

chair mounted on its long poles, being then covered with a tarpaulin and made soft with a lining of felt.

Oh, these freezing winter-storms! Also on January 7th we were unable to set out. With their bulky loads the camels could not have made any headway in the teeth of the icy wind.

DEPARTURE FROM SEBESTEI

On January 8th the storm had abated, and just after sunrise NORIN was ready with his section. The five camels in one of his files were recalcitrant, and flung their loads to the ground. The rest were kept in hand, and after a short delay his caravan disappeared in the south-west. A little later we others followed after, leaving Sebestei to its desert solitude, where BERGMAN had brought down no fewer than twenty-one antelopes. Our »Christmas-tree« we had left behind on the little hill where the flag had waved, anchoring it firmly to the ground with stones. Except for three that we had killed, the puppies that had been born on Christmas Eve were comfortably nested in a felt-lined box on one of the camel-loads. Snappy, their mother, sprang yelping to and fro, looking for her youngsters among the camels. Having been muffled up like a swaddling babe by HUMMEL, I took my place in the sedan-chair among cushions and furs, for I was still convalescent, and had to be careful. The two camels that bore me went tandem, one before and one behind. The ends of the poles attached to my chair rested in loops of strong rope, which lay between the camels' humps. MENTU mounted the foremost camel, and the strange equipage moved off. I had never before travelled just in this way, though I remembered a journey in a sedan-chair borne by mules. The camels walked at a steady and leisurely pace, and the vertical up and down movement was by no means unpleasant: it was heightened when the animals walked in step. The route was now mapped by NORIN, who went on foot and counted his steps. On this first day we covered thirty li.

The Gobi preserved its character of a vast gravel desert, even when we progressed farther to the west. The ground was generally sparsely covered with tussocks, while occasionally one saw saxaules or tamarisks. After twenty li we passed the spring Ulan-buluk, where we saw gazelles and partridges in the reeds. The day's march was forty-five li.

During the night of January 10th the temperature sank to $-26^{\circ}.7$ C., and in the morning it was piercingly cold.

We journeyed on towards the south-west between dark, low ridges of sedimentary slate and agglomerate. The amount of snow on the ground increased, forming white arrow-heads on the lee side of the tussocks, all pointing north-east. In hollows in the ground the snow lay sometimes one or two feet deep. The camels