

closer companionship by common dangers and common aims; and with the single exception that I have mentioned, we parted as the best of friends. During the first four years after my arrival home I kept up the liveliest intercourse with the more prominent among my Chinese friends. The outbreak of the world war and the violence with which it is being waged have, however, broken these bands and made it impossible to continue correspondence with the East.

However, when world peace has finally been concluded I hope that the gates to the heart of Asia may once more be thrown open, and the tireless work of research and exploration may be resumed. It will without doubt be carried on with other technical means than of yore. The aeroplane, like the motor-car, will play an important rôle in this connection. But the explorer who wishes to get to know the secrets of the earth, of its animals, its plants and the races of men inhabiting its surface, or of past millenia, will still always and in the first place rely upon the old and well-tried caravans of camels and horses.

So much is at all events certain, that the great war now being waged will constitute a land-mark between two periods in the history of Central Asiatic exploration. During the intermediate period we are now living through, whose duration we have no means of guessing, no new conquests of any scientific importance are to be expected in our immeasurable field of work.

Even now, however, it is clear that many of our results need to be supplemented with new observations on the spot; and there is not a single one of us who does not long to take up the work where we left it — in the stillness of the desert, or surrounded by the silent majesty of the mountains, and with all the hardships and delights that form the accompaniment of the simple life in the field.

But the only member of the expedition to visit the Far East since 1935 has been HENNING HASLUND, who in the years 1936—39 went twice to Eastern and Southern Mongolia as the leader of a Danish expedition with ethnological and linguistic research on its program. At the same time he also enlarged his collection of Mongolian folksongs, which he had begun in 1928 during my expedition. One concrete result of HASLUND's work on these later journeys is now available as the first volume of *The Music of the Mongols* in our series.

Casting a retrospective eye over the regions covered by our own researches, the imagination is staggered by the grandiose sweep of the territories involved, stretching, as they do, almost 4,000 kilometers from the Yellow Sea to Russian Turkistan, and nearly 2,000 kilometers from Dzungaria to the Himalayas. Not only does this region include some of the highest mountain ranges in the world, it also comprises the eastern part of the desert belt that like a dried river-bed of gigantic proportions traverses the whole of the Old World from Manchuria through Persia, Syria, Sinai, Libya and the Sahara right down to Cape Mogador, or from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean.