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A table of contents for the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* can be found here:

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# Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

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## **BRITISH WESLEYAN METHODISM AND THE POST-WAR RECOVERY OF METHODISM IN FRANCE 1871-1874**

**U**PON the Methodist Church of France and Switzerland the ravages of the Franco-Prussian War, 1870 to 1871, fell heavily as upon all parts of French life. The years 1871 to 1874 constitute a revealing episode in its trials, its pattern of recovery, and in its relationship with the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Britain. The first part of this article will provide a narrative treatment of these years, commencing with a broad comparative picture of Britain and France. The second part will consist of an analysis of the relationship between the two Churches, in terms of the challenge presented and the response evoked.

On 19th July 1870 France declared war on Prussia. On 2nd September the Emperor Napoleon III surrendered at Sedan. On 4th September in Paris Gambetta proclaimed the fall of the Second Empire, which had lasted since 1852, and the Third Republic was inaugurated. There followed widespread warfare in France against the invaders and, particularly, the siege of Paris. Encircled from September and bombarded from January 1871, the citizens endured great hardships through famine and extreme winter cold. Despite heroic resistance and the endeavours of provincial armies there was no relief. On 18th January William I of Prussia was proclaimed Emperor of Germany at Versailles; on 28th January there was a temporary armistice; on 10th May the Treaty of Frankfurt was signed, officially ending the war. April and May were marked by the rise and fall of the Commune of Paris. Revolutionary pressure, simmering within the capital since October 1870, had led to the inauguration of the Commune on 28th March. The conflict between the Commune in control of Paris and the besieging army of Versailles mounted to a frightful crescendo of violence and destruction with

heavy loss of life during the last week of May.

As this drama was being enacted in France, Britain was at the height of Victorian prosperity and influence. The premiership of the high-principled Gladstone, extending from 1868 to 1874, began a period of alternation in power with the flamboyant Disraeli until the advent of Lord Salisbury in 1885. Walter Bagehot's classic and later widely-translated work, *The English Constitution*, had appeared in 1867. Growth with underlying stability contrasted with the sharp discontents of the early Victorian period and the magnificence but hidden dangers of the close of the century. Such were France and Britain, then, in the years 1870 and 1871 : one resting on a seemingly assured prosperity, the other passing through a time of crisis.<sup>1</sup>

National comparison, especially in size, may also be made within the particular field of Wesleyan Methodism. In Britain this body constituted, with a membership of over a third of a million, the preponderant part of Methodism. Shaken by the "Fly Sheets" controversy of the late eighteen-forties, the Wesleyan Methodist connexion, however, knew steady growth from 1856 until the close of the century : growing middle-class character being tempered by expressions of evangelistic and social concern.<sup>2</sup> Across the Channel, Methodism was principally situated in Normandy, the Paris region, parts of central and eastern France, French-speaking Switzerland, and more especially the Midi with a concentration in the Department of the Gard. "L'Eglise Méthodiste de France et de Suisse" numbered in 1872 1,916 members, 182 chapels and other meeting places, 8,942 regular hearers, 2,539 Sunday School scholars, and 28 pastors and ministerial candidates.<sup>3</sup> There were three districts, sub-divided into circuits : the North, Switzerland, and Dauphiné, the South (Midi). Beginning in 1791 with the pioneer work of William Mahy, moving forward in the post-Napoleonic period as a missionary thrust guided from London by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, it experienced growth through the work of devoted pastors and lay preachers among whom Charles Cook was pre-eminent. In 1852 the Methodist societies were gathered together into an annual Conference with a large measure of autonomy. For this body, contrasting markedly in size and resources although not in devotion, energy and zeal with the parent connexion in Britain, the Franco-Prussian War, as indicated earlier, constituted a serious challenge. The summons to provide an answer was felt especially by Emile Cook, son of the eminent Charles Cook. Pastor of the church at Les Ternes, Paris, since 1866, and eye-witness of the siege and later the

<sup>1</sup> By 1880 the population of France was 39.2 millions, and that of the United Kingdom 31.1 millions. The more highly industrialised British economy has been estimated as then approximately twice that of more rural France in terms of value of manufactures. See E. H. Tuma, *European Economic History* (New York, 1871), p. 202 and pp. 264-5.

<sup>2</sup> R. E. Davies, *Methodism* (London, 1963), p. 145.

<sup>3</sup> *Actes de la Vingtième Conférence des Pasteurs de l'Eglise Evangélique Méthodiste de France et de Suisse* (Paris, 1872), pp. 8-9.

excesses of the Commune, Emile Cook prepared himself for attendance at the British Conference to be held at Manchester in the summer of 1871. Help was needed to sustain the Methodist cause in France and to provide for further advance.

A great obstacle was opposed to the work that our friend dreamed of taking and which extraordinary circumstances demanded: the lack of money. The church was poor and heavily burdened . . . Emile Cook turned his attention towards England: there was there a sister Church, great, rich, sympathetic to France and which the war had spared: this was a unique moment to appeal to its generosity. The mind of our brother was soon made up . . . he undertook the journey to England in July 1871.<sup>4</sup>

Before tracing in detail the events following the arrival of Emile Cook in Manchester, certain points need to be made. Firstly, for some years it had been the practice for a French delegate to attend the British Conference and for Addresses to be exchanged: in 1869 Luc Pulsford attended the Hull Conference, and in 1870 James Hocart père attended the Burslem Conference. Because of a recent transition, however, to a biennial arrangement,<sup>5</sup> no French Conference was held in the early summer of 1871 and no delegate was therefore expected in Britain. Secondly, throughout the siege of Paris and the days of the Commune, with but one short absence with his family in Jersey, Emile Cook had played an heroic part in participating in ambulance and hospital work, the church of Les Ternes being adapted for this purpose. Elsewhere in France pastors de Jersey, Lagier and Farjat served as army chaplains, the last-named also active in raising relief in the Midi.<sup>6</sup> This prolonged experience not only quickened Cook's motivation to seek help abroad but also provided him with a powerful appeal to deliver at the appropriate time.

From the beginning of 1871 the plight of the suffering was increasingly reported in the British press. In January collections made in Wesleyan chapels to aid the sick and wounded in the "Continental War" were sent to a national fund; private subscriptions given specifically for Methodist sufferers in France and Germany were sent to the Rev. William Shaw and Mr A. M'Arthur.<sup>7</sup> By March 1871 the Lord Mayor of London's French Relief Fund had raised considerable sums.<sup>8</sup> National sympathy tended to change: the leading article of the *Methodist Recorder* in January 1871 commented: "that a vast

<sup>4</sup> E. Farjat, *Emile F. Cook, Souvenirs Recueillis Pour Sa Famille et Ses Amis* (Paris, 1877), pp. 207-8. This work was freely translated into English by L. S. Houghton, *Faithful to the End, the Story of Emile Cook's Life* (London, 1882). Interestingly the official record states that Cook's journey was at the request of the "Bureau de la Conférence"; see *Actes de la Vingtième Conférence* (Paris, 1872), p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> *L'Évangéliste*, 23rd June 1870, p. 186.

