

## CHARLEMAGNE.

Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, King of the Franks, and subsequently Emperor of the West, has been dead 1026 years. Charlemagne was born in 742. Although the wisest man of the age in which he lived, he could not write, and he was forty-five years of age before he began his studies. His favourite preceptor was Alcuin, librarian to Egbert, Archbishop of York. On the 25th of December, 800, Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of the West; and, on the 1st of December, in the following year, Alcuin presented him with a magnificent folio bible, bound in velvet, the leaves of vellum, the writing in double columns, and containing 449 leaves. Prefixed is a richly ornamented frontispiece in gold and colors. It was enriched with four large paintings, exhibiting the state of the art at this early period; there are moreover thirty-four large initial letters, painted in gold and colours, and exhibiting seals, historical allusions, and emblematical devices, besides some smaller painted capitals. This identical bible was sold by Mr. Evans, in London, on the 27th of April, 1836, for £1500. When Charlemagne issued the instrument by which the Roman Liturgy was ordained through France, he confirmed it by 'making his mark.' Mezerai, the French historian, observes that below the 'mark' was commonly inserted, 'I have signed it with the pomel of my sword, and I promise to maintain it with the point.'

Charlemagne was interred at Aix-la-Chapelle. His body was embalmed and deposited in a vault, where it was seated on a throne of gold, and clothed in imperial habits, over the sack-cloth which he usually wore. By his side hung a sword, of which the hilt, and the ornaments of the scabbard, were of gold, and a pilgrim's purse that he used to carry in his journeys to Rome. In his hands he held the Book of the Gospels, written in letters of gold; his head was ornamented with a chain of gold, in the form of a diadem, in which was enclosed a piece of the wood of the true cross; and his face was wound with a winding sheet. His sceptre and buckler, formed entirely of gold, and which had been consecrated by Pope Leo III. were suspended before him, and his sepulchre was closed and sealed after having been filled with various treasures and perfumes. A gilded arcade was erected over the place, with a Latin inscription, of which the following is a translation:—

"Beneath this tomb is placed the body of the orthodox Emperor Charles the Great, who variously extended the kingdom of the Franks, and happily governed it 47 years. He died a Septuagenarian, January, 814."

It is further recorded, that 'Pope Otho III. ordered the tomb to be opened, when the body was stripped of its royal ornaments, which had not been in the least injured by the hand of time. The Book of the Gospels continues to be kept at Aix-la-Chapelle. With this volume the imperial sword and hunting-horn were also found. The copy of the Gospels interred with Charlemagne, appears to have been one of those executed by his order, and corrected according to the Greek and Syriac.'

Emanuel Swedenborg, a somewhat celebrated religious enthusiast, was born at Stockholm on the 31st of January, 1688 or 1689. He was educated under the care of his father, Bishop of West Gothland, in the doctrines of Lutheranism. About the year 1743, he conceived a belief that he was admitted to an intercourse with the world of spirits, and this belief he retained till his death, which occurred in 1772. It was upon this belief that he became the founder of a sect called the New Jerusalem Church. Swedenborg was a man of great talent and acquirements, and perfectly sane upon all other points.

## SULTAN MAHMOUD'S LAST EXCURSION UPON THE BOSPHORUS.

BY PRINCE PUCKLER MUSKAU.

One day I was boating upon the channel of that brilliant Bosphorus, which, decked out as it were every day for a *fete*, reflects in the mirror of its blue surface its mosques, minarets, and innumerable palaces, its gardens and villas, its delightful groups of plane trees, its cemeteries with dark cypresses, and its shaded hills resembling waves. A noise of cannon from the forts and ships suddenly warned me of the approach of the Sultan's barge. I hastened towards a spot of the Asiatic shore where the presence of some troops, and of a few foreign spectators, denoted the place selected by the Sultan for his day's prayer.

I had scarcely landed, and obtained from the courtesy of a Turkish officer one of the best places close to the mosque stairs, when the Grand Seignor's boat, rowed with the swiftness of bird-flight, touched the shore. At that period the public knew but vaguely of the disease which so promptly devoured him, and, after all I had heard about Sultan Mahmoud, I expected to behold a vigorous stature and a proud look. I was astonished when I saw a being, bent, resembling a spectre, whose features, though handsome and noble, were already struck with the marks of an incurable illness. There was a benevolence and mildness in his large and expressive eyes; but the approach of death had already imparted to them something supernatural; he seemed a stranger to all that passed around him, and to be wholly plunged into the interior of his soul.

