

FOREWORD

What is the purpose of this celebration,—to make a demonstration, or receive a revelation,—to listen to one another or listen to God,—to glorify our triumphs or scrutinise our failures,—to magnify our virtues or rectify our faults? We of the present day recognise that to us has been given the solemn custody of a rich tradition, a sacred deposit of thought, and prayer and aspiration, and achievement.

It is good to encircle the walls of Zion—to tell her towers and bulwarks, and to sing as we make the joyful round, but we must also remember that we are engaged in deadly combat with an enemy who never gives quarter, therefore we welcome the crowd, but our true joy is the convert,—the convert arrested by the invisible hand that drags back the sinner so that there is a radical transformation of thought, and purpose, and character and life.

To this end let us enter into new covenants, and march on with reinspired hearts into fields of nobler service. Let us be responsive to the Divine claim then we shall be receptive to the Divine power and be willing to share the Divine travail for souls, thus spiritual life will be quickened and our celebration be as springtime with promise of an abundant harvest.

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