

the alterations of the camel's gait, and deduced them from the disappearance of the van of the caravan and its reappearance on the crown of another flat rise in the ground. Sketching such a landscape is a simple matter. One simply draws a line with a ruler. Above this line arches the turquoise-blue cupola of the sky; beneath it is the dark-grey, violet-shot desert — and the landscape is complete. There are absolutely no details to be added — with the possible exception of some small yellow-grey dots representing tussocks. That evening we pitched camp at a well.

DAYS OF STORM

By evening the west wind had freshened up to half a gale. It continued through the night, and at nine o'clock the next morning we had a fully fledged sandstorm over us. LARSON came running to my yurt, shouting: »Come out and have a look westwards! There's a sandstorm coming up like a black wall!« It was really a gripping, indeed, almost a horrible sight. The whole sky was darkened by myriads of flying grains of sand and dust.

A series of such stormy days are enough to knock out a caravan on the march. We therefore decided to stay on for a while at camp LIV, where at least we had water, though the pasture was wretched.

This storm was without doubt the hardest we had had; we estimated its strength at thirty second/meters. It was as if we were besieged, or frozen in. Against my tent pattered not only sand and dust, but also a veritable fusillade of fine gravel with a diameter of about a couple of millimeters came pelting against the stretched felts. On the windward side it seemed that the yurt was going to collapse, and one lath after the other came falling from the roof. However, I went on working as usual, writing away at my articles for the press. Neither, for that matter, were the occupants of LARSON'S tent suffering from boredom; together with HUMMEL, the latter was making despairing attempts to teach MÜHLENWEG and MASSENBACH bridge. Every now and then one heard peals of laughter through the roaring of the storm. The evening meal in LARSON'S tent was thoroughly peppered with particles of dust.

The storm kept up the whole night of November 14th. Everybody stayed 'indoors', even the hardy Mongols.

It was as if a broom swept over the desolate ground. Light, whirling comet-tails of dust and sand went hurrying with the wind over the surface of the earth. Going among them, one had a feeling of insecurity — it seemed as if the whole ground were in movement. On going back to one's tent it was necessary to shield one's face, for millions of tiny projectiles were lashed smartingly against one's skin.