

IMPORTANT NEWS

The 8th of August was a red letter day for us on account of the letters and telegrams that arrived. First of all came a telegram from HUMMEL, sent from Tao-chow, in which he informed us that the road was peaceful, that he had made excellent contacts with missionaries and the local authorities, and that everything was splendid. Further, he wished to know about my own travelling plans so that he might be in Peking in time to accompany me to Eastern Turkistan.

HÖRNER sent a letter full of information, with amongst other things a sketch-map of the appearance of the terminal lakes of the Edsen-gol, Ghashun-nor and Sogho-nor, in the quaternary period, as far as he had been able to observe it in the course of the reconnoitring trips of the summer.

In a letter sent from Mao-mu on July 3rd BERGMAN wrote of highly interesting finds that he had made during his excavations along the Edsen-gol. A couple of days earlier we had received a telegram from him, in which he begged that his old helper from 1927—28, the digger CHIN, might be sent to Mao-mu on the Edsen-gol, where he should arrive at the end of September. His letter explained the reason for this request. It appeared that he had discovered a lot of ruins of watch-towers and forts along the Edsen-gol, that he had managed to identify as a part of the *limes* of the Han-period, i. e. frontier fortifications dating back about 2,000 years that the Chinese had erected as a protection against the Huns. In these ruins BERGMAN had excavated no fewer than 900 Chinese records written on narrow wooden slats of the same kind as those I had found in the ruins of Lou-lan in the year 1901. BERGMAN's manuscripts, however, were 100—300 years older and much more numerous than those I had discovered. And now he needed his trained digger in order during the autumn to start a new excavating campaign after the worst heat of the summer.

We had thus to send off the digger CHIN on the 1,700 kilometer journey that separated us from BERGMAN, of which only 550 kilometers were by railway, the rest being desert. Both HÖRNER and BERGMAN had sent us a long list of desiderata in the matter of supplementary equipment, especially photographic items, as well as instruments and provisions.

Something like the following conversation now ensued between MONTELL, GEORG SÖDERBOM and myself:

I: »We'll send off CHIN at once!«

Montell: »How long will it take?«

Georg: »Two months to Mao-mu.«

Montell: »Can we not send him by car to Shande-miao? He could buy camels there and afterwards continue with them.«

I: »Excellent! But then GEORG could go with him.«