

## VISIT TO NANKING

At last, on February 25th, I was able to undertake the journey to China's present capital in company with HUMMEL. Professor SIU was to join us after a couple of days.

Nanking is in all respects unlike Peking. It is scarcely possible to imagine a greater contrast between two cities in the same country. In Peking one finds everything one can desire, including wide, regular streets and short distances to travel when visiting one's friends, whether Chinese or Westerners. Nanking is a jumble, a number of vast villages separated one from another by open unoccupied fields. From Hsia-kuan, the quarter by the harbour, it is a drive of twenty or thirty minutes by car to that part of the city in which the government buildings and scientific institutions are situated. Every visit is an excursion, and cars are expensive. The road that leads to the heart of the city is narrow, and runs now between close rows of houses, now like a country lane across open fields. But the newly revived capital is being improved, new buildings are in course of erection and wide, straight streets are laid out in every direction.

Our first day in Nanking was rather eventful, and it was easier than we had anticipated to obtain access to government circles. We went straight to the director of The Central Meteorological Institute of China, Dr COCHING CHU, whom I knew from Peking, and who was himself very anxious to meet us, as he was following HAUDE's and my plans for the investigation of the climate of Central Asia with the greatest interest. Accompanied by Dr CHU we visited Dr TS'AI YÜAN-P'EI, the president of The Research Institute in Nanking and head of the Controlling Yüan.

The Government consists of sixteen departments, distributed over five yüans or sections: the Executive, the Legislative, the Judicial, the Control and the Examination Yüan. The head of the Executive Yüan is also the president of the State Council.

We conversed in German with Dr TS'AI<sup>1</sup>, stating that what we wanted above all was complete and undisturbed freedom in the carrying out of our scientific work in Sinkiang. To this he replied that I and my companions could be quite easy in our minds; the government would send telegraphic instructions to the Governor-General in Urumchi.

»Yes, but what if he refuses to obey? It's a long way to Sinkiang. The former Governor was completely arbitrary in his rule of the province, and his successor seems to want to go still further in this respect.»

<sup>1</sup> During his stay in Leipzig in 1910—11 Dr TS'AI had assisted Professor AUGUST CONRADY in the reading and interpretation of the Chinese manuscripts from the 3rd and 4th centuries A. D. which the author had found in Lou-lan in the Lop Desert, and had then offered many valuable contributions. Cf. CONRADY's publication *Die chinesischen Handschriften- und sonstigen Kleinfunde Sven Hedins in Lou-lan*, Stockholm 1920, pp. XI f, XIV. F. B.