1905

Souvenir Poem: Original Poem by Mrs. Ellen A. Dennis

Ellen A. Dennis

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Souvenir Poem

Penobscot Baptist Association, at Passadumkeag, September 5, 6, 1905.
Rev. and Mrs. A. W. Bailey.
God's Temple.

Original Poem by MRS. ELLEN A. DENNIS, at the dedication of Passadumkeag Baptist Church, September 5, 1905.

Ps. 127: 1. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

Did you hear the voice of the beautiful bell
Ringing so loud and clear?
To our listening hearts it is saying, saying.
"Come ye and worship here."

Dear church of God, this is your day,
A day of triumphant sweet,
When you can bring the garnered sheaves
And lay them at his feet.

Have you not sown through many a year,
And watered with many a tear?
To-day lay down the precious sheaves
In gladness, without fear.
You have prayed that God would send the means,
    Sufficient, by his power;
Behold how he has answered prayer
    In the gladness of this hour.

The star of hope within your hearts
    Finds full fruition here:
'Tis clustered round these sacred walls,
    Held forever sacred, dear.

Within this temple, good and strong,
    So wrought with loving care
In warp and woof, is faith and love,
    Much sacrifice and prayer.

Oh! wondrous power of unity,
    Behold! how worked the leaven:
And may this spire forever point
    The seeking soul to heaven
And as the sculptor sees the Christ
   Within the marble cold,
He patient toiling, day by day,
   The vision doth unfold

Until before his eager gaze
   Revealed, the statue stands—
His heart is filled with rapturous joy
   At the labor of his hands—

And so may you, who long have toiled
   'Mid discouragements and care,
See the embodiment of your dreams,
   Behold this temple fair.

'Twas built by honest hands and true,
   'Twas joined in faith and love,
It could not fail, it was God's plan,
   Its records are above.
All honor to the pioneers,
   To the early laborers true,
Who smote the rock with faith sublime
   From whence this structure grew.

There was one who toiled 'mid sun and shade,
   Nor asked for wealth or earthly fame,
I whisper here lest you forget,
   That Bickmore is his name.

Least you forget—ah! no!
   These words I could not mean,
For in the years to come you'll keep
   His memory ever fresh and green,

Brother, in the days now flown,
   If doubt held you within its power,
Ah! even then did'st come to thee
   A vision of this hour?
Did you not pray that God would send
One chosen of his love?
A shepherd who could guide his sheep
To glorious heights above?

One who was humble, earnest, true,
And filled with Christ-like zeal?
Who knew the deeper truths of God,
And could their light reveal?

He came; he led us to that fountain pure,
Where is balm for every pain,
Where all who will may deeply drink
And never, never thirst again.

Long as the ceaseless river flows
To join the ocean’s tide,
So shall the influence of his life
With us forevermore abide.
And many others, too, have toiled,
   With patience, hope and love,
Their names are written in your hearts,
   And known to God above.

Adown the vista of the years,
   With eyes of faith we peer.
We see the soldiers of the cross
   Who'll come to worship here.

And children's children here shall lay
   Their burdens at Christ's feet,
With him shall blest communion find
   Of all the world most sweet.

Here may Shechinah's altar burn
   With lusture pure and bright,
A lamp to guide the faltering feet,
   To trusting souls a light.
*May the Angel Peace, her white robes spread
   Above this hallowed place,
Forever keep in unity
   Sustained by heavenly grace.

*Treaty of Portsmouth signed today.