

The
Abraham Lincoln
Centre

A S E R M O N

Delivered at All Souls Church, Chicago
February second, nineteen hundred and two
By JENKIN LLOYD JONES
Published by the Provisional Board of Trustees

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PREFACE.

The sermon which follows has grown out of the ripened life of a man consecrated to the cause of a better, broader and freer humanity. From Corinth and Chattanooga to the Parliament of Religions, and down to present efforts to secure decent conditions in the State Institutions, he has manfully and effectively toiled for all of us. Jenkin Lloyd Jones needs no introduction.

His prophetic message telling of a church that shall exclude none, of a platform free to the utterance of all honest thought, is so clear that no preface is needed. The ideal of an institution with a religious and an ethical core that shall be useful every day in the week points the way to the rehabilitation of the church into the place of relative usefulness which it once held in society. We who have long studied this question of housing these great ideals in brick and mortar know what can be done. For nearly twenty years All Souls Church has with meager facilities done with success and credit almost everything that we hope to do on a larger scale in our new building. We wish to see the work carried on in unbroken succession. The territory to which this building will minister has deep need of it now, but in an infinitely larger way the world has need of this example of practical usefulness, a church and an institution that touches every worthy motive of life.

We hold as you do, that surplus wealth brings responsibility with it, and that in grateful recognition of what the ages of struggle and suffering have done for us, we in our time owe much to those about us and to those who come after. It is the plainest business proposition that the safest investment is in a well manned "going" business. Here is a chance to back a great man who has succeeded, to strengthen and reinforce a successful business and by example to teach other communities what the modern church may be.

We feel that, in so far as we are public spirited and desire to do good work in the world, we are offering you an opportunity for the highest form of investment.

We ask you to read the sermon and to communicate with us. Respectfully,

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THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN CENTRE.

*How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts!
Blessed are they that dwell in thy house.
They go from strength to strength.—Psalms 84:1-7.*

The cathedral at its noblest is the best outward symbol of the spiritual nature of man, as it is also the most suggestive measure and prophecy of the corporate life of man. The cathedral is the spired climax of fourteen or more centuries of Christian prayer and aspiration. It inspired, and still holds and represents the supreme achievements of man in nearly all the arts. In the production of the cathedral painting, sculpture, architecture and music climbed like the Gothic arch which inspired them to their highest peaks, their most perfect curves and most graceful proportions. The cathedral sustained in life and honored in death, still largely protects the ashes of the great heroes, the bards, the sages and the saints of Christian history. At the mention of the old cathedrals the names of Raphael, Fra Angelico, Da Vinci and Michael Angelo, Augustine and Savonarola, Dante, Chaucer and Victor Hugo fall from our lips. At the mention of the cathedral Rome, Florence, Venice, Paris, London and a dozen other cities rise before the mind's eye, each of them centering around its cathedral, for St. Peter's, the Duomo, St. Mark's, Notre Dame and Westminster Abbey are the gems to which the cities named are but the inadequate setting in baser metal and less precious stones.

If you ask whence came its power, why this ascendancy, the answer is not far to seek. Christianity began at least in a moral protest. Whatever else he was, the Nazarene carpenter was a reformer; whatever else he worked for, his central quest was for a better social order. Interpret the "kingdom" he proclaimed as

you please, it was at least centered in ethics and circumferenced by the good. He spoke to a distracted people; he appeared in turbulent times and was caught in the vortex of great commercial, racial and military tides of life. So strenuous were the forces of selfishness, so persistent the clamor of outward things and material power that Christendom in its infancy fled the world. It shrank from the contest and sought sanctity in the retirements of the desert, the grim solitude of caves, the inaccessible recesses of forests and mountains, and there it throve. The deserts became social with Eremites. The hermits became so numerous that they organized, and monasteries grew and nunneries multiplied until monasticism and religion, celibacy and piety, became almost synonymous terms. Then it was that human nature asserted itself, not in defiance to but through and in accordance with organized religion. The world and time began again to doff their sinister garb and don the robes of glory that are the divine habiliments of nature. The pious eye began to see God again in forest, lake, mountain and sea, flowers and clouds. And so the monastery took on spires, the nunnery took the grates out of its windows, elevated its entrances, and the cathedral rose, hospitable to man, woman, and child; it took in the family. Its hospitality widened and it became the representative of community life. Rich and poor, cultured and ignorant, peasant and prince found a common level at the altars of God, the shrine of religion, to appear at which all sadly needed the shriving hand. The community consciousness grew strong by such nurture. Present power dared count on future reinforcements, and so the cathedral grew from being the representative of one generation to being the hope of many. The fathers laid foundations, the superstructure of which they left to their children and their children's children to rear. One century dared begin what the next century could not complete, and so we find the story of centuries condensed and arranged in the walls of any one of these great cathedrals. There the generations are arranged like beads upon a string.

