

to be patient. When we pitched camp at the end of a day's tortuous march Caliban was more cheerful than usual, chatting with our men in human fashion. The next morning Mir Mullah awoke with a free leg — Caliban had vanished. With only a crust of bread he started alone and on foot across the trackless and bitter cold desert. His good humour had probably resulted in a loosening of the bonds that held him to Mir Mullah, who now could only sheepishly report that he had slept heavily and knew nothing of the escape. The man safely regained Polu, as we learned months later when inquiry was made through Mr. MacCartney, now representing Great Britain at Kashgar. And our complaint of desertion is answered by Caliban's statement that we were forcing him to follow a bad road! Poor lamb! Now, indeed, was the summer of our content made dismal winter by this inglorious son of Belial. He had bestowed us at the end of a valley, whose blackened volcanic sides gave it a more than usually sinister visage. But no question of appearance would have weighed against it if we had only known where it was—I mean if we had known with that satisfying intimacy which latitude and longitude alone can supply.

I had left behind me all hope of recovering my chronometer, lost by reason of the mulish delay of the Osh postmaster. That meant no longitude. But latitude by meridian passages is determinable without a chronometer, provided you know the declinations of the bodies observed. These, with all other required astronomical data, are given in nautical almanacs, and nautical almanacs should not