

nese, WANG, the cook, the coolie CHANG and LAO WANG, a camel-man. Without counting riding-camels we should have needed twenty-five camels to be able, on my return to health, to resume our journey. We had eight of NORIN's camels and four worn out animals that LARSON had left behind. We were therefore for an indefinite period nailed down at Sebestei, and should be unable to make any move until reinforcements in the way of pack-animals arrived from some quarter.

### DELAY AT SEBESTEI

Our camp lay on open ground. To the north the horizon comprised a black chain of mountains with short valleys. On the crest of a little hill the Swedish flag fluttered from its wire-stayed pole, visible over a wide radius to gazelles, wild camels and wild asses — for these were the only neighbours we had, and of these, both the last-mentioned animals were very rarely seen in our vicinity. From the flag-hill one had a boundless view to the south over a panorama of blue undulations and flat ridges.

Six wild camels came to the sheets of ice from the spring to drink. When BERGMAN and NORIN crept nearer for a shot they went careering off to the north-east. Instead, BERGMAN managed to bring down a beautiful gazelle buck.

Late on the evening of the 16th we heard caravan bells. A Chinese caravan pitched camp a little to the east of ourselves.

Hard north-west wind the whole day of December 17th. NORIN went over to the Chinese caravan and purchased fifty catties of flour, forty catties of millet and a cake of brick-tea — all for fourteen dollars, including two boxes of Hatamen cigarettes. This imposing sum had been mustered after BERGMAN had discovered ten dollars of private money in one of his boxes. We were now left with precisely ten cents in our treasury. A little later, however, BERGMAN discovered a further three dollars at the bottom of a suitcase, and was enviously called »Capitalist!»

The caravan hailed from Suchow, and had been in Uliasutai to sell flour. They were now on their way home, and hoped to reach Suchow in seventeen days' time. In the afternoon they resumed their southward journey.

A part of the merchant caravan returned without loads from the south. They wanted two of our men to accompany them a couple of days' journey to the north as an escort in case of attack by robbers. We were, however, obliged to refuse this request, as we were ourselves sufficiently short of men for such an eventuality.

On the 19th and the 20th we had a raging storm. Every day of bad weather meant an extra one or two days' wait.

Where was MÜHLENWEG? He had now been twenty-six days gone. His non-appearance was puzzling.

The storm raged the whole night, but abated somewhat during December 21st,