

from the brook around my tent, and the effect was beautifully cooling. But I myself have nothing against heat; I have frozen enough in my day. I was half afraid, however, that we might have a little too much of it when we pushed further into the interior and came to lower altitudes.

### REDUCTION OF THE BAGGAGE

A subject for endless discussions was the question as to whether our forty tons of baggage might not in some way be reduced, to make the loads fewer and lighter. LARSON and I, who had had Spartan habits for decades in Asia, wanted to throw overboard everything that had any appearance of luxury. We wanted to burn the chairs and tables from the mess-tent, either in a huge midsummer bonfire or piece by piece in the kitchen-range. We who slept on the ground felt a rising contempt for the softer members who still used beds; and we insisted that these should be given away. We were, in short, animated with a blind lust to destroy everything that might possibly be done without and that we considered it unnecessary to haul along with us through Mongolia — every morning loading it on to the camels and every evening unloading it again. The camp-beds were, accordingly, later given to the Belgian priests in Ho-chiao, who could put them to use in their sick-room. I have always felt a certain satisfaction in sleeping on the ground — I loved to feel myself in intimate contact with the soil of Asia — to feel that I could at any time caress it by simply stretching out a hand.

### PURCHASE OF CAMELS

In connection with the slow business of camel-purchasing LARSON and his Mongols made use of all sorts of camel-sharpers and middle-men who had interests or influence with rich Mongols right up to Outer Mongolia. Some of these latter owned herds of as many as a thousand animals.

One day a couple of our own Mongols came back to tell us that they had bought a hundred first-rate camels for \$100 apiece. But it was first necessary to hand over the silver to the various owners before they would part with their beasts — times were bad, and one never knew what kind of folk one might chance to be dealing with.

We were thus compelled to count out 10,000 silver dollars (at least 18,000 Swedish crowns) and hand over this amount to our representatives before we had had so much as a glimpse of any camels.

The heaps of silver were stacked up on the mess-table in long rows, one thousand after the other. Meanwhile, the weather-beaten Mongols stood there waiting, afterwards checking up and stuffing the silver into sacks that in their turn were