

iron bands. Finally, all the provisions were re-packed and entered in the books under new numbers.

LARSON had bought some sheep for 4.50 dollars each and a cow for twenty dollars. He also showed us pheasants, grouse and wild ducks that he had shot, that would provide a welcome change in the menu. He and a couple of Mongols had succeeded in catching fish in the river, but HUMMEL took charge of these and preserved them in spirits.

A FIRST EXCURSION

About thirty kilometers to the north lived the prince of the Torguts, whose friendship and trust we must win — not least for the sake of the station, and in order that the camels we intended to leave behind might be allowed to pasture. We therefore sent a courier armed with SIU's and my visiting-cards to inform the prince that we intended shortly to pay him a visit. He sent his own card to us in reply, bidding us welcome whenever it might suit our convenience to make the call. HUMMEL and HASLUND equipped a little caravan for a trip to Ghashun-nor and Sogho-nor, the terminal lakes of the Edsen-gol. They would thus be the first of our number to see the longed-for lake where we had originally planned to establish the first meteorological station. Early in the afternoon of October 1st they were ready to start. TSERAT had already set off with their four pack-camels when the young doctor and our Danish friend swung up on to the little ponies they had hired. They were to stay away for about ten days.

BOAT-BUILDING

I wanted to make a chart of the lower reaches of the river as far as and including the lake Sogho-nor. I realized that I should not have time to chart Ghashun-nor, the sister-lake to the west. As I should need a boat for this project LARSON was instructed to make one. In his broadest vernacular he answered calmly: »The boat will be ready in a few days.» The first attempts, however, were rather dismal failures, but our Mongol handyman GOMBO actually did manage at last to knock together a vessel of sorts that floated.

By October 3rd LARSON had the »boat» ready. It consisted of two parallel canoes held together by two strong cross-planks. Over them had been laid a deck of boards that had been left over from the re-carpentering of the chests. It proved, however, to be too heavy for such a shallow river; and it would be dangerous on the open water of the lakes, where in choppy weather the canoes would speedily fill with water.