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for the Year Ending 1871* (London, 1871), Part One, pp. 133-4. See also *L'Évangéliste*, January 1871, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> *Watchman*, 4th January 1871, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 10th February 1871, p. 67. See also *L'Évangéliste*, 16th March 1871, p. 88.

preponderance of English sympathy is now with France is no longer doubtful";<sup>9</sup> in the previous August the *Methodist Recorder* had castigated Louis Napoleon for his "pride and haughty spirit".<sup>10</sup>

The ground then was being prepared for a ready response by the Manchester Conference in the summer of 1871. In February Jean-Paul Cook, brother of Emile, secretary and general treasurer of the French Conference, recorded in a letter to the Rev. G. T. Perks, one of the secretaries of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Committee, his hope that

. . . the Committee whilst discountenancing any special appeal from us, will consider our special position, and endeavour to help us . . . most energetic appeals are now being made both in England and America on behalf of the Churches and religious Societies of France . . . the fields are white unto the harvest.<sup>11</sup>

Yet, in early June, in a letter to the Committee, Jean-Paul Cook stated: "As we shall not hold our Conference this year, you will not have any delegate from us to your Conference."<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, on 19th July, only a week before the opening of the Manchester Conference, the Rev. Luke Wiseman, one of the secretaries to the Missionary Committee, wrote to James Hocart père, President of the French Conference, stationed at Aigle, in Switzerland:

We do not think it necessary that any one should come from the French Conference to Manchester, particularly as no one could come properly accredited. The passing allusion in my last was written in momentary forgetfulness of the fact that you had not held a Conference this year.<sup>13</sup>

This advice was either not received or not heeded by Emile Cook. In the *Methodist Recorder* of 21st July, the editor stated that he had received a letter from Emile Cook in Paris containing "a touching appeal for further relief" to strengthen a nearly exhausted fund.<sup>14</sup> This early relief fund was undoubtedly the one to which William Gibson, minister of "the English work" at the rue Roquépine church since 1862 and himself eye-witness of the violence of the Commune, had referred in an earlier letter to the *Watchman*.<sup>15</sup> William Gibson had also been busy from January in supplying translated extracts

<sup>9</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 13th January 1871, p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 12th August 1870, p. 454.

<sup>11</sup> J. P. Cook to G. T. Perks, written from Nîmes, 21st February 1871, Methodist Missionary Society Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 18. Hereafter referred to as MMS Archives.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 25.

<sup>13</sup> L. Wiseman to J. Hocart, 19th July 1871, MMS Archives, Box 26, Correspondence Outgoing, 1864-77, p. 411.

<sup>14</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 21st July 1871, p. 379.

<sup>15</sup> W. Gibson, *Paris During the Commune* (London, 1871) was serialised in the *Watchman*. For this particular reference see p. 17.

from the French Methodist publication *L'Évangéliste*<sup>16</sup> for the benefit of readers of the *Methodist Recorder*.<sup>17</sup>

The Wesleyan Methodist Conference opened at Manchester on 26th July and continued to 11th August. The situation in France was quickly brought to its attention. In an early session Emile Cook was welcomed, reference was made to "the disastrous circumstances of France", and it was resolved to send "an address of fraternal sympathy and regard to the French Conference".<sup>18</sup> On 2nd August the *Watchman* reported in detail the address of Emile Cook to the Open Session of the Conference held in the Free Trade Hall the previous Wednesday evening.<sup>19</sup> This was the opportunity for which Emile Cook had been longing and he took full advantage of the occasion, stirred by the sympathetic introduction of the President, Dr J. H. James, and "loud and prolonged cheering".<sup>20</sup> In a long and impassioned address, punctuated regularly by warm responses, Emile Cook emphasised the following points: chaplaincy work during the war by certain pastors, relief work organised in the Midi by Farjat, his own work as "ambulancier" with associated evangelism, among the wounded; Christian opposition to war itself as a social evil; his Anglo-French parentage<sup>21</sup> and his fervent love for France; the ravages of war including the dispersion of congregations and loss of members through emigration, yet relatively little physical damage to chapels and other church property; serious financial problems, particularly the heavy debt in the Central Fund and widespread chapel debts with consequent handicaps placed on maintenance and advance of the work; the difficulties faced by the educational establishment at Nîmes.

There was energetic follow-up. At subsequent sessions Emile Cook quantified the Central or "Conference" debt as £1,800 and chapel debts as some £10,000 or £12,000; the Address to the French Conference, which called attention to "the state of the finances not being the least of the difficulties", and the hope that France "may come out of its sore and humiliating misfortunes, chastened, elevated, morally and religiously improved by them", was adopted; Cook

<sup>16</sup> Edited from 1853 by Jean-Paul Cook as *Les Archives du Méthodisme, L'Évangéliste* assumed its new title from 1st January 1858. This newspaper enjoyed widening circulation and influence in Protestant circles during the Third Republic, especially under the editorship of Matthieu Lelièvre.

<sup>17</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 20th January 1871, p. 28.

<sup>18</sup> *Minutes or Journal of the Conference of the People called Methodists, 1871* (London, 1874), vol. xviii, p. 614.

<sup>19</sup> *Watchman*, 2nd August 1871, pp. 246-7. See also the *Methodist Recorder* for identical report, 1st August 1871, p. 417.

<sup>20</sup> For an interesting comment from a French source, *L'Évangéliste*, late August 1871, p. 269: "An English newspaper says on this subject that the children of Manchester will continue to speak to their own children in the next century of the captivating eloquence of Emile Cook."

<sup>21</sup> His father, Charles Cook, had married in 1826 Julie Marzials of Montauban. At the beginning of the Franco-Prussian War Emile Cook applied for registration as a French citizen. See E. Farjat, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

referred to "the sea that was opening before them" in the new French Republic; finally, an important message from James Hocart père was read.<sup>22</sup> The practical outcome was the authorisation by Conference of a collection to be made in Methodist chapels "on behalf of our brethren in France", at the discretion of the September Quarterly meetings but with the commendation of Conference.<sup>23</sup> Thus was set in motion the Relief Fund which was to occupy much attention in the next two years. President of the Conference Dr James and also Luke Wiseman later gave their personal support in a letter to the *Watchman*; <sup>24</sup> the Missionary Committee was empowered to administer the Relief Fund; significantly also, in view of later events, Emile Cook had his own understanding of the permitted freedom in follow-up work.<sup>25</sup>

During the autumn of 1871 Emile Cook was actively engaged in further commending the cause of French Methodism within the context of evangelical Protestant advance in the new French Republic. Although it is not possible to be precise about his movements, he was active on both sides of the Channel.<sup>26</sup> He attended on 13th September with William Gibson and a fellow-pastor, Siméon Dugand, a "conversazione" in Pastor G. Monod's drawing room in Paris on the need for and opportunities of evangelism.<sup>27</sup> Just over a fortnight later he was present with missionary secretaries G. T. Perks and W. B. Boyce at a meeting in Exeter Hall of the London Districts Auxiliary of the Missionary Society. Emile Cook spoke with "profound emotion" and with "a light and sympathetic voice and pleasant accent", particularly recalling his student days at Richmond College from 1848 to 1851: "out of their abundance in England ought they not to assist French poverty?"<sup>28</sup> In mid-October he spoke on progress made at the Leeds Missionary Anniversary meeting in Brunswick Chapel.<sup>29</sup> Interesting comment on his view of prosperous British Methodism is given in a letter dated 28th October

<sup>22</sup> *Watchman*, 9th August 1871, pp. 258-60. The message of James Hocart was written from Aigle, Switzerland, 25th July 1871.

<sup>23</sup> *Minutes of Conference, 1871* (London, 1874), vol. xviii, p. 721.

<sup>24</sup> *Watchman*, 27th September 1871, p. 316.

<sup>25</sup> See the later letter of Emile Cook to Dr Elijah Hoole, secretary of the Missionary Committee, written from Paris, 19th March 1872; MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 56.

<sup>26</sup> E. Farjat, op. cit., p. 208: "Emile Cook, during a second stay [in England] gave numerous lectures on the events in Paris and received sizeable sums of money." Without specifying a date, *Actes de la Vingtième Conférence* (Paris, 1871), p. 15, records: "Emile Cook visited some English circuits to speak of France and this contributed towards enlarging the collections the English Conference authorised in all its chapels on our behalf."

<sup>27</sup> *Watchman*, 13th September 1871, p. 298.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 4th October 1871, pp. 323-4.

<sup>29</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 20th October 1871, p. 579. See also for help received and special mention of the Spitalfields circuit, *Watchman*, 20th September 1871, p. 306.

to the *Methodist Recorder*.<sup>30</sup> Cook referred boldly to £14,000 as the amount necessary to put all work in France on an assured footing ; he suggested that working men and farm labourers could consider five to ten shillings, tradespeople their guineas, three hundred Methodist gentlemen five pounds, and two hundred gentlemen ten pounds in contributions. Finally he instanced Methodist merchant princes, surely a rare breed, who could rise even to a five hundred pounds' donation! The cause was also being advanced during the autumn by correspondence with the Missionary Committee.

