

On July 20th the two mechanics left Stockholm with the huge crates containing the cars and the rest of our heavy baggage.

The costliest items in the whole of our heavy baggage were AMBOLT's astronomical and geodetic instruments, which were carefully stowed in mattrassed crates. The photographic equipment added considerably to the weight, especially the plates. Our cases also contained a number of items that for the people in Urumchi would be unusual enough, such as a separator, a telephone apparatus, an adding machine, a patent cooker, lamps, radiators, Primus stoves, a film-projector with a number of films, a Klepper-boat and much else besides, the greater part of which had been presented to the expedition free of charge.

I myself left Stockholm together with AMBOLT on August 8th. We travelled via Helsingfors, Leningrad, Moscow and Novo Sibirsk to Semipalatinsk, where we arrived on August 16th. Here our mechanics now assembled the cars.

### SEMIPALATINSK

One of the first visits I paid in Semipalatinsk was to the Chinese Consul-General LIU. I asked him to inform the new Governor-General of Sinkiang that we were on the way, and requested customs exemption at the frontier for our baggage.

Semipalatinsk is the capital of a *gouvernement* and was founded in 1718, but was at that time situated sixteen versts lower down on the Irtish. The present population is 64,000. The town lies in the republic of Qazaqstan, the capital of which is Kizil-orda, situated on the Syr-darya, or Jaxartes as it was called in ancient times. The western frontier of Qazaqstan is formed by the Caspian Sea from Qara-bugas to Astrakhan. The northern frontier runs just to the south of Orenburg, Orsk and Omsk and just to the north of Semipalatinsk. In the south it lies adjacent to the republic of the Qara-kirghiz and in the east it borders upon the little Oirat republic, with its mere 42,000 inhabitants, nominally Christians but actually Shamanists. In the east and south-east Qazaqstan also borders upon Outer Mongolia and Sinkiang. Of the six million Kirghiz living in Inner Asia it is considered that four million have their tents in Qazaqstan. They call themselves Qazaq.

Most of the business in Semipalatinsk is run on co-operative lines; it is only in the bazaars and the open market-places that one finds independent trade. To Sinkiang are exported all kinds of iron-ware, colonial produce, paraffin-oil, petrol, tobacco, matches and cotton goods. In return, hides, wool, cotton, live-stock, fruit etc. are imported.

No fewer than forty-five different peoples live in the province of Semipalatinsk; most numerous are the Qazaq, Great Russians and Ukrainians. There are 11,270 Germans and 7 Swedes.