

the maintenance of man and beast. The expense of a single journey is reckoned at a pound and a half per camel, and 20,000 camels come annually from Tabriz and as many from Trebizond, which means 40,000 packages yearly in each direction. The owners of the camels usually accompany the caravans themselves, and camels are used only on the main roads, all the other transport in both vilayets being provided by horses, asses, buffaloes, and oxen. The trade also suffers serious inconvenience through the insecurity in the neighbourhood of Bayazid, where Kurdish robber bands play their game. They usually attack at night, either when the caravan has encamped or just before it starts. Another trick is to secretly destroy the seals, and thus find a pretext for opening the bales at the frontier and create a disturbance, which not infrequently ends in bloody encounters and murder, for the caravan men are prepared for resistance.

The vilayet of Erzerum exports oxen, cows, horses, hides, sheepskins, and corn, etc., to the value of £400,000, and imports various groceries and manufactured goods, spices, alcohol, wine, tobacco, matches, glass, and porcelain, etc., worth £600,000. The balance, £200,000, used to be made up by workmen who earned money elsewhere, and brought home savings to the amount of 300,000 Turkish pounds. But this resource is now cut off by an order forbidding emigrants to return. The consequence is that the taxes have increased by 36 per cent in the last four years, the cost of living has risen, the Christians have been impoverished, and their wretchedness acts indirectly on the Turks. This is regarded as a phase in the systematic persecution of the Christians introduced by Sultan Abdul Hamid, and which was more injurious to them than bloody massacres. Ever since the attempt with bombs against the life of the Sultan, the screw has been put on harder. Murder of Armenians is left unpunished, Armenian girls are carried off by Mohammedans and forced to go over to Islam; the peasant must return home from the field before sunset with his oxen or they are stolen; an Armenian who wishes to leave his district must obtain a special permit, which is not needed by Musulmans.