

ous, for he holds bare knives in his hands, with which he strikes and stabs about him. At the height of his religious enthusiasm he is able to foresee impending events.

The feast was concluded with mutton, tea and *araki*. The Eḏsen-gol and Tsonḏol had bidden farewell to the mysterious strangers who were now leaving their woods.

On October 20th everything was ready for the start. But a postal messenger from Suchow arrived on this date with a telegram from myself that had been on the way for two months, in which I requested SÖDERBOM to stay behind in Suchow to await my arrival, while ZIMMERMANN was to proceed to Peking.

The luggage now had to be divided in two halves. Everything I might conceivably need was taken to Suchow, whither the instrumental equipment also was transported.

It would have been fortunate if this telegram, like several of its predecessors, had been held up longer, for my plans were altered and I never arrived in Suchow.

ZIMMERMANN's RETURN-JOURNEY

On October 25th ZIMMERMANN started out from the desolate tract where he had spent over two years. He had sixteen camels in charge of MERIN and was accompanied by two other Mongols.

ZIMMERMANN and SÖDERBOM had originally intended to take MA's coffin on one of their camels. MERIN had then asserted that it would be necessary every evening to place a bowl of rice and a pair of chopsticks on the lid and to bind a cock beside the coffin. The cock would waken MA's spirit every morning. Now that ZIMMERMANN was to go on by himself it was probably a considerable relief for him to escape the company of the dead man and the cock.

He took a more northerly desert-road during the first part of his journey than that we had travelled in 1927. (Later on I had occasion to travel the same road with motor cars. The description of this road will be found in Part III). During the latter part of his return-journey ZIMMERMANN fell in with the Gobi-group, among whose members BERGMAN was an old acquaintance. After thirty-six days he reached Kuei-hua, having covered a distance of 950 kilometers. Not far to the south of Beli-miao he bumped into MÜHLENWEG, who had been sent out by Lufthansa to look for him. And finally, on December 7th, he met me in Kalgan.

SÖDERBOM's RETURN-JOURNEY

After ZIMMERMANN's departure SÖDERBOM stayed on at Tsonḏol for a further three weeks to see to our belongings that had been left behind, and that would be needed there by new expeditions. He also made pack-saddles for his camels.