

slightest interest for us. A Chinese officer would be welcome on every one of the aeroplanes, to see that everything went forward according to plan. The audience fell out to our mutual satisfaction.

It is characteristic of the conditions in North China at this time that just this man, who alone had been able to free us from the net of intrigues in which we had struggled through a whole winter's campaign, had not even been mentioned, let alone applied to. He himself spoke with a certain contempt of the Foreign Office, and it is probable that this department considered itself to be more powerful than the chief of the general staff. Of the latter it was said that not only was he Marshal CHANG TSO-LIN's, Mukden's and Manchuria's brain and sinew but he was also one of the very best of China's rising men. If at the outset I had applied to General YANG YÜ-TING, it is possible that he would not have paid any particular attention to me or to my desires. It needed the great outbreak of the opposition on March 6th to make him aware of the fact that something unusual was in the air. In him we now hoped to have found our best support and a real friend.

The day before the visit to the chief of the general staff the latter, together with WANG YIN-T'AI, had seen the German Minister; and the particulars they had then been given explained the favourable change in YANG YÜ-TING's attitude to the German contingent.

#### REPLY FROM THE OPPOSITION

One might think that the discussion of the expedition and of the points still under debate might have been hastened and finally concluded, but the Federation of Scientific Institutions seemed to have no more important business than to drag out the negotiations and to ride upon questions of principle that had very little real significance. On April 15th Professor LIU FU brought me the following letter:

Dear Dr HEDIN,

Your letter dated April 11th has been discussed by our Federation this afternoon.

The notes I and III can be more thoroughly considered when the board of Committee and the scientific staff are organized.

In answer to your note II we beg to set forth our fundamental principle No. 2 translated as follows: Collected materials shall be preserved within Chinese territory. Nothing can be transported outside of the country without being examined and sanctioned by the Board of Committee».

Such vagueness could not bring us any nearer a definitive solution — the letter contained no sign of a settlement. LIU and I talked backwards and forwards, and finally I made the following proposal, which he begged me to set down in writing: