

WE MOVE INTO A CHINESE HOUSE

One result of the political tension was that many rich Chinese in Peking moved into the Legation Quarter in order to enjoy the security afforded by its neutral walls in the event of military action between the generals who were fighting for power.

MONTELL and I, however, made a move in the opposite direction. On the day of HUMMEL's departure we moved from our old rooms in Wagons Lits to a Chinese house in the Tung-t'ang-tze Hutung, that we rented from WILHELM SCHMIDT, Lufthansa's representative.

Our new dwelling was a perfectly delightful place. It consisted of several single-storey houses grouped around two courtyards, in which grew trees and bushes. Their quiet stillness was in strong contrast to the international babel of the hotel. And it was such a pleasant change to have a little elbow-room. Moreover, a household of one's own, with cook, boys and gate-keeper came much cheaper than life at the hotel.

The atmosphere here was almost soundlessly still both night and day. The street was so narrow that two cars coming from opposite directions had to slow down to pass each other, and it was but seldom that one heard a horn. Most of the traffic consisted of silent rickshaws. Only the cries of pedlars or their acoustic 'sign-boards' occasionally made themselves heard on the peaceful air. Each one had its own sound. The pedlars had their entire stock with them, and they either half-sang some rigmarole or rang a bell, blew blasts on a trumpet, rattled pieces of metal or of wood. But all this only inspired a pleasant feeling of being in the picturesque Far East.

SÖDERBOM soon recovered from the rheumatism he had incurred during the hard Mongolian winters. He now suggested that he and MONTELL should take the expedition's car for a lightning trip to the Edsen-gol to make a complete collection of Torgut ethnographic objects. This journey was, however, entirely dependent on whether civil war broke out or not, and this in its turn depended on the success or ill-success of the war-lords in their attempts to buy one another. Making plans in this country was indeed no easy matter. However, we were always optimists, and SÖDERBOM was allowed to dispatch a small petrol caravan to the Edsen-gol to lay out petrol depots along the road.

On April 5th the Nanking Government issued orders for the arrest of YEN HSI-SHAN, who was also violently denounced in the mandate in question. In some circles it was thought that this would lead to a division of China into a Northern and a Southern realm.

Little serious fighting occurred, however, until the latter part of May, when the Nanking forces occupied a place outside Kai-feng. The Kuominchun counter-attacked on a wide front, and the Nanking array was forced to retreat with heavy