“Art is long, but time is fleeting,”

said the Greek Hippocrates, but art grew venturesome when it had the centuries to deal with, and so the cathedral grew glorious.

How, then, came that power to be? Whence, then, did the cathedral derive its power? Clearly here: It took back the family into the confidences of religion. It taught man and woman how the human and the divine love could go hand in hand. It reconciled the home to the church, consecrated marriage and recognized in children a heavenly heritage. It recognized, to an extent unrealized by any other building ever reared by the hands of man, the *com-unity*, the common life of those who dwell together, irrespective of race, birth, rank or degrees of saintliness. The cathedral triumphed by virtue of a daring, unparalleled and hitherto untried democracy. It triumphed lastly by virtue of its faith in continuity, the philosophy of history that believed in the continuous life on earth, and so it took counsel of the ages, it built on and with the granite, and the centuries broke at its feet as the waves beat and break at the base of the lighthouse tower.

But in spite of all this, in full view of all this, the cathedral sickened and waned. The cathedrals of history today represent a decadent power. Why?

Again the answer, to my mind, is not far to seek. Splendid as was its courage, it weakened from cowardice. Great as was its inclusiveness, it sickened from narrowness. Splendid as was its fellowship, it waned on account of its inhospitality. Unparalleled as was its democracy, it was debilitated and grew emaciated by its aristocracy. It had a passion for fellowship, but it was afraid of freedom. It took no note of birth lines, but it undertook to survey the thought boundaries of the kingdom of God. and sooner or later fellowship becomes impossible where freedom is denied. Love itself will grow selfish and arrogant where thought is dishonored. The cathedral had a shrine for John the beloved, Peter the denier, even Judas the betrayer when penitent, but because it had none for Thomas the doubter, the investigator, the time came when its power in the world was crippled, for where reason is

slighted there is an indignity to God, where investigation, inquiry, research, adventure of mind are distrusted, discouraged or denied there piety becomes conventional, religion formal and progress escapes the mephitic atmosphere.

The story of the decadence of the cathedral as a moral power, a spiritual energizer in civilization, is the sad but inevitable story of dogmatism. It is the story of the struggle of free thought with bigotry, religion making common cause with the wrong side. When Luther nailed his theses on his chapel door at Wittenberg it was a strike for freedom, but he only asked for what freedom he could use. Calvin wanted freedom, but his "Institutes" fixed the boundaries of as much of freedom as he approved of, and Servetus being found outside his stockade, must be burned. Wesley struck for freedom of spirit and Methodism flourished under the conquering banner. But they stretched the corralling rope, and a disciple of Wesley would "stretch upon a barn door the skin" of a brother-disciple who in the spirit of the master tried to bring his liberty down to date and make his religious thought conform to that thought without an adjective, which is always the last version of the thoughts of God phrased by man; i. e., the latest discoveries of science, the highest conclusions of philosophy, and the most reasonable expression of the accumulated experience of the race.

With love and appreciation for all the churches, it goes without the saying that organized religion is sick today. Not religion, but the organizations that seek to represent it, instead of being aggressive and triumphant leaders in art, literature, statecraft or science as they were when the cathedral came to its power, are now too often on the defensive, apologetic, more or less successful attachments to life rather than expressions of life.

I know what the statistics tell and I have no desire to challenge the figures that show increasing membership rolls, ever enlarging missionary funds and widening plans, the cumulative figures of charity and charitable institutions, and still in the face of all these unquestioned facts the leadership of the churches is

now in question and the minister of religion is regarded by many as more of an appendix than a prophecy in that book of life which represents civic welfare, social well being and public weal.

The only department of education that seems to lag today is that of theological education. The only professional schools that have lessening rolls are the divinity schools. And the theological students that we have are often not recruited out of the ranks of the most vigorous college students, measured by power of mind, ethical enthusiasm or potency of will. Something is the matter.

