

At last there was no further obstacle to their return journey. They set off for Suchow on May 7th, being greeted as heroes on their arrival. Dinners were given in their honour, wine flowed and there were many speeches. Still by cart, they went on to Mao-mu, where the new burgomaster also entertained them royally.

SÖDERBOM AND MA BACK AT THE EDSÉN-GOL

After their return, and during the period from the 2nd to the 19th of July, SÖDERBOM went on a trip to Ghashun-nor, where HUMMEL had commissioned him to collect plants, insects and birds for the account of the State Museum of Natural History, a task which he performed in a very meritorious way. During this period the temperature rose to 42.4° C., and for a while the Edsen-gol people suffered from shortage of water.

SÖDERBOM and MA were pleasantly surprised to see what ZIMMERMANN had achieved in his kitchen-garden in their absence, and they now began to enjoy the fruits of his work.

In September orders from myself reached Tsondol that eight hydrogen cylinders and a number of other things that had been left behind should be taken by SÖDERBOM to Urumchi via Hami. Accordingly, on October 17th he started out for Suchow to obtain a permit for this journey. This he duly obtained from the commandant in Suchow; but the Sinkiang frontier was closed, as before. He himself was not allowed to continue to the town of melons. The hydrogen cylinders, however, were taken there, but no further; and there I suppose they are reposing to this day.

When on January 11th, 1929, SÖDERBOM returned to Tsondol, ZIMMERMANN and he were able to journey down to Ghashun-nor to study the contour of the lake-shore, the depth of water and the ice-conditions. The ice was two feet in thickness, and the lake only a couple of meters deep. They went round the southern and eastern shore of the lake and then crossed over on the ice, not however, where this was widest, as the guide was afraid to go too far out. The Torguts never go over the lake, but prefer to make long detours on firm ground. The salt that is released on freezing forms a granulated layer on the surface of the ice, thanks to which camels can walk steadily without slipping.

Afterwards they divided up their caravan. SÖDERBOM rode to the Torgut prince to pay his respects at the Mongolian New Year's festival, while ZIMMERMANN followed the Mören-gol to a point opposite Tsondol. During the whole of this excursion he drew a route-map.

MA had seen to the meteorological observations in his absence; and on his return to the station they exchanged roles, MA starting off to the Mören-gol and Ghashun-nor for a fortnight's excursion.