That Prince, the image of expiring grandeur, was seated upon several red velvet cushions under a gilt canopy, forming a sad con-

trast with the herculean rowers, whose athletic forms shone beneath their shirts of transparent silk. The dying sovereign attempted to rise, but he fell strengthless upon the cushions, and two officers rather carried than conducted him up the stairs. Whilst the Sultan addressed some affectionate words to the persons surrounding him, a painful smile passed over his suffering face, which, to conceal the vestiges of his illness, was painted red and black, according to the Paris etiquette, but shaded by an ebony beard, cut very short. Those borrowed colours did but more sadly bring out the signs betokening an approaching decomposition.

I was so dismayed at that aspect, so sorrowfully absorbed in the fate of that martyr—for he is a martyr that devotes his life to an idea disowned by the mass of the people—that I let the Sultan pass without saluting him and taking my hat off, like the rest. The Sultan's eyes fixed upon me; perhaps he had perceived and taken offence at my unpoliteness; but could he have read my soul, he would have recognized more flattering homage than any that a skilful courtier could have tendered; for, in verity, it was very long since the sight of a sovereign had transported me so far as to make me forget myself.

We were not permitted to follow the Sultan into the mosque, and when he left it I was myself again; I failed not to repair my fault with a profound salute, after taking my hat off long before he reappeared. He wanted to return to his palace in a carriage, and, after descending the stairs with great pains, he stopped at the door to rest himself before he entered the vehicle. During that pause he attentively looked at the crowd surrounding him. A poor woman kept her hand up with a petition; the Sultan remarked her; he immediately desired his suite to fetch the memorial, and carefully deposited it in his carriage. Fearing lest the ladies standing among the spectators might be touched by his spirited horses, he had them requested to draw back a little to a higher spot.

In the meantime, I had not ceased to study his interesting countenance with all the attention of a physiognomist. Melancholy, richness of thought, perhaps more of the ideal than of fixed will, a great sensitiveness to pleasure and pain, goodness and frankness—such were the principal features I fancied I read in it; but all that was, as it were, veiled by the presentiment of death.

## A LOCATION.

Two friends and brother lawyers of mine were travelling some years since on the "circuit." Their route led them across the sandy hills that form the northern boundary of Alabama, one of the noble rivers of our noble state. These hills, or ridges, however, were as barren and desolate as Arabia and Petraea. You might plant a Yankee there, and he would not grow! Perhaps, after this assertion, it would be "surplussage" to say that no effort of ingenuity could coax a blade of grass to rear its head above the sterile soil. It was a rainy gloomy day; and after travelling some time without encountering any signs of human life, their hearts were cheered by the sight of "the smoke that gracefully curled," and they knew forthwith, "that a cottage was near." And sure enough there it was. A clumsy, ill-shaped, log-hut, with interstices, or to speak more emphatically, "chinks," wide enough to throw a sizeable bear through.

My friends here dismounted. A fire of pine wood, or "light wood," as it is technically called, blazed in the clay chimney. In one corner of the fireplace was huddled a baker's dozen of "yellow complected brats." A tall gaunt female, with long uncombed tresses, or bunches of coarse red hair, was seated upon the floor; while in front of the fire, and occupying the only stool in the hovel, sat "the lord of the soil," shivering under the malign influence of a certain ague.

"Good morning, my friend," said one of the visitors, who is celebrated for his politeness and urbanity.

"Morning," was his laconic and echo-like reply, (I believe that it is an incorrect expression). Echo, like a woman, always has the last word.

"Fine situation you have here," resumed my brother attorney.

"Fine!" responded the host, "what is it fine for?"

"Why, I should suppose you would have sport here in hunting."

"Then you suppose a lie! You can't hunt, 'cepting you got somethin' to hunt at, kin you."

"No! that's a very clear case; I thought, however, that so near the river, there would be plenty of deer. Still, if it's not good hunting ground, it is a fine place for raising cattle."

"It is, is it? S'posin' the cattle gets in the swamp, and the river 'pon 'em, and the cussed fools don't git out of the way, but git drowned!—how are you gwine to raise 'em then, eh?"

"This certainly is very bad," continued my indefatigable friend; "but there is one comfort to you. If you have not the richest soil, nor the best hunting ground, nor the greenest pasturage, you have what is better than the monarch's diadem, or the highest niche in the temple of Fame; you have health."

"The deuce I have, stranger. Do you see them yellow complected critters in the corner there? Them's got health, aint they? And look at me with this cussed agur shaking my bones into jelly! You call that health, don't you?"

"Look here, my friend," exclaimed my brother chip, "answer me this question, and I won't ask you another. If you can't get any thing to grow here, and nothing to hunt, and all your cattle

get drowned, and your family are all the while sick; why, in the name of common sense, do you not up sticks and walk?"

