

quite unruffled. The post-office carriage was waiting, and the little luggage they were taking home to Sweden had been placed upon it. An embrace: thanks for all your patience and loyalty! — remember me to the people at home! And so these veterans passed out of the expedition.

### SINKIANG SHILLY-SHALLYING

On August 14th there came a telegram from the Minister for Railways in Nanking, asking how long we wished to extend the time to be spent on the motor-expedition, »for the time arranged for has already been exceeded . . . You ask to be allowed to return to Nanking, but according to the original programme your expedition was to go to Chuguchaq, Kulja or Kashgar. If the expedition returns now it means that it will not have carried out its mission. Telegraph at once the cause of your request to be allowed to return».

We had hinted to the Minister for Railways that as we had not got permission to travel on any of the three roads mentioned, a prolongation of our stay in Urumchi was pointless.

Again — as so often before — we wrote a letter to SHENG TUPAN, quoting the Minister's telegram and pointing out that our lorries were at the Qum-darya and that we had not yet received the petrol we had asked for more than two months previously. We also asked if we might borrow a lorry and a ton and a half of petrol for a twenty days' trip to Kashgar. We explained in detail how easy it would be to arrange this trip. Seventeen days later the answer came. It was a polite and absolute refusal. The province was short of cars, and those that were available were required for military purposes.

On the 21st the Minister for Railways sent an express telegram, insisting yet again that we must travel along one of the three roads in the province. To reply by telling the truth — that the Governor-General was barring the three roads to us for political reasons — would have done us little good, for his censorship would never have let such a message through.

I may mention here that BERGMAN, on his journey to Chuguchaq with HUMMEL, made notes on the condition of the road that were later appended to the engineers' report. So that even on this point we had, in a way, carried out the task entrusted to us.

Our position was queer, to say the least. We asked nothing better than to go to Kashgar, but were refused permission. The Minister for Railways reproached us repeatedly for not going there, and we could not inform him of the reason. We wrote letter after letter to SHENG TUPAN, demanding a reply to our questions. Two tons of petrol and eight *puds* of lubricating oil had been promised us from Russia, but could not be handed over without payment. SHENG TUPAN had