

trouble. He was to be taken down a peg. He was to have extra heavy loads to tame his temper. For the rest, the Mongols assured us that the catastrophe was by no means due to the fact that the camels were too fat and well-fed and rested, or that they had shied; it was simply a natural consequence of their own failure to sacrifice to the spirits of the region at the sacred *obo* near the site of our former camp. I begged them, by all means, to sacrifice for all that they were worth, so that we might be spared sacrifices that I had to pay for in the form of runaway animals and lost chests.

LIEBERENZ was in despair at not having gone with LARSON. LARSON told him categorically that such a spectacle, if filmed, would be unique, and worth fifty times as much as it had cost. But he added consolingly and considerately that he would have other opportunities on the way to Ghashun-nor. And I endeavoured to comfort him by suggesting that if he had been mixed up in that pandemonium he would have been mince-meat by this time, and his film camera would have been trampled to smithereens.

I asked LARSON if anything important was missing. »Yes, two chests of silver with four thousand dollars. We're making a special hunt for them, but so far in vain. MÜHLENWEG is just out looking for them. What shall we do if the money is lost? If bandits or thieves find the chests we shall have seen the last of them. Four thousand dollars is too big a hole in our treasury.»

»Well, come what may, I'll not send any more envoys to fetch money from Peking.»

At seven o'clock in the evening a Mongol came in with fifteen camels in tow, several of them with loads. »Hurrah!» shouted LARSON, »here we have the missing chests of silver at last!»

We were much like ship-wrecked sailors, combing the beach for what might be washed ashore. It was clear that we should have to stay here for at least three or four days; the excited camels would need a spell of quiet in which to calm down. It was, moreover, evident that LARSON needed more men for the big caravan. He wanted to employ ten Chinese to help the Mongols. A message to this effect was therefore sent to the nearest villages.

#### ADDITIONAL CAMEL-MEN ENGAGED

On the 24th four Chinese turned up. They were farmers, but used to looking after camels. On account of the insecurity created by roving bands of robbers the farmers considered it scarcely worth while to cultivate the soil, and they were therefore only too glad to get paid work. I was pleased that we were thus in a position to do each other a mutual service. Our new camel-hands were to get fifteen dollars a month and would be hired for that period.