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## AN ARMENIAN WEDDING.

We have been favored with a copy of the following letter from a lady in Constantinople to her friend in this place, giving an account of an Armenian Wedding, which we take pleasure in laying before our readers:

Constantinople, January 4, 1841.

My DEAR —

I wrote you not long since in answer to your letter of July 21st, which is the latest I have received from you. I have great cause to complain of your silence, as I receive very few letters from you. You do not know what a pleasure it is to me, who am so far separated from my native land, often to hear from those I love.

I have recently, for the first time, attended an Armenian wedding, and as it was something so novel to me, will do myself the pleasure of writing you a description of it, though a description will scarcely convey to you what the reality was. The Barutjee-bashee, a chief superintendent of the Imperial powder works, one of the wealthiest and most influential Armenians of the Capital, invited us on the 27th ult. to the wedding of his son, a youth of 17 years of age, educated in England. We proceeded from Pera to San Siffano, where he resides, in a Turkish carriage called Koteche. In one of these same carriages we last spring made a journey to Brousa, at the foot of Mount Olympus; but this last one was still more splendid. Its interior was one mass of gilding, over which was laid rich bouquets of flowers; in each corner was a large diamond-shaped mirror; the wicker-work windows and the body of the carriage were all newly painted in bright and lively colors, and the red cloth coverings thrown over the top, edged with gaily colored tassels, were evidently new. We had two strong frisky nags which stopped at nothing, their tails neatly wrapped up in red cloth coverings and traced up along their sides clear of the mud. The coachmen were two equally frisky young Turks, one of whom presided the equipage a few steps through the narrow streets of the city, with a baton of office in his hand, to clear the way, whilst the other walked before the horses, leading them by their bridles, and whenever we approached an eminence requiring extra exertion to ascend, the pioneer changed his position for one immediately along side, and courted his baton over the horses' backs, bringing it down with a most Turk-like violence. I patted the horses, but to say any thing to the Turks was useless. The ground was deeply covered with snow, the wind whistled through the wicker-work of the windows, bringing with it fine particles of the drift; the tall evergreen cypress, which we frequently met on the way-side, by their summer freshness seemed to mock the season. Mr. — and myself, who were alone in the carriage, were very comfortable, as we were provided with a number of cushions, &c., unless we have a sufficiency of these, those carriages are not pleasant, as they have no seats, and we have to sit down on the floor of the vehicle, *a la Turque*. While at San Siffano we remained at the American Minister's palace, and he, together with — and —, accompanied us to the wedding house. This house, like all Turkish houses, is divided into two separate apartments, one for the males called the *Salamlik*; and the other appropriated to the females called the *Harem*. In the former were received the Mussulmen guests, and a few Armenians, who were not relations of the family. They admit male relatives into the *Harem*, as such a thing as relations intermarrying they never hear of! It is customary for the mother of the marriageable youth to go in search of a Bride for him. In the present case, the mother, after determining her son should be married, started off for the Capital, with the intention of not returning until she found a daughter-in-law. We were told that in this instance the young lady was selected for her beauty of form and face. After making known to her father the success of her mission, he visited the young lady's mother, and so far broke through the ceremony used in the East, as to ask an audience with her and her daughter. He approved of his wife's taste, and as the young lady's mother consented to the marriage, he presented the bride elect with a ring of betrothal, and preparations were immediately made for the nuptials. The bride is 14 years of age. The ceremony was performed at midnight in the chapel of the Barutjee-bashee; and it was on the previous day that the bride was conducted from her mother's house to the house of the groom, by some 25 or more carriages, and a numerous cavalcade. Immediately on her arrival at the house of her father in law, she was taken to the chapel, where prayers were performed, and a blessing asked on the intended nuptials. She was dressed in yellow silk trousers, richly worked with gold; a robe a Persian cloth heavy with gold trimmings; cloth colat, worked with gold and pearls; a turban of crimson cloth and blue tassels; a rich kerchief edged with flowers, bound round the turban; many large diamond ornaments on the head dress; short half a pound

