

journey before us, and so I was left to get on as best I could, in half-English, half-Chinese, with the "boy," Liu-san. The guide was a doubled-up little man, whose eyes were not generally visible, though they sometimes beamed out from behind his wrinkles and pierced one like a gimlet. He possessed a memory worthy of a student of Stokes, and the way in which he remembered the position of the wells at each march in the desert, was simply marvellous. He would be fast asleep on the back of a camel, leaning right over with his head either resting on the camel's hump, or dangling about beside it, when he would suddenly wake up, look first at the stars, by which he could tell the time to a quarter of an hour, and then at as much of the country as he could see in the dark. Having thus satisfied himself as to our position, he would, after a time, turn the camel a little off the track, dismount, and there, sure enough, we would find a well. The extraordinary manner in which he kept the way surpasses anything I know of. As a rule no track at all could be seen, especially in the sandy districts; but he used to lead us somehow or other, generally by the tracks