

They set off immediately, coming presently to a simple house inhabited by an old Chinese. There they ate their fill and drank tea, afterwards buying flour, meat and an ass. The same afternoon they started out on the main road to Hami.

An hour later they met two Mongol soldiers. After putting a lot of questions the latter rode off at full speed, returning in ten minutes with a whole troop, whose leader embarked upon a fresh cross-examination. MÜHLENWEG and BANCHE were now taken to a courtyard where there were several yurts, soldiers and horses. The commandant lived in a mud dwelling, on the »k'ang» of which they now sat down to talk. He had heard that two foreign prisoners had escaped, and now understood that they had been recaptured. They would, however, be given back their camels the following day. But neither on the 14th nor on the 15th was anything more heard about the camels. It had been rumoured that a huge caravan of Europeans was approaching, and that late that autumn twelve hundred men had been quartered in eighty tents on the Edsen-gol. He now wished to know whether we belonged to FENG YÜ-HSIANG's army. The whole of eastern Sinkiang had been mobilized on our account.

On the 16th MÜHLENWEG spoke out: »If I don't get my camels to-morrow, and if you don't lend us two horses, we shall set off on foot for Hami.» They were given horses. At the village I-k'o-shu they fell in with WALZ's Mongol TSERCHI, and on the 18th they continued on their way to Hami, where General LIU subjected them to another cross-examination. On the 22nd LAO CHANG arrived with the two camels he had been left in charge of.

MÜHLENWEG promptly set about organizing relief for us, a task which he performed with admirable energy and address.

HASLUND's LETTER

From HASLUND, who had acted as HEMPEL's and HAUDE's caravan-leader, I received a letter written in Hami on December 18th. At the village Miao-erh-ku the column had been taken prisoner by Mongol and Mohammedan soldiers, who disarmed them and detained them for eleven days. In the course of their march through the desert they had lost three of their twenty-four camels, which shows how well HASLUND had managed as caravan leader. That they were not welcome in Hami was made more than evident. His request to be allowed to hasten eastwards to my column was not granted.

HAUDE's REPORT

The next document is Dr HAUDE's detailed report on the journey through The Black Gobi from October 31st to November 27th, when they reached Miao-erh-ku and were detained, strongly guarded. On the 3rd of December they counted 800 mounted men, and this troop was later further reinforced. The following day the