

with no more than twenty people. Their reports, if they wrote any, could only speak of weary tramping from village to village, from farm to farm; of a soul being converted here and there. Honor to those, our worthy predecessors! Much of the fruit which we gather to-day is due to their patient, ignored, silent sowing, in suffering and in tears.

But 1870 brought us, after the dark hours of defeat and shame, the glorious sunrise of liberty. In a marvelous and unexpected way the Lord sent us the help which we needed to make good that golden opportunity. No one should have thought that an English pastor, who had passed middle life, and who spoke French but imperfectly, would become the most successful evangelist of France in these times. And yet, no doubt, Mr. R. W. McAll had been prepared by God Himself, and his whole previous course as an architect, and then as a minister, was only God's training for this, his special life's work.

When, on Sunday, January 17, 1872, Mr. McAll opened a little shop in one of the streets of Belleville, for the preaching of the gospel—in answer to the urgent appeal which had come to him from an *ouvrier*,* he could not possibly foresee what a large tree would grow from this little root. But he came in a most propitious time, when the ground, recently furrowed by the terrible plow of foreign and civil war, was ready for the seed of peace and hope; he came, not with a new panacea, not with some grand scheme of social regeneration, but with the old remedy which had never been applied, with the old gospel, so new to those poor people! His aim was not great in men's opinion: he came not to save a nation, but to save souls.

Three principles, at the outset, were adopted by him, and have never ceased to be at the basis of this mission. Their combination is, we believe, the cause of its success.

The first one is: *Nothing but Christ*. Christ and Him crucified is the only attraction, the only theme, the only aim. No paid choir, no high-flown rhetoric, no scientific or literary entertainments, are used to draw the people together. "Conférences sur l'Évangile" are the words painted in large letters on the outside of the halls. It would have been easy to gather very large audiences by other means, but it would have been impossible to retain them. The Church cannot compete with the world on the world's own ground; David is very clumsy (and what a blessing he should be so!) in Saul's armor. There are in Paris plenty of concert halls. Ours are *gospel* halls; they are never opened for another purpose than to make known, by word or by song, the love of God through Jesus Christ.

The second principle on which this Mission is built is *Catholicity*. On its platforms ministers and members of all denominations are equally at home. Each church has a right to claim the Mission as her

* The whole story of the beginning of the Mission, from the pen of Dr. McAll himself, will be found in the book, "A Cry from the Land of Calvin and Voltaire." London: Hodder & Stoughton, Paternoster Row.