My purpose is not to argue today, but I venture to make these statements without fear of effectual contradiction, and I venture the opinion that the explanation is not far to seek: The exclusion, the halting of the intellect, the dogmatic and *other-worldly* spirit that brought blight upon the monastic life of the eighth to the tenth centuries, and that produced that outbreak of energy that dotted Europe with cathedrals, have brought Protestantism to the distractions of the present day. The "schism," the sectarian rivalry, the competitive struggle of the denominations have come to be the scandal of Christianity in the nineteenth century, the despair of that religion that finds its fundamental postulates in the decalogue, the beatitudes and the golden rule.

Signs are not wanting that there are pent-up forces about to reveal themselves that will bring about the renaissance of the cathedral-building spirit, not a renaissance of steeple-building, not a revival of Gothic architecture or mediæval liturgies, but a renaissance of that fundamental spirit that built the cathedrals, the spirit of unity as opposed to the spirit of caste, class and race, the spirit of hospitality as opposed to the spirit of exclusion; in a word, the spirit of catholicity as opposed to the spirit of schism and dogmatism. Every label in vogue today in Christendom is more or less a libel upon those who wear them, willingly or otherwise, because they indicate divisions where no divisions exist, differences that are unreal. Creeds that once represented the consecrated intellect of masters,

creeds that were mighty weapons in spiritual warfare when loaded with profound convictions, are now hindrances because they are so largely emptied of convictions. They are an embarrassment to those who are within the enclosures and a barrier to those who are without. All science as well as commerce, art and statesmanship point to a coöperation and a combination which religion must eventually sanctify and organize into more magnificent expressions than any of these other forces can. In some new fashion, through fresh instrumentalities and up-to-date methods, religion and morals are yet to find cathedral expression.

I believe it because I believe that religion and morals are fundamental forces in human life. So long as sin-stained souls stagger under the burden of conscious guilt, so long as life is torn by passion, so long as babes are born into loving homes, and open graves mock the joys that clustered around the cradle, so long as the human heart is vulnerable to pity and so long as men and women love each other, and the human body is susceptible to pain, so long will religion seek for expression and the spirit of man reach out to the spirit of fellow man. Not until the human heart is stolid to poetry, the human eye blind to beauty, not until the intellect ceases its quest for truth and conscience finds its quietus either in universal defeat or in triumphant success, will organized religion cease to be.

What will this new cathedral be like? What is the demand today above all other demands?

Again the answer is easy to discover, however difficult to state. The twentieth century cathedral, like that of the thirteenth century, will be a spirit before it is a building. It will not be a thing of columns and of arches, however necessary these may be and however beautifully they may ultimately be developed. Before that, it will be a spirit of freedom; a freedom to think God's thoughts after him; freedom to investigate and to respect the results of such investigation; freedom for the other man as well as for yourself; freedom enough to go round, all round; a free-

dom for Trinitarian and Unitarian, Presbyterian and Catholic, Christian, Jew and Pagan. The freedom not of toleration, but of appreciation; not of endurance, but of sympathy.

Out of this freedom comes fellowship, again fellowship that will go all round; fellowship for a man who differs from you, fellowship because he differs from you, a fellowship born out of appreciation of the meanest and the wickedest, a fellowship that rises into the third factor of the coming cathedral,—Service, Usefulness. This fellowship asks of its members not what do you believe, but what are you going to do about it.

This liberty, fellowship and service represents a consecration of all energies and resources, the new catholicity that will make a unit of the community in its moral quest and spiritual needs, the catholicity that will in the twentieth century, as in the tenth century, bring men and women together again where they will together face the common joys and common responsibilities of the community to which they belong, finding that what they hold in common is far more fundamental and extensive than what they hold in difference. The monasticism of the nineteenth century has been social—no, “society” monasticism. Men and women have sadly fallen apart, separated into their different clubs and functions, to the weakening and cheapening of all concerned; children have been remanded to Sunday-schools which their parents seldom or never visit, and the fundamental tenets of which they often confessedly do not endorse; labor and capital have congregated in antagonistic camps, greatly to the hurt of both parties; the good have gone away from home in order to do good; the wealthy have builded many missions for the poor “beyant the tracks”; greasy halls, wheezy hymns sung to rag-time music, ignorant piety and unctuous emotionalism are the instruments by means of which they have undertaken to ameliorate the wickedness over there; while upholstered pews sparsely tenanted, conventional theology exquisitely rendered in steeple houses, architectural anachronisms, cold, dark and neglected a large part of each week, are the re-

ligious helps for those who from their own choice or for some other cause are often the spiritually indifferent if not the spiritually neglected, who live on our avenues and our boulevards, those whom George Eliot called with measureless pathos "the perishing upper classes."