From the beginning of 1872 Emile Cook continued his energetic work in close association with his elder brother Jean-Paul. There were parallels and contrasts between these two zealous sons of the indefatigable Charles Cook.<sup>31</sup> Both spent their boyhood in the village of Congénies, not far from Nîmes ; both were converted at an early age, nine and ten years respectively ; both were pupils at Woodhouse Grove School in Yorkshire, as also was William Gibson, incidentally ; both were ordained as pastors of the French Methodist Church in early manhood, Emile in 1854 and Jean-Paul in 1856 ; both revealed broad sympathies within movements such as the Evangelical Alliance. There were variations. Jean-Paul was notable particularly for administrative skill, interest in publication, founding in 1851 *Le Magasin des Ecoles du Dimanche* and in 1853 *Les Archives du Méthodisme* (later to become *L'Évangéliste*), and in widespread contacts within French Protestantism, particularly the Sunday School movement. Emile Cook was notable particularly for his evangelistic and pastoral work in successive appointments in the Cévennes, St Pierre-lès-Calais, and finally from 1866 Paris. His experience and fervour led to his becoming President of the French Conference from October 1874. In temperament Jean-Paul was more reserved than Emile and more heavily built than his brother, whose agility was seen, for instance, in his love of gymnastics at Richmond College.<sup>32</sup>

These complementary qualities and mutual resolution of the two brothers were to be fully employed in the new year. In late January 1872 Jean-Paul Cook in correspondence with the Missionary Committee dealt with the question of the best use of the Relief Fund and

<sup>30</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 3rd November 1871, p. 608. Note that in the 1860s the economist Leone Levi estimated the average income for a working-class family in England and Wales was about 31 shillings ; G. D. H. Cole and R. Postgate, *The Common People 1746-1946* (London, 1961), p. 354.

<sup>31</sup> Jean-Paul Cook lived from 1828 to 1886 ; Emile-François Cook from 1829 to 1874. For a survey of the life and work of Jean-Paul Cook see the tribute by Matthieu Lelièvre in *L'Évangéliste* for 1886, pp. 162-3. For Emile Cook, apart from Farjat's biography, the tributes in *L'Évangéliste* for 1874, pp. 44-7, 63-6 and 110, and the notice in the *Actes de la Vingt et Unième Conférence* (Paris, 1874), pp. 6-9.

<sup>32</sup> See E. Farjat, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-53, for a delicate and perceptive portrait of the young student, both at work and play, during his studies at Richmond College. Emile Cook's general good health was marred by "a thorn in the flesh", painful quinsy, to which he referred on several occasions in later correspondence.

expressed thankfulness for its rapid growth.<sup>33</sup> March was eventful. Difficulties and tensions became apparent. On 6th March part of a letter by Emile Cook was printed in the *The Watchman*, acknowledging gratefully the money being collected and emphasising the need for all circuits to contribute towards a revised target of £16,000.<sup>34</sup> On the same day Emile Cook was informed by the senior missionary secretary, the redoubtable Dr Elijah Hoole, that the letter had been altered, principally to delete a request by Emile Cook that James Hocart père should visit England to add his voice. There were other strictures. The closing sentence was stark : "The interests of France will be most efficiently served by leaving them in the hands of the officers of the Society."<sup>35</sup> Thus rebuked, Emile Cook was stirred to a deeply felt reply wherein he forcefully urged the cause he had so much at heart. Following a strenuous defence of the dedication, in most trying circumstances, of his fellow pastors, he concluded :

We do not ask for anything for ourselves, we are content to live in mediocrity for our work's sake ; we ask and plead for France, for our benighted countrymen, for those who are desolate, and on behalf of a work which will surely grow and prosper.<sup>36</sup>

In April, however, Emile Cook was in most appreciative and amiable correspondence with another missionary secretary, G. T. Perks, with kind remarks about Perks's daughter, who had attended the "Pensionnat Evangélique" at Nîmes, and revealing himself as an assiduous reader of the *Methodist Recorder*.<sup>37</sup>

In May a deep concern was brought forward by the District Assembly of the Midi, namely the desirability of introducing lay delegates into the French Conference. Reference was made to the fact that this already applied in the United States, was being actively considered in Australian Methodism, and was also being raised in Ireland and Canada.<sup>38</sup> At the end of May the Conference assembled at Les Ternes, Paris, and gave further thought to this matter, resulting in the composition of a Memorial to be submitted to the forthcoming British Conference. The Address adopted to be sent to the British Conference further stressed the problem of the after-effects of war and appreciation of the helpful presence of missionary secretary W. B. Boyce.<sup>39</sup>

The British Conference opened in London at the close of July with Emile and Jean-Paul Cook attending. The appointment of the former

<sup>33</sup> J. P. Cook to the Missionary Committee, written from Nîmes, 20th January 1872 ; MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 48.

<sup>34</sup> *Watchman*, 6th March 1872, p. 78.

<sup>35</sup> MMS Archives, Box 26, Correspondence Outgoing, 1864-77, pp. 442-3.

<sup>36</sup> E. Cook to Elijah Hoole, written from Paris, 19th March 1872. *Ibid*, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 56.

<sup>37</sup> E. Cook to G. T. Perks, 13th April 1872, *ibid*, no. 59.

<sup>38</sup> *L'Evangéliste*, 16th May 1872, p. 156.

<sup>39</sup> Address of the Conference of the Methodist Church in France and Switzerland, 1872, to the British Conference 1872, *Minutes of Conference* (London, 1874), pp. 682-4.

as President of the French Conference from October was confirmed and authorisation given for one further year's collection in favour of the Relief Fund.<sup>40</sup> The French Memorial on lay delegation was received. Illuminating impressions of the Conference were recorded by Jean-Paul Cook in lengthy dispatches printed in *L'Évangéliste*. Warmly received, he was able to participate in the preparatory Conference committees, take a close interest in the work of the Conference, including the issues of lay representation and national education, and contribute to special occasions in favour of Sunday School work. On the matter of full lay participation in church work, he commented shrewdly: "We love in France to walk more quickly and, besides, we have no legal difficulty to overcome. This is what our brothers have understood."<sup>41</sup> He stated with obvious delight the many opportunities given to both Emile and himself to speak of the French work, especially to a large evening meeting arranged by his kind hosts Mr and Mrs Green, which led to the formation of a supporting association of young ladies.<sup>42</sup> There were further opportunities presented by a large Sunday School rally in Southwark Wesleyan Chapel<sup>43</sup> where Jean-Paul Cook spoke warmly of the French scene in which six hundred Sunday Schools existed, and by an opportunity to preach in Wesley's Chapel, City Road.<sup>44</sup>

Most important, the Conference was able to record what had been achieved in terms of relief in France. At the Open Session Jean-Paul Cook reported the paying off of the Connexional or Central debt of £1,800. A new Chapel Relief Fund of £2,000 had been built up from a further appropriation of £1,200 from English collections and from £800 raised by the French churches. This had served to reduce the overall chapel debt which totalled some £15,000.<sup>45</sup> Finally, in his reply to the Conference Address, Emile Cook stressed the fact that France was in a state of transition and the challenge this presented for further mission in large towns such as Marseilles, Lyons, and Bordeaux.<sup>46</sup> In December, however, Jean-Paul Cook informed G. T. Perks that, despite the additional help from the Relief Fund, there was still the possibility of cutbacks in the French work if the regular quarterly grant of £925 was not increased.<sup>47</sup>

There was no meeting of the French Conference in 1873. William Cornforth, however, Staffordshire born but pastor of the French Methodist Church since 1857, attended the British Conference at Newcastle. He presented a picture of growth in France over the past twenty years and the need for continued Methodist presence. He

<sup>40</sup> *L'Évangéliste*, August 1872, p. 279.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 296.

<sup>43</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 15th August 1872, p. 465.

<sup>44</sup> MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 79.

<sup>45</sup> *Watchman*, 7th August 1872, p. 259.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 14th August 1872, p. 266.

<sup>47</sup> MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 79.

made no mention of the financial situation and, in more restrained terms than Emile Cook, commented that "though the French Methodists were numerically a feeble folk there were elements in their condition which commended them to serious consideration".<sup>48</sup> Earlier in the year there was brisk correspondence between Emile Cook and G. T. Perks following the decision of the Missionary Committee not to allow a renewed special appeal for the Relief Fund. In a letter dated 24th March Emile Cook gave vent to a passionate outburst heavily underlined in the text :

The wants of France are immense, the importance of its claims is paramount, even with regard to England of which it is the nearest neighbour and which it influences so fatally by its popery, its infidelity, its socialist tendencies, etc.

Touchingly, Emile Cook concluded by a tribute to Perks's own "sympathy, your love to our cause, to France".<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, in more measured terms, Jean-Paul Cook recorded the progress achieved and gave an account of the complementary fund raising by the French brethren. In a letter to G. T. Perks on 4th March he mentioned not only the wiping out of the Connexional debt but also the payment of Conference expenses and the distribution of £1,560 among various chapels to diminish their indebtedness.<sup>50</sup>

In September 1873 Emile Cook, together with his fellow pastor Matthieu Lelièvre and other French Protestants, departed for New York to attend the international meeting of the Evangelical Alliance.<sup>51</sup> There followed several weeks' advocacy of the cause of France, primarily within the context of the Evangelical Alliance but also in terms of fund raising for the Methodist Church. The return crossing in September was marked by the wreck of his ship, *La Ville du Havre*.<sup>52</sup> Seriously ill following his ordeal in the waters of the Atlantic, Emile Cook returned to the Midi, hopefully to recuperate, but he died on 29th January 1874 at Hyères and was buried in the Protestant Cemetery at Nîmes. The warmest tributes to his life and work abounded not only in France but

<sup>48</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 5th August 1873, p. 424.

<sup>49</sup> MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 91. In a letter to G. T. Perks dated 1st April 1872 (*ibid.*, no. 93), Cook did in fact disclaim any such specific request for further appeals and stated there had been misunderstanding. It is a fact, however, that in a letter of 26th February he had sought the help of the Missionary Committee to encourage circuits that had not yet responded to do so.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 89. I am indebted to Dr E. Jennings for the following note. In June 1873 Jonathan Holden, manager of the woollen factory I. S. Holden et fils of Reims, sent at the request of his uncle Isaac Holden, eminent Methodist layman and industrialist, 1,000 francs to J.-P. Cook, and also a subscription to Emile Cook. J. Holden commented: "They appear to keep up old traditions of Methodism, ever doing and ever in need."

<sup>51</sup> Emile Cook wrote a letter on 11th September, the day before departure, requesting a letter of introduction be sent from Luke Wiseman to ministers in New York. MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 108.

<sup>52</sup> See E. Farjat, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-51.

also in Britain, Switzerland, and the United States.<sup>53</sup> His passing virtually coincided with the publication of the third and final list of contributors to the Relief Fund with which he had been so closely associated since its inception in 1871.

## II

There can indeed be no doubting the gravity of the disruption brought to France by the sufferings of the years 1870 and 1871. Heavy loss of life during the Franco-Prussian War amounting to 150,000 killed or dead of war wounds,<sup>54</sup> extensive areas ravaged by war, severe damage in Paris and further loss of life with the suppression of the Commune, post-war occupied areas to 1873, the forfeited region of Alsace and much of Lorraine, the heavy indemnity imposed by the Treaty of Frankfurt, all witnessed to this fact.

At Manchester Emile Cook graphically portrayed the consequences of these years for the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion in France. Another source provided complementary detail. The wide-ranging statement of James Hocart père, President of the French Conference, which was read at Manchester, commented:

The year which we have just traversed has not only been for France a period of disasters unparalleled and never to be forgotten, it has been for the Church of Christ in general and for our feeble body in particular, a calamitous period.<sup>55</sup>

The churches in the Midi escaped the ravages of war compared with those in Paris and towards the east of France where certain stations, such as Nancy, St Dizier, and Joinville, fell within the post-war Prussian-occupied zone. Even in the Midi, however, there were crop failures, vines and olives being frozen during the severe winter of 1870-1871. More generally, an epidemic of smallpox beset the country and had its repercussions within Methodism.<sup>56</sup>

Again, the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War brought the challenge of adjustment to a new order. In prophetic terms Matthieu Lelièvre exhorted repentance from the ambition and folly of the Second Empire :

<sup>53</sup> See, for instance, E. Farjat, op. cit., pp. 259-64 ; *L'Évangéliste*, 1874, pp. 44-7, 63-4, and 110 ; *Actes de la Vingt et Unième Conférence* (Paris, 1874), pp. 6-9 ; *Methodist Recorder*, 6th February 1874, p. 68 ; *Minutes of Conference*, 1874 (London, 1877), vol. xix, p. 484.

<sup>54</sup> A. Horne, *The Fall of Paris : The Siege and the Commune 1870-1* (London, 1865), p. 244.

<sup>55</sup> *Watchman*, 9th August 1871, p. 260.

<sup>56</sup> *Actes de la Vingtième Conférence* (Paris, 1872), p. 5 : "Several pastors have seen their churches ravaged by small-pox and have themselves been affected by this terrible sickness."

There is not one, truly, of our national feelings which has not received its punishment. Our pride has been abased . . . our frivolity, which took life for a feast or an orgy, has been cast down.<sup>57</sup>

At local levels Methodist communities had to wrestle with post-war dislocations, a tendency for men to turn to political activity leaving religion to women, and a degree of hostility from the Catholic population because of suspected affinity with predominantly Protestant Prussia.

Post-war distress, then, was clearly the overriding factor precipitating the decision of Emile Cook to hasten to the Manchester Conference in 1871. Like James Hocart, however, he was fully aware of underlying difficulties and problems, exacerbated undoubtedly by war, but pre-existing and dating in their immediate context from 1852, the year of the setting up of the French Conference. That action has certainly been regarded as a notable advance, a growth towards maturity, but it presented important questions, especially the degree of remaining tutelage *vis-à-vis* the British Conference.<sup>58</sup> Undoubtedly there was much coincidence in structure through Conference, district and circuit, in emphases of Christian doctrine, in itinerant ministry, and in forms of fellowship and evangelism, between Methodism in France and the parent Wesleyan Connexion in Britain. There were, however, significant variations, as indicated by the Conference held at Lausanne in June 1870 before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War. Despite a continued if modest growth in membership to over two thousand, financial weakness was apparent: "The finances of the Church are always its weak point . . . despite the help received from our English brethren." The decision to change from an annual to a biennial Conference was taken mainly for reasons of economy. There was concern that, although the opening of new chapels represented advance, many were in debt to creditors who had advanced money to aid their construction. Finally, the matter of lay delegation to the Conference, as mentioned earlier, was broached.<sup>59</sup>

These basic interrelated issues that constituted the challenge of the post-war years will now be treated in detail. Firstly, one may take the constitutional issue. The innovation of a biennial Conference was, in fact, abandoned from 1874. Lay delegation, however, touched on many aspects of the work in France, not least that of the changed circumstances of the new Republic. In the lengthy Memorial, carefully composed after the meeting of the French Conference in 1872 and presented to the London Conference by Emile and Jean-Paul Cook, the cause was eloquently and forcefully presented. Having recorded the indebtedness of French to British Methodism for its very

<sup>57</sup> *L'Évangéliste*, 11th January 1872, p. 10.

<sup>58</sup> This and related issues are clearly set out in G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Missionary Society* (London, 1922), vol. iv, pp. 452-59.

