

*Georg:* »With all my heart! It won't take us more than ten days in all.»

*I:* »How would it be if MONTELL also went along, and you drove all the way to the Edsen-gol in the car?»

*Montell and Georg:* »Hurrah! hurrah!«

*I:* »When could you be back in that case?»

*Georg:* »In three weeks.»

This sounded splendid. It would give MONTELL an opportunity together with GEORG of devoting himself to an ethnographic study of the Torguts on the Edsen-gol, a plan of which I have spoken on page 95. And in addition to their real tasks they could study the route from the point of view of its practicability for car-traffic, and draw up a report for me on the question. Thus, in the event of Governor-General CHIN in Urumchi refusing my telegraphed request for permission to enter Sinkiang via Siberia, I could journey westwards to this remote province by car.

#### PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAR-JOURNEY TO BERGMAN

Both MONTELL and GEORG then rushed precipitately into town to make the purchases for HÖRNER and BERGMAN. They had most of these preliminaries behind them already the following day. But there still remained much to do before they could set off, especially winding up business with all the curio-dealers who were perpetually calling, and with whom I neither would nor could have dealings. There would be so much baggage, moreover, that it would be quite out of the question to take it in the car. The latter must be as light as possible if it was to be able to take four men and sufficient petrol. Happily, we had a number of petrol depots already laid out along the route. A car-journey had been projected earlier, as has been mentioned on page 95; and in May GEORG had supervised the sending out of a camel caravan with petrol that had been deposited in four or five places with Chinese merchants known to GEORG along the planned route to the Edsen-gol. There was also a depot at the river itself. These preparations by GEORG now proved very opportune.

All heavy articles, especially tinned food, that filled two chests, as well as divers other things, were to be taken on five camels by old MERIN, who had been with ZIMMERMANN at the Edsen-gol meteorological station during the whole time it was in action. He would require thirty-five days for the journey. While MERIN was in our service he had been plundered of all his possessions by his son, so he was now practically destitute, and would doubtless be very glad to be taken once more into our employ. The camels were our own; they were animals that ZIMMERMANN and GEORG had taken with them from the Edsen-gol. They were now grazing in the neighbourhood of Kuei-hua up on the Mongolian plateau.