I quarrel with no church; I impugn the motives of no one and question the sincerity of no pulpit or pew; I gladly recognize the vast good accomplished by all the churches, and still I but state what the observation of every intelligent man and woman will confirm, that notwithstanding all this confusion of churches, this overlapping of territories, with their tireless activities, great multitudes of people in the city of Chicago, as everywhere in America, are practically unchurched today. After all the sects claim all they can, there still remains, largely untouched by their denominational enthusiasm, the best and the worst of every community, the wisest and the most ignorant, oftentimes the most benevolent, as well as the most depraved.

Is there no need of some new corporate expression of the ethical sense of the community, of the religious life of the twentieth century? Is there not a new cathedral-building spirit to be born out of this travail, this compression, this distraction?

Let me try to outline in a few words, as I see it, this new cathedral that is needed today and right here, that is possible now and here whenever the need is appreciated and its methods and purposes are understood.

I am thinking of a building of modern architecture, gracious though not gorgeous, representing in its lines dignity, hospitality and service, a building with four faces, each honest and clean, no pretense on the boulevard that is shamed by a slovenliness on the alley; the whole building invested with an atmosphere of sweet reasonableness, of home-like domesticity and cordiality, on the exterior of which is carved such names and inscriptions as will show that it stands there to serve the public, that it is allied to science, in league with literature, free but devout from the street level to the crowning cornice that rims the seventh story.

The basement and lower stories of this building will be devoted to helping activities. The offices in this department store that deals in spiritual commodities will be a sympathy shop, an information bureau, a reference board, an exchange of kindly offices where spiritual dynamos are at work making live the lines that radiate far and near with light-giving power; I mean a reading-room always open, a reference and circulating library available to the countless children, the aged, the house-bound and those who by taste or by necessity cannot frequent the great book depots of our city. Here will be a publication industry to produce things that do not pay and still the things that people need. Here should be playrooms, night-school rooms, manual training benches and modeling tables that will become the refuge of the boys and girls who cannot always be kept indoors, however attractive the home; as well as that of the boys and girls for whom such privileges are provided in no other way.

What would represent the next two floors in the building will be occupied by the auditorium; not large but attractive, not sumptuous but artistic, refined and comfortable, with the maximum of light, the best of air; an auditorium that will be an open congress hall for everything that pertains to public weal, to civic advancement, as indeed the old cathedrals were, and on that account all the more a place for prayer, hymn and sermon in proper season. The next floor should be given to class rooms, with working reference libraries attached. There should be rooms, one dedicated to civics, another to the bibles of the world, another to literature, the poets and sages, the master bards. Here if not elsewhere should be a school for domestic science, not to compete with but to supplement other activities. Here home-making and housekeeping should be lifted into a fine art, made honorable by all the skill and devotion possible. The next floor should be devoted to the social life of men, women and children, the modern family club refined, elevated and economized, so that those sufficiently attuned to enjoy the privileges of a common parlor and to merit the confidences of common companionship would find them available. Here

are rooms where the college graduate, the public school teacher, the wage earning woman, the young lawyer, the physician and the business man or woman will find themselves at home in the presence of those who have gone over the road a little ahead of them.

The next floor should be devoted to quarters for resident workers, apartments for the personalities without which the building would be dead and the spaces grow cold and vacant: the court of the Levites of the old temple, the chapter house and cloisters of the old cathedral. Here post-graduate students in sociology will love to tarry while they do laboratory work in the humanities, imbibing the spirit of usefulness and service from those who have already found work to do and a way to do it. The upper floor will be given to the physical man, gymnasium for women and children, boys and girls, the aged and the invalid; rooms for dancing and banqueting within the limits and under the direction of conscience and reason, purity and propriety.

This whole building will be alive with personalities, warmed and lighted as needed seven days in the week, fifty-two weeks in the year, and all the waking hours of every day. Such a building may well be taken in charge by a self-perpetuating board of trustees under the state law that provides for such educational institutions. It may well deserve and eventually will receive not only the confidence but the support of the best people in the community, whatever their individual theological beliefs or ecclesiastical relations may be. Its activities will take upon themselves associations, endowments, the support of the living and the blessed benedictions of the dead.

I have drawn no fancy sketch, no rhetorical castle in Spain. I have given in outline the result of ten years' study and quest on the part of architects, and the officers and minister of this church. Through the toils of seven different architectural elevations we have arrived at this last, which is still another, the best suggestion, subject to change and improvement.

And further, this is no untried dream. I have but outlined the quarters now necessary to house activities already developed through twenty years of work in

and around this humble home of a seven-day religion, this open church, this free platform, a place of religion that would still be religious without creed and without sectarian label.

Our present building was never meant to be anything but a crude study, a pencil sketch in the direction of the new cathedral. As it is now it represents upward of thirty distinct activities, most of them with an autonomy of their own, they came up with their annual exhibit last month with a financial balance, all of them on the right side. Library, reading-room, manual training, clay-modeling, postoffice mission, magazine dispensary that sends good reading from Alabama to Nevada, classes in Browning, Tolstoy, Ruskin, Emerson, studies in comparative religion, Bible and Christian history, these represent something of the activities already fostered here. Onto this platform did the Parliament of Religions overflow, the greatest corporate event in the religious history of the race; the hospitality there prophesied was here actualized under the sanction of a church and in the name of religion. Here has been carried on the publishing interest already indicated as non-profitable, but potent and needed.

This is not an impractical scheme. We have the work and we have the workers which demand the house, and when the house goes up it will rest on at least twenty years of local experience that proves that independence can be sympathetic, that rationalism can be devout and that freedom is not necessarily iconoclastic and negative.

And what is more significant still to the commercial mind of Chicago, we have most of the money necessary to build it. This scheme as a scheme was put to its severest test when its promoters said, "Not until one hundred thousand dollars of good subscriptions are obtained will we make the venture." By the generous self-denial of many and the patient search of a few we are now safely within the last decade of our fiscal century, we have turned the ninety thousand point. Seven or eight thousand more will reach the hundred thousand limit which is the *minimum* condition of suc-

cess in the building. This is what we *must* have. We need fifty thousand more to adequately furnish and equip these varied departments, and then one hundred thousand dollars as an endowment to keep the wheels a going and keep the rope of financial anxiety from strangling the spiritual forces that are to be set at work. The corner across the way, one hundred by one hundred and fifteen feet, is ours. This corner is an unencumbered asset.

Backed by all this today we confidently ask for that support and coöperation from the solid business men of Chicago, that will make this preliminary study, this prophetic attempt at a new cathedral tangible in this progressive city, this favored section of favored Chicago. That there is in it an element of adventure (I prefer to call it invention and initiative) goes without saying. For what else are we here? In what respect has Chicago claim for uniqueness or for lasting fame save in this? Where did you get your money, your homes, your city, except through this initiative? But that there is nothing erratic or unsound is proven by the experience of at least twenty years' work right here, the present financial asset of about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and a band of tried workers who have proven that combination is as good for love as for greed, and that an altruistic Trust, dealing in thought, in poetry, in science, in kindness, may prove as successful as an "Egoistic Trust" dealing in steel, coal, or petroleum.

WHAT IS IN A NAME? Much. What would we call it? The term "Social Settlement" brought with it a new idea, a fresh method. It has proven to be a term to conjure by. It represents the most vital, living, sensible expression of coöperative altruism in the English speaking world today. And the great good accomplished is but a beginning of the greater triumphs in store for the "Social Settlement." But for our purposes it contains within itself two limiting implications: The first is the implication that one must needs go away from home in order to do good, a patronizing assumption that the favored are better than the less favored, or at least a complacency on the part

of the favored who assume that misery and degradation are matters of geography and of financial resource. The second limitation is the abeyance of religious expression, the practical divorce of some of the most permanent forces in human nature represented by the church and Sunday life. Believing as I do that hymn and prayer and sermon as expressions of the devout heart, as an exercise of the spirit, are valuable and permanent elements in coöperative religion, I look for the New Cathedral to be a "Settlement" without going away from home, with the universal elements of the church enshrined at the core of it.

