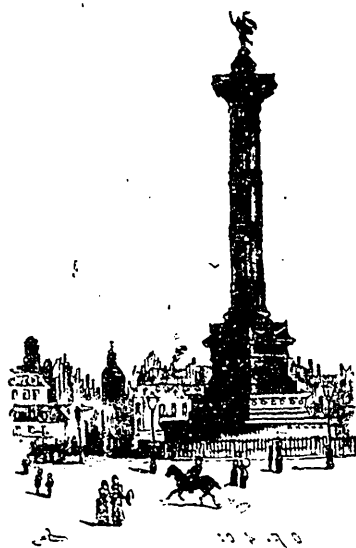


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THE WHITE FIELDS OF FRANCE.*

BY THE REV. THEO. J. PARR, B.A.



COLUMN OF JULY, ON THE SITE
OF THE E. STILE.

I.

The romantic history of the work of Robert Whitaker McAll in behalf of the people of France, and especially of the workingmen of Paris, is replete with interest and instruction for those who care to trace human effort and divine providence in the betterment of the condition of men.

Mr. McAll was a genuine Scotchman by descent, although

* The writer is indebted in the preparation of this article chiefly to "The Life of Robert Whitaker McAll," by his wife, and "The Story of the McAll Mission," by Horatius Bonar, D.D.

an Englishman born, and used to delight in making mention of his Highland ancestry as Celts of the Hebrides, who for ages had their dwelling in the lonely island of Coll, off the Argyleshire coast. His father was the well-known Dr. McAll, of Manchester, noted for his genius, his piety, and his eloquence. The son became the pastor of a Congregational church in Lancashire, from which, after a successful pastorate, he resigned, to enter upon the mission which since has made his name revered throughout Christendom. In leaving his native isle, no vision was revealed portraying the task that lay before him, no man of Paris, like him of Macedonia, saying, "Come over and help us;" but there was something no less explicit and remarkable. Happening to be in Paris soon after the Franco-Prussian war, on a four-days' vacation tour, he went into a cafe shortly before his departure for home. He was distributing tracts at the door, when a workman grasped his hand and said:

"Sir, are you not a Christian minister? If so, I have something of importance to say to you. You are, at this moment, in the midst of a district inhabited by thousands and tens of thousands of us workingmen. To a man we have done with an imposed religion, a religion of superstition and oppression. But if any one would come to teach us religion