<sup>59</sup> *L'Évangéliste*, 23rd June 1870, pp. 185-7.

beginnings, the Memorial indicated that "if we wish to succeed in our efforts to win the French nation to the Gospel we must take account of its peculiarities". Fuller lay participation was the appropriate step in Republican France and would remove the charge of clericalism; it would remove also the accusation of Methodism being a "foreign church"; it would ensure better relationships with other Protestant Churches; it would finally make for greater commitment, not least in financial terms, within Methodism. The Memorial concluded by commending "our request to that Christian interest and sympathy which you have ever displayed toward us" and instancing widespread similar concern existing in "other sections of the great Wesleyan church".<sup>60</sup>

Secondly, the most intractable problem was financial solvency. For the pressing problems of chapel debts and deficits in the Central Fund ("Caisse Centrale") there were indeed underlying reasons. These were painstakingly itemised in the statement of James Hocart père read to the Manchester Conference of 1871: "the poverty of the majority of our people"; extensive and extending commitments; the necessity of chapel building; "the increase in size of families in our ministry"; travelling and removal costs for an itinerant pastorate; the burden of the war. Despite retrenchment, especially in terms of pastoral allowances, "these causes have gradually created a debt of £2,000 on our general funds for carrying on circuit work: the debt upon chapels and other trust property amounted from £10,000 to £12,000."<sup>61</sup> There was much evidence for widespread poverty: "Many of our people in the Cévennes see little money and live on little; and their givings too are most insignificant"; the presence of some rich families in the church at Nîmes was the subject of special comment.<sup>62</sup> The exasperation created by the tension between the desire to evangelise more widely and the restraint of limited resources was clearly reflected in a letter of Emile Cook to Dr Hoole in London:

You can scarcely imagine how our energies are occupied and our time wasted "at home" with these financial matters, chapel debts and others, how day and night we are crushed and burdened to the utmost of our liabilities *which we could not avoid accepting*.<sup>63</sup>

A considerable part of all the extensive correspondence with the Missionary Committee was indeed concerned with finance, at times virtually to preoccupation. The regular quarterly grant which in the early 1870s stood at £925 (23,125F) was obviously crucial. Apart from the payment of local worship expenses, circuit collections for the

<sup>60</sup> For the full text of the Memorial see MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 63.

<sup>61</sup> *Watchman* 9th August 1871, p. 260.

<sup>62</sup> *Report of the Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for the Year Ending 1874* (London, 1874), Part One, p. 108, also p. 105: "The Sabbath morning Service is attended by persons belonging to rich Protestant families of Nîmes. As a consequence we have a marked progress in the collections."

<sup>63</sup> E. Cook to Elijah Hoole, 19th March 1872, MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 56.

Central Fund, responsible among other things for ministerial allowances, and other connexional funds such as overseas missions, evangelism at home, property, and pastoral retirement, were £1,555 (38,878F) for 1870-71 ; £2,263 (56,568F) for 1871-1872 ; £2,046 (51,140F) 1872-1873 ; £2,208 (55,206F) 1873-1874.<sup>64</sup> The most signal feature of the financial system was the high degree of centralisation with much responsibility resting on Jean-Paul Cook as general treasurer and, to a lesser extent, other treasurers as James Hocart fils, Emile Cook, and Gédéon Jaulmes. The contrast with the British practice of greater circuit responsibility was clearly indicated by Matthieu Gallienne père on a visit to Nîmes in 1877.<sup>65</sup>

A third issue was a definition of the work in France acceptable both to the French Methodists and the "English brethren". Clearly the strategy was one of fervent mission but tactical considerations varied between emphasis on work in more Catholic areas or revival among Protestants ; rural consolidation or entry into new urban areas. There were "Macedonian" appeals for help. This directly related again to the question of resources. There were dangers in over-commitment.<sup>66</sup> Significantly the President of the Conference, Dr J. H. James, and missionary secretary Luke Wiseman, in a letter to the *Methodist Recorder* in September 1871, underlined a point made earlier by James Hocart père. They pointed out that accumulated annual French deficiencies resulted mainly from the sudden drying-up during the American Civil War (1861-1865) of regular American funds which had earlier stimulated wider evangelistic effort in France.<sup>67</sup> Jean-Paul Cook did make one special visit to the United States to raise money at the close of the Civil War in 1865. Likewise Emile intended to do the same at the Evangelical Alliance gathering in the USA in 1870, but this event was postponed. Retrenchment was frequently necessary to avoid more indebtedness ; pastors accepted lower allowances ; posts were left vacant ; training facilities at Lausanne were impaired. Nevertheless, revivals occurred ; souls "found peace" ; Christian holiness was experienced in many lives.

The posed question of the relevance of Methodism was answered in masterly fashion by Matthieu Lelièvre in a treatise, *La Mission Spéciale du Méthodisme au Milieu des Diverses Eglises*, published in 1869. In 1871

<sup>64</sup> *Actes de la Vingtième Conférence* (Paris, 1872), pp. 10-11. *Actes de la Vingt et Unième Conférence* (Paris, 1874), pp. 22-3.

<sup>65</sup> I am indebted to Pastor S. Samouélian for consultation of the valuable manuscript in English contained in the archives (Nîmes) of the Eglise Evangélique Méthodiste de France : Account of Six Weeks Summer Holiday spent in France, mainly Nîmes and the Cévennes, 1877, by M. Gallienne père. Matthieu Gallienne fils was then treasurer of the French Methodist Church.

<sup>66</sup> See T. Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 157 : "French Methodism has always been poorly supplied in men and financial resources. It seems also that it has dispersed its activity over too great an area of the country."

<sup>67</sup> For this letter and associated leading article, see the *Watchman*, 22nd September 1871, pp. 534-5. On this important point see also the *Methodist Recorder*, "Methodism in France", 27th September 1871, p. 316.

the charge against Methodism in general of fanaticism was answered by the publication of an admirably balanced and perceptive life of John Wesley by Charles de Rémusat, French Academician. This had earlier substantially appeared in *La Revue des Deux Mondes*.

These then were the elements constituting the challenge to France in general and Methodism in particular. The response was forthcoming and varied. The recovery of France itself measured in economic growth and rapid payment of the Prussian indemnity was remarkable. Matthieu Lelièvre, having censured the vanity and bellicosity of the Second Empire, welcomed, not without some hesitation, the prospects of the new Republican government. Within Methodism, too, a general pattern of recovery was evident :

The year 1872 may be compared to the period of the turn of the tide from ebb to flow. In 1871 we had to enumerate our calamities and losses ; neither the one nor the other reaching their lowest point until some months after the close of the war. The year 1872 has shown us our beloved church "cast down yet not destroyed, chastised and not killed", we have sometimes been ready to say "dying, yet behold we live".<sup>68</sup>

By 1874 there was the resumption of normal patterns of worship and assembly, the Prussians having left the last of the occupied areas in the previous year ; an important Conference was held at Nîmes in 1874 ; collections had risen. Nevertheless, scars remained ; warnings were necessary ; vigilance was commended by the pastoral letter of James Hocart père in 1874.<sup>69</sup>

As a constitutional issue the matter of lay delegation to the French Conference continued to be pressed after the Hocart Memorial of 1872. On the British side there was postponement of a thorny question ; thus it was referred by Conference to a special committee and William Gibson counselled patience when he appeared at Nîmes in 1874.<sup>70</sup> On the French side there was growing impatience ; Jean-Paul Cook asked in the spring of 1875 whether the matter could not be resolved immediately.<sup>71</sup> In the event, the British Conference received lay members at its meeting at Bradford in 1878 ;<sup>72</sup> the General Australasian Conference also received lay members in the same year, the South Africa Conference in 1881. The French Conference of 1878 announced the implementation of lay membership and four laymen took their seats at the 1879 Conference.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>68</sup> MMS Archives, Box 52, *Report of the State of the Work under the Care of the French Conference*, by Emile F. Cook, President, 26 February 1973.

<sup>69</sup> *Actes de la Vingt et Unième Conférence* (Paris, 1874), pp. 24-34

<sup>70</sup> *Procès-Verbaux de la Conférence (française) Méthodiste en 1874*, p. 603. *Procès-Verbaux* is an unpublished manuscript.

<sup>71</sup> Jean-Paul Cook to Missionary Committee, 10th March 1875 ; MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1875-76, no. 15.

<sup>72</sup> See *Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Thanksgiving Fund, 1878-1883* (London, 1883). The Report clearly indicates the sense of achievement : "not without some fears in hearts that trembled for the ark of God but in perfect peace . . . and in thankful and jubilant love the Conference at Bradford announced and completed its work."

<sup>73</sup> *Actes de la Vingt-Sixième Conférence* (Paris, 1879), p. 4.