And so we venture to call it a "Centre," a "Centre" that shall radiate intelligence, culture, joy, helpfulness, a "Centre" to which will gravitate the lonely, the loving, the intellectually hungry, the morally affluent, the spiritually active. This "Centre" will, I believe, become a generic term. The ideal of many, the realization of an ever increasing number of communities. For the specific term we sought a name that would carry the connotation of the best the nineteenth century has achieved. We sought a name that belonged to democracy; had conquered the prejudices of aristocracy; a name that at once would be gentle and strong, tender and stalwart; a name that had achieved much for liberty, a name that had suffered much for the right. We wanted a name that would radiate benignity, humility, a Christ-like patience, in short, a saint of the new order, a martyr of the new day, and such a name we believe "Abraham Lincoln" to be. So we dare Christen this "Centre" of helpfulness, this home of kindness, this academy of life "The Abraham Lincoln Centre."

This is a name to conjure by, a name that touches thousands still living with peculiar pathos, among whom I am glad and proud to count myself one, for I was a humble private in that army that sang in the face of loneliness, sickness and death,

"We are coming, Father Abraham,
Three hundred thousand more."

For three years his leadership was the reluctant leadership of a man of peace compelled to do the dire service of a warrior. But the campaigning of the sword and bayonet ended in 1865 with the ending of his patient life. But that was but the brief prelude to the ministry of Abraham Lincoln. He is still a leader in the great army of love, the army upon whose banner is inscribed the angel chorus of

“Peace on earth, good will to men.”

In the files of that larger, diviner and more heroic army I have tried to hold my place throughout the campaign, thirty-eight years long now, which began after the surrender of Appomattox.

May I tell you the story of my cane, which lames me when I cease to wear it? It was in October, 1862, soon after the battle of Corinth. I had been in the service but a few weeks, most of the time had been spent in the hospital. Emaciated and weakened by camp fever, I reported for duty, for the ranks were sadly thinned at Corinth. The discipline was strenuous. Invalided as I was, I volunteered to take the place of a sick comrade in a battery drill on a rough corn field. The battery was in motion, the command was “Trot!” then, “Cannoneers, mount!” I sought my place on the rear chest of the caisson, but the legs were too weak to lift the body on the fast moving carriage across the corn rows, and I sunk between the wheels, and one of the wheels, bearing the twenty hundred-weight of ammunition passed over my left ankle, the other crushed my hat and pulled my hair. I was pulled out from under the horses’ feet of the next carriage and left for the time being in the care of a motherly old black woman, who brought water from the near spring, and caused another one to drip it from a gourd on the injured joint, while, with my head in her lap, she chafed my hands and wiped the clammy sweat from my brow while the “contrabands,” as we were beginning to call them, gathered around with eager curiosity. The old mammy, anxious for her patient, exclaimed, “Stand back out o’ de air! It am a Linkum soldier that’s done gone got run over. Stand back out o’ de air!” The

excruciating torture was abated by the complimentary title. I was proud then to be "a Linkum soldier." I am prouder now than then to wear his name, and when the wheels of life bear me down for the last time, I ask for no higher compliment, I seek no truer statement of the work I have tried to do than that which the white-headed old negress gave the beardless boy on the hot Corinth cornfield in 1862. Then, if I deserve it, let some one who loves me, say, "Here is a 'Linkum soldier' who has done gone got run over," and I shall be satisfied, for it was Lincoln who said:

"I want it said of me by those who know me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower when I thought a flower would grow."

Here is a saying worthy a place on the walls of the new cathedral which I ask you to help me rear. I ask you business men of Chicago, in the language of John Ruskin: "Is not the manufacture of souls, of a good quality, a business worthy your investments?" I ask you to help me to build up this spiritual industry, upon whose walls we will inscribe the words of good King Alfred: "Power is never good unless he be good who has it;" and again the words of Ruskin: "Life without industry is guilt, industry without art is brutality"; and again, "There is no wealth but life."

My plea was made for me on the Gettysburg battlefield thirty-nine years ago. Lincoln's words reach down across the flying years and out across the toiling distances and plead with us and for us this morning. We, the living, need to be dedicated to the unfinished work, to the task remaining, that by virtue of our high resolve those dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

This is the task of religion no less than of statesmanship. It is alike the business of politics and of piety. To help along this work we need, and in a day not far distant may I hope we will dedicate the

ABRAHAM LINCOLN CENTRE.

