

used as a precedent. I was the first European to experience the rigorous demands of the new epoch. Those who came after would not find things easier. Actually, as it turned out, I had no successors who travelled under conditions similar to those with which I had to cope.

LIU FU and I went through the contract point by point. He agreed to several of my suggested alterations and promised to put them forward at a meeting which he had convened for the evening of April 24th, to be attended by the leading men in the Federation. If LIU FU had been able to decide everything alone it would have been easy to come to an agreement. But when the learned reformers met they seemed incapable of arriving at reasonable conclusions. I have never found such striking proof of the justice of GUSTAVE LE BON's ideas in »Psychologie des foules» or in GOETHE's dictum concerning *Die königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften* in Berlin, of whose members he says: »Ein jeder für sich ist ganz leidlich, aber alle zusammen machen einen grossen Dummkopf aus.»

Three of their demands were almost childish. I wanted the clause »The Federation is to organize the mission» changed to »The Federation and Dr SVEN HEDIN . . . » Their formula »The whole staff is to be appointed by the Federation» I wanted altered to »The European staff is to be appointed by Dr SVEN HEDIN, the Chinese staff by the Federation.» And finally, I wanted their clause »The Federation appoints Dr SVEN HEDIN as head of the European section» changed to »is the head» etc.

These matters were strictly speaking mere trifles without real importance. Whatever happened, the expedition would always remain my enterprise. The introduction of the Chinese section was a necessary consequence of internal political conditions in China at the time. The main thing was for the Chinese not to lose face with their own people. They were, on the other hand, quite indifferent to a question that from the European point of view was of great importance, namely, the matter of correspondence and letters to newspapers. LIU FU considered that it was not necessary to bring up this matter for discussion at all.

Late in the evening we had another meeting, LIU FU, Governor CHOU, Professor LEE and myself. LEE was the most reasonable of all the Chinese. He got the stubborn CHOU to agree to my above-mentioned suggestions for alterations. As they stipulated that *all* collections, even zoological ones, should be brought from Sinkiang to Peking for purposes of control, I asked them if they could not see how unpractical it would be to transport beetles, scorpions, pressed plants, household utensils and such like over the interminable desert route to Peking instead of sending them up to the Siberian railway and home to Stockholm. But CHOU declared that also such collections, that were of no value for China and that I could keep as a matter of course, must nevertheless be inspected and controlled. However, here, too, I got my way, thanks to Professor LEE's sensible and persuasive arguments.