

the Silk Road or by train through Siberia. If only we could obtain permission to leave the town! Travellers to Moscow via Novo Sibirsk were considered harmless; but people who went east were dangerous, for there lay Nanking, and the authorities did not want the Central Government to obtain up-to-date reports of the policy that was being pursued in Sinkiang.

EARTHQUAKE

At 5.45 p. m. on August 7th we three Swedes were in the sitting-room, and BERGMAN was reading aloud, when a rather violent circular earthquake took place. The tea in our glasses was spilled, plaster loosened in places, and the window-panes rattled. HUMMEL and BERGMAN hurried out into the yard. A peculiar curiosity caused me to remain for a moment to see if the ceiling would fall in. It held, but the room went round; I had an unpleasant feeling of giddiness and followed the others. The shock was not repeated. Three houses had been destroyed not far from where we were; and it was said that four people had been killed by the fall of a tiled roof.

Two days later we heard that thirty persons had been arrested at two in the morning for conspiring against the government. One of them was the head of the provincial bank, and five were White Russians. Fifteen of the accused were said to have been shot.

HUMMEL AND BERGMAN LEAVE FOR SWEDEN

We had now waited for over a month for a chance for HUMMEL and BERGMAN to leave Urumchi. Our doctor's state had not improved; he was always feverish. The preparations for their departure had taken a quite unnecessary time, like everything else. But at last all was ready. A convoy of ten Russian motor-lorries was leaving on the night of August 11th for Chuguchaq, Bakhty and the railway. That the information was really true this time was proved by the fact that Consul-General APRESOV came on the afternoon of the 11th to return our two travellers' farewell visit.

The south gate of the Chinese town was to be shut at 8 p. m., and as the lorries were to start from the Russian quarter, the passengers had to keep an eye on the clock. BERGMAN was ready long before eight. But HUMMEL took matters quietly; and at 8.30 he was sitting dictating to YEW instructions for my treatment — I had an acute attack of the gastric trouble so common in Urumchi. BERGMAN was in despair. If they missed the lorries this time they would have to wait another month. It was ten minutes to nine when the doctor came out on the verandah,