

ternal symptoms, but we are to trace it to constitutional defects and difficulties; and it is so in the Church of Jesus Christ. All efforts to perfect external organization and superficial methods will prove not only ineffective, but even disastrous, unless the spiritual vitality is quickened. There must no longer be disorders at the very nerve centres of Christian life; there must no longer be a defective chemistry in the very constitution, or a defective vitality in spiritual tissue. No problem is of more consequence than this: How shall a higher standard of piety, of prayer, and of power be secured in the Church of the living God?

This is the true forward movement which secures advance in every direction. How can the Church unitedly move all along the different lines of missions?—that is the supreme question of this centenary year. It will never be adequately answered by great popular meetings full of the *clat* and enthusiasm of an excited throng that responds with hurrahs of loud applause to the voice of popular eloquence. Popular meetings have their purpose, and they serve that purpose, especially in the dissemination of information and the arousing of interest in the great subject, but oftentimes in their permanent results they are delusive and illusive. There are thousands who on these occasions give vent to their aroused emotions in cheers and encomiums, who go away to forget their obligations to a dying world, and smother the claims of the cause upon their active sympathy and effort until another annual meeting comes round.

What, then, are the supreme needs of the Church of Christ in this critical hour of the age? First of all we need the spirit of obedience to our Lord's great command. We call ourselves disciples, but a disciple is a follower. He is a disciple who calls Jesus Saviour and Lord, who looks to Him not only for salvation, but for sovereignty, who accepts Him not only as his redeemer from sin, but as his leader in his whole life course. We call ourselves soldiers, but nothing is more characteristic of a soldier than immediate and implicit obedience to the marching orders of his general-in-chief.

“ ‘Forward!’ the captain’s cry;
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs but to do and die.”

If in song we thus celebrate the heroism of those who, in obedience to an order which was really a blunder, rode into the “valley of death,” can we do less than emulate such obedience when the orders of the Captain of our salvation come to us and nobody has “blundered”? Francis Bacon says that it is not worth while to argue with any man if you cannot agree with him on first principles, and we assume that those whom these words address are confessed disciples and soldiers of Jesus Christ, and that they therefore accept His last command and commission, “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,” as settling forever beyond question the duty and obligation of the Church of Christ. If there be any among our readers who dispute or doubt as to this obligation, these words are not