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A traveller in Asia minor: Frederick Burnaby

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Frederick Burnaby was born in Bedford, England on March 3, 1842. He was the son of a fox-hunting vicar and a squire's daughter. He attended Bedford Grammar, Harrow and Oswestry schools. He spent some time in Dresden learning French, German and Italian. He passed his army entrance examinations in 1859, when he was 17 years old and joined the Horse Guards which had a social rather than a military function. This can be seen from the fact that this corps enjoyed five months leave a year. He was tall (1,90 meters) and heavy (about 95 kg, at the age of 20) and practised boxing, weight-lifting and fencing. Burnaby was an adventurous person. He liked ballooning and nearly died during one ascent.

He was also interested in politics and learned Russian in order to better understand foreign affairs. In 1868-9 he went to Southern Spain and North Africa, about which he wrote a number of articles. He travelled in Russia and then again in Spain, where he witnessed the civil war (1874). He then went to Sudan as a reporter of *The Times*. When Burnaby learned that Russian Asia was being closed to foreigners, he decided to go to Khiva, in Turkestan. He succeeded in getting there and wrote his experiences in his popular book, *A Ride to Khiva*, 1876. Here he warned of the Russian threat to British interests. His next enterprise forms the subject of this paper, his 2000-mile ride through the length of Northern Turkey during the winter of 1876-7, just before the beginning of the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-8. Burnaby was later a witness of this war in Bulgaria (winter of 1877-8). He was a staunch supporter of the Conservative Party. He was killed in 1885 in Sudan¹. The primary aim of Burnaby's journey was to ascertain the truth of allegations that Christians in the Ottoman Empire were being inhumanely treated. I intend here to take up some of his observations of social life.

As is to be expected, Burnaby has a lot to say about the roads. In most places it is not even a road, but a "track" or a "path". Being winter, B. and his group had to struggle through mud, snow or ice. At Hadimköy, near Istanbul, going to a nearby village meant going through mud "at least" two