

expedition and journeyed on foot to Kumbum, Hsi-ning, Lanchow, Suchow, Anhsi and Hami, and so to Turfan, with their baggage on horses.

LESZCZYNSKY said he was acting as a kind of medical officer under General MA. He expressed his views on the military situation without the least reserve. He had recently been at headquarters at Davan-ch'eng, and had seen how things were with his own eyes. Guns with no ammunition, soldiers like rag-bags, insufficient food. Aeroplanes from Urumchi had flown low over the general's camp at the passes, causing great confusion among the troops. He maintained that the Tungan general's invading army was scarcely more than a thousand strong, and was already in full flight to Toqsun and Qara-shahr. He advised us most strongly not to travel in that direction. We should find ourselves among wild, undisciplined soldiers who were nothing but robbers. They would not hesitate to take our lorries and our belongings, and would probably shoot us into the bargain. And yet he begged HUMMEL to persuade me to let him come with us to Qara-shahr and Kashgar! I suppose he had nothing to lose.

Another of the eccentric, mysterious wanderers we met in Turfan was a little black-bearded Professor LI, who had started from Peking with four students in June 1933, and walked all the way to Hami. They pretended to be Chinese, and had arrived there in October and come on to Turfan, which they reached in December. LI and his party of young men also paid us a visit, and told us that they intended to stay in Sinkiang for five years at the most, to study the local languages and literature. Literature in Sinkiang! They would not need five years for that. At least LI was a Japanese.

THE UPPER TEN OF TURFAN

Several of our party drove round and called on the important people in Turfan — the chief-of-staff, General LI HAI-JO, YOLBARS KHAN, and the grandson of the former king of Hami, who was commandant of the town, and his chief-of-staff, CHANG SIN-MING, who also commanded the training corps. Only YOLBARS was at home, and at his house we met the mayor of Turfan, a dignified old man with a white beard and turban.

PAI, MA's representative in Peking, was a Tartar. He had set off for the towns on the T'ien-shan Nan-lu in Turfan's one and only lorry with our twenty gallons of petrol and fifteen other emissaries. We wondered how far they would get before the car broke down or the petrol ran out.

Then all the potentates came to return our calls, and we spent an eternity drinking tea, smoking cigarettes and talking rubbish. General LI, whom some of our party had known in the days when he was governor at Chuguchaq, was cheery and lively, though he freely admitted that the position was serious. He doubtless