In the sphere of finance reference has been made to the importance to the French budget of the regular quarterly grant and the beneficial post-war help given by the Relief Fund. The latter eventually totalled, with the extension granted by the British Conference of 1871, more than £3,500. Apart from numerous individual contributions, over three hundred circuits, covering more than twenty districts and drawn from varying regions, made collections. There was particularly strong response within the industrial regions of Lancashire and Yorkshire and in Greater London.<sup>74</sup> This total should be compared with the quarterly grant of £925. It fell well short of the sanguine expectations of Emile Cook and indeed the hope expressed by his brother during the London Conference that all circuits would eventually participate.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless it answered certain immediate needs, stimulated further thought on financial improvement, and was warmly appreciated by the French Conference.

There was quickened British concern for the work in France from the close of the Franco-Prussian War expressed not simply in the immediate relief of distress but in wider encouragement, council, and at times direction. In September 1871 the leading article in the *Watchman* surveyed French finances and recommended reforms, including the establishment of a Chapel Relief Fund. It further underlined the "cheering - indications" for general Protestant advance.<sup>76</sup> This was to include, for example, the mission of the Rev. R. W. MacAll and the work of the "Mission Intérieure". In 1872 missionary secretary W. B. Boyce was warmly welcomed to the Conference at Les Ternes, Paris, as representative of the Missionary Society. He counselled that the British Conference did not wish to dominate but the French Conference should not anticipate in lay delegation; that annual Conferences should be resumed; that pastors should be better remunerated; that fresh thought should be taken on the matter of entirely liquidating chapel debts by a special scheme mutually funded by the British and French Conferences. The last point was not, in fact, taken up. Significantly, he commented that French Methodists had suffered because they were not properly understood in England and that it was desirable that all young pastors learned English to widen their theological studies. Boyce was further concerned that pastoral stipends should improve, for "the pastor is humiliated, degraded, when there is a struggle to live". Detailed evidence on how the matter of lay delegation was

<sup>74</sup> Three lists of contributors are printed in Part Two, pages 6, 3 and 3 respectively, of *The Reports of the Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for 1872, 1873, and 1874*. Interestingly, for the Blackheath Circuit there are mentioned "small sums in plate after address of Revd. Emile Cook, £6-10-0".

<sup>75</sup> *L'Évangéliste*, August 1872, p. 279. Jean-Paul Cook recorded that about 280 circuits had donated approximately 900,000 francs (£3,600); 330 had yet to give. This was, in fact, the final total.

<sup>76</sup> *Watchman*, 13th September 1871, p. 299. Note however that by June 1873 the reduction of chapel debts was only from £15,795 to £12,813. Letter of J. P. Cook to the Missionary Committee, 5th June 1873; MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1870-74, no. 99.

viewed by the French pastors can be seen in the manuscript record. Frédéric Prunier adopted a more militant stance of achieving it immediately without further reference to the British Conference ; other pastors, including James Hocart père and fils, were more gradualist and conciliatory.<sup>77</sup> In 1874 William Gibson spoke to the Conference at Nîmes, stressing the possibility of moving into the large cities as well as giving practical advice on property maintenance.<sup>78</sup> The first point had indeed been broached by Gibson, with emphasis on the role of the rue Roquépine church in Paris, at an extra-Conference meeting at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in August 1873 with the Revs. Rigg, Arthur, Cornforth, Boyce, and Stephenson present.<sup>79</sup>

The influence of the British Conference was strong and varied. There was also the associated matter of the degree of "Englishness" considered proper within the life of French Methodism. Emile Cook and Jean-Paul Cook, of Anglo-French parentage, were bilingual bridge-builders engaged in regular correspondence with London ; their correspondence in English, at times formal and respectful, at times warm and fraternal, constitutes a fascinating study. Of the secretaries to whom they wrote, Luke Wiseman and G. T. Perks each became President of the Conference in 1872 and 1873 respectively ; the senior secretary, Dr Elijah Hoole, had a long record of missionary service. The French pastorate contained members drawn from England, such as William Cornforth who wrestled so hard to perfect his command of the French language ; from the Channel Islands, such as James Hocart père ; and principally France, where particular mention can be made of Matthieu Lelièvre. The question of the ethos to be maintained was often raised.<sup>80</sup> Certain illustrations may be permitted. In 1875 Matthieu Gallienne fils wrote to the Missionary Committee :

Our English friends may have the wisdom to remember that French modes of thought and feeling on many points are different from English and we must find the way to adapt Methodism to France, of course without compromise.<sup>81</sup>

In 1872 during the discussion of the subject of lay delegation at the Paris Conference, Jean-Paul Cook spoke of "the difference in the genius of the two peoples" and Frédéric Prunier forcefully stated that "nobody can grant us the right of being French, we are such without the permission of others."<sup>82</sup> Graciously, the *Watchman* of July 1872 commented, with reference to the French pastors, that "their natural

<sup>77</sup> *Procès-Verbaux de la Conférence*, 1872, pp. 572-6. Unpublished (see above).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 1874, pp. 603-12.

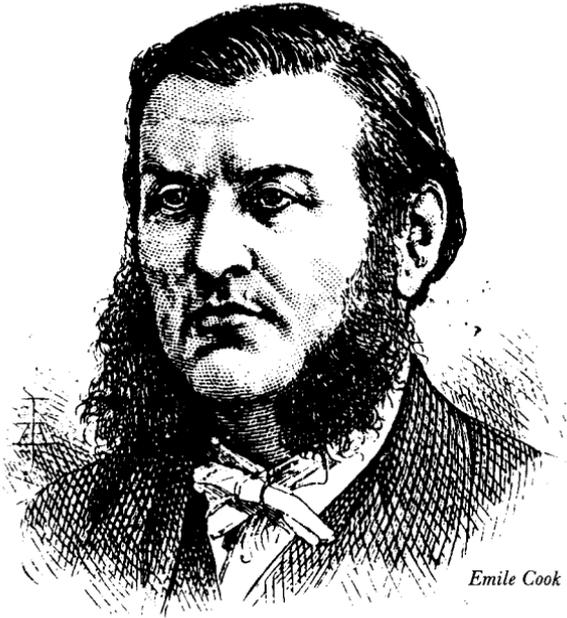
<sup>79</sup> *Methodist Recorder*, 22nd August 1873, p. 489.

<sup>80</sup> T. Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 159 : The list of Methodist pastors . . . for a long time adorned by foreign names which seemed vexatious for the self-esteem of certain Protestants, has contained some great figures."

<sup>81</sup> M. Gallienne fils to Missionary Committee, 10th June 1875 ; MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1875-76, no. 31.

<sup>82</sup> *Procès-Verbaux de la Conférence*, 1872, pp. 575-6. Unpublished (see above).

politeness will often gain them an entrance where the blunt Englishman would find the door closed against him.”<sup>83</sup>



*Emile Cook*

As early as 1835 John Beecham, secretary of the Missionary Society, had favoured Charles Cook's stance of "giving to Methodism in France an independent and national air, instead of its appearing to depend on a foreign Society".<sup>84</sup> The establishment of the French Conference in 1852 was a landmark in this process but the French work did not become financially self-supporting: In 1875 a searching enquiry into all aspects of the French work was carried out by a Missionary Society sub-committee, including Dr J. H. Rigg and William Gibson.<sup>85</sup> In 1876 the Resolutions of the Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society on French affairs recommended some considerable reshaping, especially greater circuit financial responsibility, although "the general function of the French Conference [should] be left untouched". From 1878 William Gibson, "hundred-per-cent English",<sup>86</sup> first appointed to the rue Roquépine church in 1862 as minister responsible for the separately organised "English work", developed a mission based in the Paris region and extending to the Channel coast.

<sup>83</sup> See the article "Evangelistic Work in France", *Watchman*, 16th July 1873, p. 231.

<sup>84</sup> G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *op. cit.*, p. 450.

<sup>85</sup> Concern for mutual consultation was expressed by Jean-Paul Cook in a letter to the Missionary Committee in June 1875; MMS Archives, Box 63, File 1875-6, no. 35.

