

EPWORTH.

BY THE REV. DWIGHT WILLIAMS, D.D.

MOTHERLAND across the sea,
 Home of bards and sages,
 Crowned amid the ages,
 Shrines unnumbered are in thee
 Where the pilgrim reverently
 Stands like one upon a shore,
 Looking far the billows o'er,
 Waiting till the echoes float
 From the wastes that lie remote ;
 So we lean, with ear attent,
 For some winged message sent.

In the distance here we stand :—
 'Tis a deep devotion,
 Mother isle of ocean,
 Speaks a blessing on thy land,
 For thy heroes, strong of hand,
 Brave of heart, the ages through ;
 'Tis a shining retinue
 Thou hast given for the lead
 Of a world in restless speed ;
 Seas are wide, but chains of gold
 Bind us each, the new and old.

Where the Trent with easy flow
 Seeks the Humber, gliding,
 Winding oft, and hiding,
 Through the "levels" rich and low,
 There a manor long ago
 Rose beyond, on heights of green,
 Looking down the river sheen ;
 That is Epworth, parish old,
 Of a date that is not told ;
 Hence the echo o'er the sea,
 Worthy theme of minstrelsy.

Parsonage of Epworth, where
 Came there brighter angel,
 With a glad evangel ?
 Never on the burdened air
 Was a sweeter breath of prayer,
 Than the words by priest intoned,
 When the mother, love-enthroned,
 Gave the new-born one caress,
 With God's seal of blessedness ;
 Write that mother's queenly soul,
 England, on the royal scroll !

Thatched the cottage where he dwelt,
 Shepherd and protector,
 Epworth's saintly rector ;
 Dim the chancel where he knelt,
 'Neath the mossy tower that felt
 Shock of storm, and sunlight kiss,
 Pointing from the world that is
 To the higher towers of gold,
 In the glory manifold ;
 Bless St. Andrew's with its chime,
 Relic of the olden time !

From the parish of the priest,
 Humble in its story,
 Spread a wave of glory ;
 Like the day-star in the East
 To the daylight broad increased ;
 Till a morning song is heard
 Like a carol of a bird ;
 Song of prisoned souls unbound
 Rising all the wide world round ;
 Palaces have heard the strain,
 And the lowly keep refrain.

Epworth born, and Oxford bred,
 Student, fellow, master,
 Thence a world-wide pastor ;
 Where the rubric had not led,
 There his parish field was spread ;
 Mid the Newgate felons bold,
 On the Moorfields, temple old,
 Where the Kingswood colliers met,
 While he spread the gospel net ;
 Wider than a bishop's see,
 His a priesthood by degree.

Westward rolled the glory wave
 With the wave of freedom ;
 As from ancient Edom
 Came the mighty one to save,
 So the stalwart and the brave
 Entered through the forest doors,
 Trod the great cathedral floors,
 With their arches old and dim,
 Where, as from the cherubim,
 Fell the beauty and the gold
 With a rapture never told.

Onward is the sacred march
 Through revolted regions,
 Filled with hostile legions ;
 Wild sirocco storms but parch
 All the way to victory's arch ;
 "God is with us," best of all ;
 He will smite the bastion wall ;
 We shall write upon the bells
 Of the horses as he tells,
 "Holiness" for his renown,
 His the glory and the crown.

'Tis a birth-song we have sung ;
 Whispered as we listened,
 When a babe was christened ;
 When the parish bells were rung,
 And two souls together clung,
 Child and mother. Onward, time !
 'Tis a battlefield sublime ;
 Turn the kingdoms ; islands wait ;
 Chimes the jubilee elate !—
 Parish of the world ! behold !
 Christ is crowned with stars of gold.