

X. FROM URUMCHI TO ANHSI

The hour of our liberation struck on October 21st, 1934, a year to the day since we had started out from Peking. We left Urumchi behind us with feelings of indescribable satisfaction. It was delightful to feel the wheels going round, each revolution taking us farther away from Urumchi and nearer to Nanking, Peking, home. Our convoy consisted of two lorries and the Sedan car.

It was getting late as we drove along the familiar road to Davan-ch'eng, and we soon pitched camp.

In the cool of the morning we went winding up to the narrow defile of the nearby passes and down the steep road on the farther side. We met a few caravans of horses and donkeys carrying flour and cloth — local trade was beginning to look up. A month earlier, two Russian Amo cars had been descending from the pass when the drivers lost control of the cars. They dashed downhill at a furious pace and over-turned. Four lives were lost.

The next day we drove out through the east gate of Turfan, and soon found ourselves in the picturesque Sengim Valley. At the commandant's office at Pichan an officer told us that guards had already been posted along the road, now well known to us, so that we might continue our journey without fear.

HAMI

Twilight fell, on October 25th, and then darkness, before we were among the outermost cottages of the Hami oasis. Here, a curious reception awaited us. At a small bridge spanning a canal a dozen soldiers ran forward with rifles pointed at us. They ordered us to stop. We got out and asked what the trouble was. They asked us arrogantly who we were, and where we were going. We replied; and they sent a mounted messenger to YOLBARS KHAN for instructions. Meanwhile, we had to wait. They all kept their fingers on the trigger, ready to fire.