

fleeing army. And if we had not lost a day at Bugur we should probably have succeeded in withdrawing to the Lop Desert.

Meantime, with much trouble the cars were turned right about and the convoy moved back towards Korla in its own tracks. The bridges were now far worse and more dangerous than in daylight. Several soldiers had clambered up onto the lorries, and a score of horsemen swarmed round the convoy.

The mixture of petrol with paraffin repeatedly caused back-firing that sounded like rifle-shots. Until the soldiers grew accustomed to these detonations they started, thinking we had begun to shoot. Later on, they pretended that it was these explosions that had caused them to open fire in the willow avenue.

After long delays at the last bridges and the stone at the town-gate we drove into our old Korla quarters. We had taken five hours to cover 3.5 km. We were all of us dead tired after the hardships of the day and the fearful mental strain.

We no longer had any freedom of movement; we were entirely in MA CHUNG-YING's hands. We now had it in black and white that it was our cars he wanted. Thus our first captivity began.

AS MA'S CAPTIVES

Two soldiers kept guard at our gate. At about twelve o'clock next day (March 12th) fifteen men marched into the courtyard, most of them with rifles. Things looked critical again. However, they explained that they only wished to see the doctor. One of them had got a bullet in the right shoulder and was in the most fearful pain. Medicine chests were taken out and a table was placed outside our little verandah. On the latter HUMMEL arranged his packets of bandages, bottles, basins and all the necessary apparatus. The wounded man was laid out on the table. He really did look exhausted, and he was moaning pitifully. He had pain all down his arm. HUMMEL washed and dressed the man's wounds and put on a spotless white bandage. He then gave him an injection of morphine. In a few minutes the fellow told his comrades with a smile that the pain had completely disappeared and that he had a pleasant feeling in his arm. The fifteen laughed delightedly, raised their thumbs in the air and cried:

»You're a good doctor!«

The treatment was hardly finished when a boy of sixteen was brought to the doctor's field-hospital with a bullet in his chest. No operation could be undertaken without a preliminary X-ray examination. But the lad was treated as carefully as the first patient, and the fifteen were just as interested.

Then came a third, with syphilitic sores on his neck. It was most interesting to watch the spectators. Their hard, brutal faces lightened and softened, and