of pearls and other ornaments, mostly of diamonds, hung round her neck; round her waist was a rich Cashmere shawl, tied in a sash; on her hands silk gloves, with heavy diamond rings over them; from her forehead to her feet hung a veil of gold threads, or rather gold tinsels, which was sufficiently close to conceal her face; her stockings were embroidered silk, a pair, and her slippers of crimson velvet worked with gold. The Priests were richly dressed in cloaks of embroidered silk. After the ceremony of the blessing was concluded, the Bride was conducted to the *Harem* apartment of the house, and as she ascended its steps, the father and mother of the Groom threw over her shoulders such showers of small coin, called *Paras*, that the steps were literally covered with silver. At the head of each flight of stairs, she was met by two young Armenian girls, very richly dressed, holding wafers of perfumes and incense. She was led to a seat on a sofa, and each of the female guests went near and kissed her. Not one relation accompanied her, as it is the custom for the parents and relations of the Bride to remain at home to mourn her loss; and only an old woman, perhaps her nurse, attended her from her parents' house on this trying occasion. She was compelled by custom to remain without speaking for three days, except to this one individual to express her wants. The dresses of all the Armenian ladies who were present, were of rich brocade worked with gold; and their heads ornamented with masses of diamonds so heavy that many took them off as insupportable. Music was played in the hall; and as it is not the custom for Armenian ladies to dance, the servant maids danced for their amusement and for joy. On the morrow we were invited first to dinner, and then to the wedding. Dinner was served both in the *Salamlik* and the *Harem*, in European style; and at candle-light music was again played in the hall. The Bride was not present, but dined in a separate apartment, attended by the female who accompanied her from her mother's. After dinner all the gentlemen met in the *Harem*, except the Turks and Armenians who were not relations. The American Minister dined in the *Harem*, and Mr. — could have done so had he desired it. After dinner the evening was passed in conversation and music. The Bride sat with us part of the time; the groom was also present, but could not see the face of his bride, as she still wore her veil, and he did not speak to her. She could see him easily through this veil, and I doubt not but she took the opportunity of seeing, for the first time, her husband. Near midnight the Priests commenced chanting in the hall and burning incense, as a signal that the ceremony was to commence. The Armenian ladies left the house for the Chapel, and repaired to their apartment, which is separated from the males by wicker-work. The Bride was conducted to the Chapel by her female attendant and the groomsmen, a young cousin of the groom. The bride couple were seated side by side immediately opposite the altar. The Groom was dressed in a red Turkish cap, and his coat richly embroidered with gold. The bride was entirely concealed from view by a red silk covering like a bag, which went over her head and down to her feet. It was trimmed up each side with bunches of flowers and ribbons, also over the top of the head. On the back of the head was a large ornament of pearls and diamonds. From her forehead over this silk covering she still wore her gold veil; and round the head where it was tied, from one ear to the other, were large ornaments of splendid diamonds. These diamonds were a present from the Groom. Before them on a table was another cap and richly embroidered coat lined with fur, which, after being blessed, was transferred to the body of the Groom. Whilst the ceremony was going on, they either stood or knelt, with their foreheads leaning together.

As soon as the boy concluded, the Groom was kissed by his father and relations, and falling down before his uncle, the father of the child who had just addressed him, kissed his feet. The Bride was then slowly led back to the *Harem*, followed by her husband, and thousands of silver *Paras* were showered over their shoulders. The remainder of the night the Bride's face was partly exposed, and she seemed to take some interest in the dancing going on in the hall.

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## Debate in the Senate.

### SPEECH OF

Mr. Clay, of Kentucky,  
On the Executive Message containing the President's objections to the Bank Bill.

In Senate United States, August 19, 1841.

Mr. CLAY, of Kentucky, rose and addressed the Senate as follows: Mr. President, the bill which forms the present subject of our deliberations had passed both Houses of Congress by decisive majorities, and, in conformity with the requirement of the Constitution, was presented to the President of the United States for his consideration. He has returned it to the Senate, in which it originated, according to the direction of the Constitution, with a message announcing his veto of the bill, and containing his objections to its passage. And the question now to be decided is, Shall the bill pass, by the required constitutional majority of two thirds, the President's objections notwithstanding?

Knowing, sir, but too well that no such majority can be obtained, and that the bill must fall, I would have been rejoiced to have found myself at liberty to abstain from saying one word on this painful occasion. But the President has not allowed me to give a silent vote. I think, with all respect and deference to him, he has not reciprocated the friendly spirit of concession and compromise which animated Congress in the provisions of this bill, and especially in the modification of the 16th fundamental condition of the bank. He has commented, I think, with undervalued severity on that part of the bill he has used. I am sure unintentionally, harsh, if not reproachful, language; and he has made the very concession, which was promptly accepted as a peace offering, and from friendly considerations, the cause of stronger and more decided disapprobation of the bill. Standing in the relation to that bill which I do, and especially to the exceptionable clause, the day which I owe to the country, and self respect, impose upon me the obligation of at least attempting the vindication of a measure which has met with a fate so unexpected and so unexpected.