"Oh; cause the light wood knots are amazin' handy."—*Knickerbocker*.

## THE MISERERE.

The following description of the Miserere, as performed at the Sistine Chapel, is from the pen of the late Dr. John Bell:—The service opens by a portion of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, sung by the choristers; after which, the Pope recites the pater-noster in a low voice; then being seated on the throne, and crowned with the mitre, the theme is continued, sung loud and sweet by the first soprano, in a tone so long sustained, so high, so pure, so silvery and mellifluous, as to produce the most exquisite effect, in contrast with the deep choruses, answering in rich harmony at the conclusion of every strophe; and then again the lamenting voice is heard—tender and pathetic—repeating one sweet prolonged tone, sounding clear and high in the distance, till brought down again by the chorus. The exquisite notes of the soprano almost charmed away criticism; but yet we could not help being conscious of the difficulties attending a composition of this nature, even in the hands of so great a master as Allegri, whose music it was: nor of perceiving that, after a time, the continued strain and measured answering chorus became monotonous, and the mind insensibly sinks into languor. Yet, the whole is very fine: it is as if a being of another world were heard lamenting over a ruined city, with the responses of a dejected people; and forms a grand and mournful preparation for the Miserere. The last light being extinguished, the chorus, in heavy sounds, proclaims that our Saviour is betrayed; then, for a moment, as a symbol of the darkness in which the moral world is left, the deepest obscurity prevails: at the words, "Christus est mortuus," the Pope, the whole body of the clergy, and the people, knelt, (in former times they fell down on the earth,) and all was silent,—when the solemn pause was broken by the commencing of the Miserere, in low, rich, exquisite strains, rising softly on the ear, and gently swelling into powerful sounds of seraphic harmony. The extraordinary effect produced by this seraphic music is finer and greater than that of any admired art; no painting, statue, or poem—no imagination of man, can equal its wonderful power on the mind. The silent solemnity of the scene—the touching import of the words, "*take pity on me, O God!*" passes through to the inmost soul, with a thrill of the deepest sensation, unobscuredly moistening the eye, and paling the cheek. The music is composed of two choruses of four voices; the strain begins low and solemn,—rising, gradually, to the clear tones of the first soprano, which at times are heard alone; at the conclusion of the verse, the second chorus joins; and then, by degrees, the voices fade and die away. The soft, and almost imperceptible accumulation of sound, swelling in mournful tones of rich harmony, into powerful effect, and then receding, as if in the distant sky, like the lamenting song of angels and spirits, conveys, beyond all conception to those who have heard it, the idea of darkness, of desolation, and of the dreary solitude of the tomb. A solemn silence ensues and not a breath is heard, while the inaudible prayer of the kneeling Pope continues. When he rises, slight sounds are heard, by degrees breaking on the stillness, which has a pleasing effect,—restoring, as it were, the rapt mind to the existence and feelings of the present life. The effect of those slow, prolonged, varied, and truly heavenly strains, will not easily pass from the memory.

## ANECDOTES OF CHARLES V.

In the treaty he signed at Madrid with Francis I. of France, wishing not to mortify his prisoner, a king without a kingdom, he signed himself Charles, citizen of Ghent. Francis, not to be outdone in courtesy, signed himself Francis, seigneur of Vauvres, the smallest of all the royal domains. Charles had a good many favourite maxims. He used to say that long reflection was the guarantee of good success. Though quick and impetuous, he was very patient, and often said, "Time and I are worth any two you can bring against us." One of his maxims was, that states will govern themselves well enough if you let them alone. Another was, "my scholars instruct me, my merchants enrich me, and my nobles plunder me." He loved industry, and was delighted at the application of the Flemish women, whose needlework was already famous, and observed that the country would never be poor while the Flemish women had their fingers left. He was happy in his replies. Titian was once painting his portrait, and told him it was the third time he had had that honour. "It is the third time that you have made me immortal," was the reply. In 1541, when he was preparing to set out for Algiers, as it was late in the season, and the navigation was dangerous, Andre Doria urged him to put it off till spring. "If we set out we shall all perish," added he. "What! after seventy-two years of life for you, and twenty-two of empire for me!" answered Charles. And the expedition set out. One night when he walked lame, owing to a late attack of gout, the count of Buren, who was intimate with him, said, laughingly: "The empire totters." "Do not entertain such a thought," said the emperor, with grave mildness, "and remember it is not the feet that govern, but the head." Having met with a reverse before Metz, towards the close of his life, he only said, "I now see plainly that Fortune is a woman, since she deserts grey hairs." Two ladies entering the presence-chamber quarrelled as to precedence.