<sup>86</sup> T. Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

Within this extended framework of interaction between the two Churches, the post-war years 1872 to 1874 constitute a distinctive and instructive episode, the Relief Fund evoking a broad response of practical sympathy and aid at a time of great need. The last reference should rest with Emile Cook, who clearly expressed the Anglo-French Methodist link in his own birth, upbringing and action; tribute should be paid to the amazing *élan* which marked the whole of his life, the fervent advocacy of a cause close to his heart, and not least the impact of his speech at Manchester which set so much in train.

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Copies are still available of the catalogue of the John Fletcher Bicentenary Exhibition held in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester during summer 1985. It consists of detailed descriptions of the 127 exhibits plus a most valuable 'Guide to Further Reading' which is a wide-ranging and up-to-date bibliography selected and annotated by Dr Clive Field. There are four illustrations. Copies, price £1 each can be obtained from Dr C. D. Field, JRULM, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PP. Cheques should be made payable to the University library.

Readers seeking a brief account of the history and extent of the Connexional Archives will welcome a recent article by William Leary in *Archives*, which is available as an offprint from the Connexional Archivist, Methodist Division of Property, Central Hall, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1.

*English Methodism: A Bibliographical View* by Laurie E. Gage is a revised form of a lecture and is an informal and knowledgeable introduction to the literature of Methodism in its various branches with the emphasis on the period after the death of Wesley. Copies are £1.50 post free from Gage Postal Books, PO Box 105, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 8EQ.

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CLIVE D. FIELD.

*Union Catalog of World Methodist Manuscript Collections*

Several years ago the World Methodist Historical Society commissioned Dr Homer L. Calkin, a professional archivist, to make a detailed survey of Methodist manuscript collections throughout the world. Three sections of this have now been published, including a detailed history of the British Methodist Archives in Manchester. The details are as follows:

Part 2:	Asia	\$10.00
Part 3:	Australia and the South Pacific Islands	\$35.00
Part 6:	Great Britain and Ireland:	\$40.00
Section 1	John Rylands University Library	

The latter can be ordered through me and paid for in sterling. Prices include carriage to England, but postage within the British Isles may be extra.

JOHN A. VICKERS  
87 Marshall Avenue  
Bognor Regis  
West Sussex PO21 2TW

## NEWS FROM OUR BRANCHES

The Branches are marking significant milestones in their own histories. **East Anglia**, which may claim to have been the first of the local branches to be formed, is at present engaged in some replanning of its activities, **Cornwall** marked its 25th anniversary with an informal gathering, and **Lancashire and Cheshire** its 21st with a lecture on Thomas Coke by Mr J. A. Vickers.

The **Bristol** branch went in the footsteps of John Cennick through a pleasant part of North Wiltshire visiting places associated with Cennick, Whitefield and of course the Wesleys. At Bradenstoke the Rev. R. Ward Smith lectured on "The famous Brinkworth Circuit" of the Primitive Methodists which rose out of the second wave of the Methodist revival in the area. The Rev. W. J. Little marked his retirement as secretary by giving the branch a masterly survey of "Methodist Hymnody" happily to be printed in the Bulletin. The **Cornish** branch visited Methodist sites at St. Ives, including the Countess of Huntingdon church, a reminder in a town where six denominations in the "Wesleyan" tradition have been represented, of the early work of "My Lady's Preachers" and their ambivalent relations with Wesley's Methodism. At two specially convened gatherings held in different parts of the county, the work of the Cornish class leaders was considered. At Camelford, the Rev. James West (Anglican) spoke about his relative Ann West and her class at Wadebridge, while at Troon Mrs Betty Martin made use of the diary of the Ponsanooth class leader William Jewell, recently made available by his descendant, the Rev. A. J. Jewell of Bramley, Leeds. The branch journal contains articles on Adam Clarke's Cornish ministry, 1784-86, and the business journal of Thomas Pope Rosevear, the Methodist merchant and reformer of Boscastle.

The Rev. Douglas Wollen, the official historian of Wesley's Chapel and editor of the **London and Home Counties** branch, leads a weekly Sunday walkabout around the City Road district. A summary of the account that he gives at each place is printed in the current bulletin. It is hardly to be wondered that Wesley and his contemporaries flit across the pages of the London journal—in the current one Charles Manning, vicar of Hayes, Vincent Perronet, vicar of Shoreham, General Oglethorpe, Adam Clarke and of course the Wesleys themselves. The bulletin also contains an historical account of the Leysian Mission. Other branches might consider visiting London sites and some have done. This year the **Cumbria** members were at Wesley's Chapel, his house, the Museum of Methodism and St Paul's Cathedral. Their journal gives an account of Tebay, Great Broughton, Spital and Kirby Lonsdale Methodism and of some Cumbrian hospitality plans, 1894-1914. Dr Bowmer contributes useful paragraphs on the New Connexion, the Wesleyan Protestant Methodists, the Wesleyan Methodist Association and the 1849 Reformers.

Methodism's inheritance both from the high church and puritan wings of the English Church, and so from their Lutheran and Calvinist precursors on the continent, as well as more directly from the Moravians (of Hussite origin) has often been noted and evaluated. The **East Midlands** branch journal (appropriately called "Heritage") gives special coverage in its present issue to "Huguenot Heritage, 1698-1985" of which Noel Pollard writes, and Geoffrey Milburn isolates for our inspection that strand of Calvinism in our Methodist heritage. The journal also includes a provisional bibliography of Methodism in Derbyshire (one of a series covering the Midland counties).

Our **Isle of Man** members spent a beautiful afternoon visiting Methodist historic sites in one of the most scenic parts of the Island, including Abbeylands, one of the oldest chapels still in use. Their recently established newsletter includes two interesting letters from Manchester to Castletown in 1870-71. They are from A.C. to his, or her, former class leader in the Island describing his/her new class (and the society of which it was part) at Radnor Street, Hulme. (Lancashire and Cheshire please copy!) The active **North East** branch reports visits to the Timothy Hackworth Museum at Shildon (Hackworth was an eminent railway engineer and local preacher), to Newton Aycliffe (where Methodism after a small beginning in 1880 found itself in the 1950s caught up in a bustling new town) and to Ripon for a joint meeting with the Yorkshire branch. The bulletin reflects the industrial background of the North East in Alan Walton's account of Methodism's changing fortunes in what is now the inner city area of Newcastle West, with its multi-racial community. Here we read about the Jewish synagogue building in Temple Street which later became the Temple Street Wesleyan Mission, and the Methodist premises in Elswick Road which, like San Sophia, later became a Moslem mosque. This industrial background is also evident in the Sunderland Industrial Chaplain's account of "Four Just Men", Peter Lee, Arthur Henderson, William Crawford and John Wilson. Out in the country, the journal gives an account of the historic Newbiggin in Teesdale and its chapel library, and of William Martin, "a reluctant class leader" of Sealhouses. The post-union leaders of Methodism are now seen as significant figures in Methodist history, and so, in the current issue of the journal, Edwin Thompson writes interestingly about Dr Leslie F. Church, Connexional Editor, President of the Conference and Methodist historian.

The **Plymouth and Exeter** branch has published a Handlist of articles in its proceedings 1964-83, which contains information about the whereabouts of complete sets of that journal—at Exeter, Taunton, Torquay and Manchester, and which prompts the reminder that there should be a complete set of all branch publications in the W.H.S. Library at Southlands College. The current proceedings contain a topical article on the formation of "The Exeter Circuit and District Missionary Society" in 1815, and a sad account of the loss to Methodism of the William Morris stained glass formerly in Exford chapel.

The emphasis in the **Yorkshire** bulletin is at present on Primitive Methodism. It contains an account of the Scarborough Conference of 1925 based on that year's "Handbook" with its inevitable Hartley's Marmalade advert. Mr D. C. Dews writes on Primitive Methodism in Canada. The bulletin records the addition of the 2,845th accession to its archives. At a joint meeting of the **Yorkshire** and **North East** branches, Mr G. E. Milburn lectured on "Primitive Methodism north of the Humber". There was also a joint gathering of the **Shropshire** and **West Midlands** branches at Madeley in connection with the John Fletcher 200th celebrations. Dr Barrie Trinder led a guided walk around Madeley and Mr Peter Forsaith lectured on John Fletcher. The current **West Midlands** journal contains an account of Richard Parker (1807-71) of the New York City Mission, a native of Herefordshire.