On the 4th of April he, the lamented Harrison, the President of the United States, paid the debt of Nature. President Tyler, who, as Vice President, succeeded to the duties of that office, arrived in the city of Washington on the 6th of that month. He found the whole metropolis wrapped in gloom, every heart filled with sorrow and sadness, every eye streaming with tears; and the surrounding hills yet ringing back the echo of the bells which were tolled on that melancholy occasion. On entering the Presidential mansion he contemplated the pale body of his predecessor stretched before him, and clothed in the black habiliments of death. At that solemn moment I have no doubt that the heart of President Tyler was overflowing with mingled emotions of grief, of patriotism, and of gratitude—above all, of gratitude to that country by a majority of whose suffrages, bestowed at the preceding November, he then stood the most distinguished, the most elevated, the most honored of all living Whigs of the United States.

It was under these circumstances, and in this probable state of mind, that President Tyler, on the 10th day of the same month of April, voluntarily promulgated an Address to the People of the United States. That Address was in the nature of a coronation oath, which the Chief of the State, in other countries, and under other forms, takes upon ascending the throne. It referred to the solemn obligations, and the profound sense of duty, under which the new President entered upon the high trust which had devolved upon him by the joint acts of the People and of Providence, and it stated the principles and delineated the policy by which he would be governed in his exalted station. It was emphatically a Whig Address, from beginning to end—every inch of it was Whig, and was patriotic.

In that Address the President, in respect to the subject-matter embraced in the present bill, held the following conclusive and emphatic language: "I shall promptly give my sanction to any constitutional measure which, originating in Congress, shall have for its object the restoration of a sound circulating medium, so essentially necessary to give confidence in all the transactions of life, to secure to industry its just and adequate rewards, and to re-establish the public prosperity." In deciding upon the adaptation of any such measure to the end proposed, as well as its conformity to the Constitution, I shall resort to the Fathers of the great Republican school for advice and instruction.

to be drawn from their sage views of our system of Government, and the light of their ever glorious example."

To this clause in the Address of the President, I believe, that no interpretation was given throughout this whole country, by friend and foe, by Whig and Democrat, and by the press of both parties. It was, by every man with whom I conversed on the subject at the time of its appearance, or of whom I have since inquired, construed to mean that the President intended to occupy the Madison ground, and to regard the question of the power to establish a National Bank as temporarily settled. And I think I may confidently appeal to the Senate, and to the country, to sustain the fact that this was the contemporaneous and unanimous judgment of the Public. Reverting back to the period of the promulgation of the Address, could any other construction have been given to its language? What is it? "I shall promptly give my sanction to any constitutional measure which, originating in Congress," shall have certain defined objects in view. He concedes the vital importance of a sound circulating medium to industry and to the public prosperity. He concedes that its origin must be in Congress. And, to prevent any inference from the qualification, which he prefixes to the measure, being interpreted to mean that a United States Bank was unconstitutional, he declares that in deciding on the adaptation of the measure to the end proposed, and its conformity to the Constitution, he will resort to the Fathers of the great Republican school. And who were they? If the Father of his Country is to be excluded, are Madison, (the Father of the Constitution,) Jefferson, Monroe, Gerry, Gallatin, and the long list of Republicans who acted with them, not to be regarded among those Fathers? But President Tyler declares not only that he should appeal to them for advice and instruction, but to the light of their ever glorious example. What example? What other meaning could have been possibly applied to the phrase, than that he intended to refer to what had been done during the Administrations of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe?

Entertaining this opinion of the Address, I came to Washington, at the commencement of the session, with the most confident and buoyant hopes that the Whigs would be able to carry all their proposed measures, and especially a Bank of the United States, by far that one of the greatest immediate importance. I anticipated nothing but cordial co-operation between the two departments of Government; and I reflected with pleasure that I should find, at the head of the Executive branch, a personal and political friend, whom I had long and intimately known, and highly esteemed. It will not be my fault if ostentatious relations should unhappily exist, in consequence of any difference of opinion between us on this occasion. The President has been always perfectly familiar with my opinion on this bank question.

Upon the opening of the session, but especially on the receipt of the plan of a National Bank, as proposed by the Secretary of the Treasury, I was excited that the President had been misunderstood in his Address, and that he had not waived but adhered to his constitutional scruples. Under these circumstances it was hoped that, by the indulgence of a mutual spirit of compromise and concession, a bank, competent to fill the expectations and satisfy the wants of the People, might be established.

