

of former caravans, which were so faint that I could not distinguish them even when pointed out to me, for a camel does not leave much impression upon gravel, like a beaten-down path in a garden! Another of his desert-acquired habits was that of going to sleep walking. His natural mode of progression was by bending right forward, and this seemed to keep him in motion without any trouble to himself, and he might be seen mooning along fast asleep. These were his accomplishments. His one failing was opium-smoking; directly camp was pitched he would have out his pipe, and he used to smoke off and on till we started again. I was obliged occasionally to differ with this gentleman; but, on the whole, we got on well together, and my feelings towards him at parting were more of sorrow than of anger, for he had a hard life going backwards and forwards up and down across the desert almost continuously for twenty years; and his inveterate habit of opium-smoking had used up all the savings he ought to have accumulated after his hard experiences.

The Mongol assistant, whose name was Ma-te-la, was a careless, good-natured fellow,