From across the border the journal of the **Scottish** branch makes interesting reading. The Rev. W. Jamieson contributes articles about Scotland in Wesley's time, provides an overall view of Wesley's visits and arrives at the thought-provoking conclusion that if Wesley had been stationed in Scotland he would not have exercised a particularly successful ministry. Mr Jamieson

writes that Wesley was ill at ease with the people of Scotland, and he gives six reasons for that statement.

### LOCAL BRANCHES

Additions and alterations to the list printed in *Proceedings*, xlv, p. 16f., are as follows:

#### *Membership*

Bristol	—	87
Cornwall	—	261
East Anglia	—	39
NorthEast	—	194

#### *Secretaries*

Isle of Man	—	Mrs Thelma Wilson, Westend, 28, Dwghadfayle Road, Port Erin, I.O.M.
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#### *Journals and other Publications received*

Bristol	Nos. 43, 44
Cornwall	VII, No. 2
Cumbria	Nos. 17, 18
East Midlands	II, 2
Isle of Man	Nos. 2, 3
London & c.	No. 32
North East	Nos. 44, 45
Plymouth and Exeter	VI, 5, 6. <i>Handlist</i>
West Midlands	IV. 6, 7
Yorkshire	Nos. 47, 48
Scotland	Nos. 15, 16

THOMAS SHAW.

The third annual lecture to the Friends of Wesley's Chapel was delivered in 1984 by Dr Frank Baker under the title: *John Wesley, London Publisher 1733-1791*. It has now been printed and can be obtained from the Chapel, price £1 plus postage. It surveys Wesley's printers in London and is an important addition to our knowledge of the early years of the Book Room.

Two of our oldest chapels are in urgent need of repair and are appealing for funds. *Newbiggin in Teesdale* was built in 1759 and is the oldest Methodist chapel in continuous use. £7,000 is needed for general repairs. Gifts should be sent to Mr Alan Simpson, Heather Cottage, Snaisgill, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Co. Durham. *Little Walsingham* dates from 1794 and is the oldest chapel still in use in East Anglia. It is a charming brick building with a tiled pyramid roof topped by a weather vane. Extensive renovation is needed which will cost £40,000, a heavy burdern for a small society. Gifts should be sent to Pastor B. G. Barton, The Manse, Grove Road, Wells next the Sea, Norfolk NR23 1HY.

## BOOK NOTICES

*The Journal of John Wesley* abridged by Christopher Idle ; (Lion Publishing, pp.272, 1986, £4.95.)

The realisation that my own interest in Wesley stemmed largely from Hugh Martin's abridgement of his *Journal* (SCM Press, 1955) makes me well aware of the value of such abbreviations. The only such edition promoted by British Methodism this century is (as far as I know) Nehemiah Curnock's volume first published in 1903 and reissued as recently as 1952 by the Epworth Press. This edition pre-dated Curnock's Standard Edition, and was based on the old four-volume version of the *Journal* published as part of the set of Wesley's *Works*. This abridgement along with Martin's and those by other hands are now obtainable only secondhand and the need for a satisfactory modern abridgement has been increasingly apparent in recent years.

This year Lion Publishing have filled the gap with an attractive paper-backed edition abridged and edited from the Standard Edition by Christopher Idle, Rector of Limehouse, whose name may be known from his interest in hymns and indeed from one of his own compositions (number 479) in *Hymns and Psalms*. In size Idle's volume falls between those of Martin and Curnock and it seems to me that he has got the length right. Sensibly he divides the text by years from 1735 to 1790, but he prefaces this by some extracts from letters etc which throw light on Wesley's earlier years ; and at the end, after a brief account of Wesley's death, we are given (under the date 1791 which is misleading) an extract from his will (dated 1789) and a sentence from the inscription on the City Road tomb (erected in 1839).

The main contents of the book take us from the embarkation for Georgia in October 1735 to the sermons at Spitalfields and Shadwell in October 1790, and in condensing the *Journal* for these fifty six years Mr Idle and his publishers have done a remarkably good job, with well-chosen, vivid, pithy extracts, nicely spaced and attractive to the eye. The essential Wesley is to be found in these pages in very readable format. Mr Idle has done useful editorial work in inserting helpful information in brackets and in providing indexes of Bible texts, of books and publications mentioned in the text (though these are not given any dates of publication), of people and of places. As a frontispiece there is a facsimile of part of Wesley's diary of his voyage to Georgia, and the book's cover has a reproduction of the Williams portrait of 1742.

Mr Idle acknowledges his debt to Douglas Wollen, historian at Wesley's Chapel, for inspiring his interest in Wesley and in Methodism. But he is far from being an uncritical admirer and in his preface he shows a sharp awareness of Wesley's methods and purposes in writing and publishing his *Journal*, and indicates his own feeling that Whitefield was probably the greater man though eclipsed by Wesley's later fame largely propagated by the *Journal* itself. An interesting addition to the extracts in this volume are the quotations placed at the head of each yearly account. Some of these are by Wesley himself but most are by other hands - Charles Wesley, Whitefield, James Hutton, Cennick, Romaine, Newton, Asbury and others including Dr Johnson and King George II ! In a variety of ways these quotations throw light upon Wesley and enlarge the understanding gained from the *Journal* extracts. The voices which speak through the quotations are occasionally antagonistic and several of them offer insights into Wesley which are not attractive. Their inclusion seems to me to be well justified for the sake of provoking readers to think for themselves and not to take Wesley simply at his

own account. But Mr Idle is no superficial debunker of Wesley. 'Love him or hate him' he writes, '- and most have loved him - God has blessed him, and his readers.'

GEOFFREY E. MILBURN

*The Works of John Wesley, Bicentennial Edition. Volume II. Sermons II. 34-70.* Edited by Albert C. Outler. (Abingdon Press, 1985. pp. 624. \$49.95.)

The reader can be fully assured that there is much of great interest in this second volume of Wesley's sermons. One fears that even among Methodist preachers the venerable "Standard Sermons" are not read as widely as they used to be, nor as they deserve. However, in our tradition the "53", later "44 Sermons" have virtually monopolised attention. A leading interest in this second volume is that editorial work passes on from the remainder of the "Standard Sermons" to other sermons which Wesley published, and which may be less familiar. Dr Outler has valuable introductions to some of them, displaying his deep knowledge of Wesley's theology, and sympathy with his subject. There are also many examples of the meticulous care with which he has traced the source of the numerous quotations, and provided the corrected text, together with brief notes of the persons and books mentioned or alluded to. The editor rightly observes that there is an interesting contrast between the generality of the more familiar "Standard Sermons" and this other material.

The general subject of the "44 Sermons" is the evangelical message, "the religion of the heart", and "real Christianity". The Sermons cover "our doctrines": divine grace, repentance, faith, justification, assurance, sanctification, the means of grace, and holiness. These themes are present in these later Sermons, but the portrait of Wesley as the man and the scholar emerges more clearly alongside that of the evangelical preacher. We see Wesley turning his mind to broader and in some cases more philosophical subjects: God's providential government of the world, and of the Church in history, the problem of evil, the place of reason in religion, and the like. We observe Wesley as a man of enquiring mind, deeply interested in the science of the period, and widely read in literature. Particularly we notice his great love of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. This was surely a natural choice, for it may be claimed that this is our language's greatest poem of evangelical and scriptural Christianity. And Wesley is displayed as a scholar, who quotes the Latin and Greek classics of his education constantly and naturally. However, the Sermons are also the work of a very busy man with "deadlines" to meet, who has to write not as an academic with a library to hand, but when and where he can. So he quotes from his capacious memory, but from memory only, for Dr Outler can demonstrate that there is hardly a quotation which is word-perfect. But this is not the case with the Bible! Paragraph after paragraph is a skilful catena of texts correctly quoted in the loved language of the Authorised Version. How far we modern preachers lag behind!

JOHN LAWSON

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*'Nonconformity in Nineteenth-century York' by Edward Royle (Borthwick Paper No 68, £1.80) is the sequel to Dr Royle's study of the Church of England in the same city. It is a perceptive and well documented account of a city in which all branches of Methodism flourished.*