Under the influence of that spirit, the Senate and the House agreed, first, as to the name of the proposed bank. I confess, sir, that there was something exceedingly unwise and revolting to my ears in the term "Fiscal Bank;" but I thought, "What is there in a name? A rose, by any other name, would smell as sweet." Looking, therefore, rather to the utility of the substantial facilities than to the name of the contemplated institution, we consented to that which was proposed.

2d. As to the place of the location of the Bank, although Washington had passed through my mind as among the cities in which it might be expedient to place the bank, it was believed to be the least eligible of some four or five other cities. Nevertheless, we consented to fix it here.

And lastly, in respect to the branching power, there was not probably a solitary vote given in either House of Congress for the bill that did not greatly prefer the unqualified branching power, as asserted in the charters of the two former Banks of the United States, to the 16th fundamental condition, as finally incorporated in this bill. It is perfectly manifest, therefore, that it was put in conformity with the opinion and wish of majorities in Congress, but in a friendly spirit of concession towards the President and his particular friends that the clause assumed that form. So repugnant was it to some of the best friends of a National Bank in the other House, that they finally voted against the bill because it contained that compromise of the branching power.

It is true that, in presenting the compromise to the Senate, I stated, as was the fact, that I did not know whether it was acceptable to the President or not; that, according to my opinion, each de-

partment of the Government should set up its own responsibility, independently of the other; and that I presented the modification of the branching power because it was necessary to ensure the passage of the bill in the Senate, having ascertained that the vote would stand 26 against it to 25, if the form of that power which had been reported by the committee were persisted in. But I nevertheless did entertain the most confident hopes and expectations that the bill would receive the sanction of the President; and this motive, although not the immediate one, had great weight in the introduction and adoption of the compromise clause. I knew that our friends who would not vote for the bill as reported were actuated, as they avowed, by considerations of union and harmony, growing out of supposed views of the President, and I presumed that he would not fail to feel and appreciate their sacrifices. But I deeply regret that we were mistaken. Notwithstanding all our concessions, made in a genuine and sincere spirit of conciliation, the sanction of the President could not be obtained, and the bill has been returned by him with his objections.

And I shall now proceed to consider those objections, with as much brevity as possible, but with the most perfect respect, official and personal, towards the Chief Magistrate.

After stating that the power of Congress to establish a National Bank, to operate, *pro et contra*, has been a controverted question from the origin of the Government, the President remarks: "Men most justly and deservedly esteemed for their high intellectual endowments, their virtue and their patriotism, have, in regard to it, entertained different and conflicting opinions. Congresses have differed. The approval of one President has been followed by the disapproval of another."

From this statement of the case it may be inferred that the President considers the weight of authority, pro and con, to be equal and balanced. But if he intended to make an array of it—if he intended to say that it was in equilibrium—I must respectfully, but most decidedly, dissent from him. I think the conjoint testimony of history, tradition, and the knowledge of living witnesses prove the contrary. How stands the question as to the opinion of Congress? The Congress of 1791, the Congress of 1813-14, the Congress of 1815-16, the Congress of 1831-32, and finally, the present Congress, have all respectively and unequivocally affirmed the existence of a power in Congress to establish a National Bank to operate *pro et contra*. We behold, then, the concurrent opinion of five different Congresses on one side. And what Congress is there on the opposite side? The Congress of 1811. I was a member of the Senate in that year, when it decided, by the casting vote of the Vice President, against the renewal of the charter of the old Bank of the United States. And I now here, in my place, add to the testimony already before the Public, by declaring that it is within my certain knowledge, that that decision of the Senate did not proceed from a disbelief of a majority of the Senate in the power of Congress to establish a National Bank, but from combined considerations of expediency and constitutionality. A majority of the Senate, on the contrary, as I know, entertained no doubt as to the power of Congress. Thus the account, as to Congress, stands five for and not one, or at most, not more than one, against the power.

