

On the 16th our Tartar friend BURKHAN came from Urumchi. He was the head of the garage, motor-cars and drivers in that city and had now journeyed here with twenty drivers to receive fifteen new lorries that had arrived in Bakhty. He was able to inform me that my telegrams from Stockholm, Semipalatinsk and Chuguchaq had never been received at our headquarters. Our people thus did not know that we were so near. But as they had calculated that we were on the way they had on three separate occasions requested of the new Governor-General that the road to Urumchi be kept open for us.

As AMBOLT's condition grew progressively worse I decided on the 16th to send LAGERBÄCK with one of the cars to Urumchi to fetch HUMMEL. I wrote about the course of the illness and begged him to hurry. Nearly the whole day was required to prepare all the necessary papers. BURKHAN helped us with road-pass and petrol-pass, and the Governor wrote out special orders. I got permission to use the services of ANSORGE, a German driver who had been YANG's personal chauffeur and who now happened to be in Chuguchaq. He and LAGERBÄCK took with them provisions for only two days, as well as a rug each and overcoats.

During the night it rained; and as it was still raining the next morning they could not make a start before eight o'clock, when it finally stopped. Later in the day the weather turned fine, and we hoped the road would dry up, even though our courtyard looked like a miniature lake.

AMBOLT's temperature was now 39.9° C. (103.8° F.) and his pulse 114—120. On KALINKIN's advice he was given a hot bath, that did him more harm than good. His heart became very irregular and his pulse was nothing but a wild flutter. He was taken with the most violent shivering fits, followed by complete prostration.

Oh, those terrible nights! Everything was silent in Chuguchaq; all the others were asleep and I sat alone by the bed of the sick man. He raved deliriously; he could throw off the bed-clothes and rush straight at the wall, shouting: »There'll be the devil to pay for this, we've forgotten the ammunition!» Frequently I was obliged to sit holding his bed-clothes in order to prevent him from repeating this manoeuvre. Another time he glared out into the night and shouted: »Who is that fellow? Is he going with us?» He could neither sleep nor rest; he had to be tended the whole time and his bowels bled continuously.

The following day we got hold of a nurse, a midwife by the name of MARIA ALEXEEVNA, who helped me with the night-watching. One down-pour succeeded another, and the sky looked ominous. We thought only of the car that had been sent to fetch HUMMEL. Would this rain block the road over the salt-swamps?

The days crept past. The patient's condition did not get worse, and MARIA ALEXEEVNA considered that there was hope. Both she and KALINKIN had seen cases of dysentery that had been still more violent and the patients had nevertheless recovered. AMBOLT showed a tendency to improvement. He raved no longer.

