probably at that meeting, Pétavel once again went on record saying that he shared completely the opinions of the “Methodists.” See *Actes de la Classe* 16, 200, 21 juil. 1824. Unfortunately, the conflict with Clottu continued unabated.

force established clerical power. That stern stance proved untenable even in Reformed Neuchâtel. So the Wesleyan Methodists were antecedents, but not instigators, of the Neuchâtel Réveil, providing a model by which it might be interpreted, and perhaps presenting a paradigm for taking the Church to the people.