Let us now look into the state of authority derivable from the opinions of Presidents of the United States. President Washington believed in the power of Congress, and approved a bank bill; President Jefferson approved acts to extend branches into other parts of the United States, and to punish counterfeiters of the notes of the bank—acts which were devoid of all justification whatever upon the assumption of the unconstitutionality of the bank. For how could branches be extended or punishment be lawfully inflicted upon the counterfeiters of the paper of a corporation which came into existence without any authority, and in violation of the Constitution of the land? James Madison, notwithstanding those early scruples which he had entertained, and which he probably still cherished, sanctioned and signed a bill to charter the late Bank of the United States. It is perfectly well known that Mr. Monroe never did entertain any scruples or doubts in regard to the power of Congress. Here, then, are four Presidents of the United States who have directly or collaterally borne official testimony to the existence of the bank power in Congress. And what President is there that ever bore unequivocally opposite testimony—that disapproved a bank charter in the sense intended by President Tyler? Gen. Jackson, although he did apply the veto power to the bill for rechartering the late Bank of the United States in 1832, it is within the perfect recollection of us all that he not only testified to the utility of a Bank of the United States, but declared that, if he had been applied to by Congress, he could have furnished the plan of such bank.

Thus, Mr. President, we perceive that,

in reviewing the action of the Legislative and executive departments of the government, there is a vast preponderance of the weight of authority maintaining the existence of the power in Congress. But President Tyler has, I presume unintentionally, wholly omitted to notice the judgment and decisions of the third coordinate department of the Government upon this controverted question—that department, whose interpretations of the Constitution, within its proper jurisdiction and sphere of action, are binding upon all; and which, therefore, may be considered as exercising a controlling power over both the other departments. The Supreme Court of the United States, with its late Chief Justice, the illustrious Marshall, at its head, unanimously decided that Congress possessed this bank power; and this adjudication was sustained and re-affirmed whenever afterwards the question arose before the court.

After recounting the occasions during his public career, on which he had expressed an opinion against the power of Congress to charter a Bank of the United States, the President proceeds to say: "Entertaining the opinions alluded to, and having taken this oath, the Senate and the country will see that I could not give my sanction to a measure of the character described, without surrendering all claim to the respect of honorable men—all confidence on the part of the People—all self-respect—all regard for moral and religious obligations; without an observance of which no Government can be prosperous, and no People can be happy. It would be to commit a crime which I would not wilfully commit to gain any earthly reward, and which would justly subject me to the ridicule and scorn of all virtuous men."

Mr. President, I must think, and hope I may be allowed to say, with profound deference to the Chief Magistrate, that it appears to me he has waded with too lively sensibility the personal consequences to himself of his approval of the bill; and that surrendering himself to a vivid imagination, he has depicted them in much too glowing and exaggerated colors, and that it would have been most happy if he had looked more to the deplorable consequence of a veto upon the hopes, the interests, and happiness of his country. Does it follow that a magistrate who yields his private judgment to the concurrent authority of numerous decisions, repeatedly and deliberately pronounced, after the lapse of long intervals, by all the departments of Government, and by all parties, incurs the dreadful penalties described by the President? Can any man be disgraced and dishonored who yields his private opinion to the judgment of the nation? In this case, the country (I mean a majority) Congress, and, according to common fame, a unanimous Cabinet, were all united in favor of the bill. Should any man feel himself humbled and degraded in yielding to the conjoint force of such high authority? Does any man, who at one period of his life shall have expressed a particular opinion, and at a subsequent period shall act upon the opposite opinion, expose himself to the terrible consequences which have been portrayed by the President? How is it with the judge, in the case by no means rare, who bows to the authority of repeated precedents, settling a particular question, whilst in his private judgment the law was otherwise? How is it with that numerous class of public men in this country, and with the two great parties that have divided it, who, at different periods, have maintained and acted on opposite opinions in respect to this very bank question?

How is it with James Madison, the Father of the Constitution—that great man whose services to his country placed him only second to Washington—whose virtues and purity in private life—whose patriotism, intelligence, and wisdom in public councils stand unsurpassed? He was a member of the National Convention that formed, and of the Virginia Convention that adopted, the Constitution. No man understood it better than he did. He was opposed in 1791 to the establishment of the Bank of the United States upon constitutional ground; and 1816 he approved and signed the charter of the late Bank of the United States. It is a part of the secret history connected with the first bank that James Madison had, at the instance of General Washington, prepared a veto for him in the contingency of his rejection of the bill. Thus stood James Madison when, in 1815, he applied the veto to a bill to charter a bank upon considerations of expediency, but with a clear and express admission of the existence of a constitutional power in Congress to charter one. In 1816, the bill which was then presented to him being free from the objections applicable to that of the previous year, he sanctioned and signed it. Did James Madison surrender all claim to the respect of honorable men—all confidence on the part of the People—all self-respect—all regard for moral and religious obligations? Did the pure, the virtuous, the gifted James Madison, by his sanction and signature to the charter of the late Bank of the United States, commit a