

MISCELLANEOUS.

ASPIRATIONS.

BY EDWIN EMERSON, A. M.

Oh! for clear thought to aid all men,
In things which seem above their ken,
And show the false and true,
In such a guise that they may know,
For evermore the way to go,
And the straight road pursue.

Oh! for that gift of genial speech,
By which at once all hearts we reach,
And make men yearn to rise,
Where they may see the noblest things,
And feel the joy rare knowledge brings;
And thus at length be wise.

Oh! for keen sight to see outspread,
Through all the earth on which we tread,
Most precious gifts for man;
Which banish from his thoughts vain fears,
And smooth his pathway through the years,
However long the span.

Oh! for the poet's art to sing:—
To thought profound, warm feeling bring,
Expressed with rhythmic grace;
So that the song, a potent spell,
Deep in the hearts of men shall dwell,
And bless the human race.

Oh! for a pen with which to write,
The wingèd words just now in flight,
Lest they be caught no more;
And fix them to be read by all,
And have them henceforth at our call,
To be oft pondered o'er.

Oh! for a life of high emprise,
 Direct, sincere, without disguise,
 Of all men read and known;
 Built firmly on the rock of truth,
 Though waxing old, secure of youth;
 A life—itsself alone.

Oh! for an optimistic mind;
 The good in all things prone to find;
 A stranger to despair;
 It sees, the howling storm to-day
 Shall by to-morrow speed away,
 And leave the prospect fair!

Oh! for contentment's placid state;
 Mid this world's turmoil still sedate;
 All duties promptly done;
 In danger calm, devoid of fear,
 Unblanched if death itself appear:--
 The moral victory won!

Oh! for long life,—when we are dead,—
 In minds and hearts which we have led
 Along the upward way;
 A pleasing vision this,—to see
 The coming race more wise, more free,
 And nobler in its day!

OLD SYMBOLS IN A NEW SENSE.

It is always interesting to see a subject treated from different points of view, and so we are glad to offer to our readers an explanation of the significance of the swastika in the development of religious thought from the standpoint of a devout Roman Catholic. Adversaries of the Church have considered the fact that the symbols commonly used by Christians (such as the cross, the labarum, the fish, and the swastika) were pre-Christian, as an evidence of their human origin. They existed before Christianity and were filled with new meaning with the appearance of the new faith. Dr. Parker is familiar with the facts, but his explanation, though simple enough, does not in the least detract from the dignity and even the pretensions of his Church. The swastika appears in the catacombs as a Christian symbol by the side of the cross, the fish, and the christogram, and to him they are endeared by their Christian meaning. Their pre-existence does not disturb him, for he sees in them a prophecy of Christianity. They anticipate the appearance of Christ and help to prepare his way. This interpretation does justice to the facts, and I do not hesitate to say that it is the correct and orthodox view even from the standpoint of the Church. We need not enter here into a discussion of the nature of prophecy and the methods by which movements are prepared in history, but the present case is typical of many other and similar