



Fig. 7. A Mongol from the Edsen-gol oasis

prince, bearing a Chinese letter in which they were informed that orders had come from the authorities in Suchow, the nearest large town in Kansu, to the effect that the station's staff were to be expelled from Kansu immediately. No reasons were given.

A reply was drawn up by MA. Owing to the condition of the camels they *could* not leave the Edsen-gol, and they lacked the money to hire transport. They asked the authorities in Suchow to send a representative to the station to negotiate and to convince himself that the staff of the station had no evil intentions, but were only engaged in scientific research.

Accordingly, on December 16th, an official, WU CHEN-YÜAN, accompanied by one TSENG *fu-kuan*, arrived from Suchow together with a small detachment of police. WU was a haughty and distinguished gentleman who had been to Russia. He evidently had a certain respect for the mysterious guests who had settled down in the wood, for before venturing to advance himself he send a couple of merchants to the station to find out and report to him how strong the 'garrison' might be, and how many rifles and pistols they had.

All the yurts with their contents were shown, chests were opened, instruments were described, and at last he began to understand that the staff of the station really had no evil intentions. But when he caught sight of the steel cylinders of hydrogen gas, that were used to fill the pilot-balloons, he became dubious, and it proved impossible to persuade him that these had not some military function. In