

would not have run away if Handum had heeded the cook's warning that they were beginning to stray at three o'clock of that fateful day. At bedtime, eight o'clock, Handum Bai was in anything but a pleasant frame of mind.

"If the camels are lost and we die here in the desert," he told us that he had said to himself, "it will be my fault. This is the mating season, and our camels have surely gone off after the wild camels which come here to drink. They may go a hundred miles without stopping. If I wait till morning, and go with another man, the camels will have such a start, and we shall go so slowly, that we shall never catch them. The Sahib will be angry if I go alone, but he will be still more angry if the camels are lost and we all die."

Waiting till the moon rose, between nine and ten o'clock, he stealthily crept out, taking nothing but some matches. How he found the track I do not know, but find it he did, and ran beside it all night. Once his unprotected hands got so cold that, finding a small bush a foot high, he stopped to make a little blaze. At the same time he ate a bit of snow which had been preserved under the bush, the last remnant of a couple of inches which had fallen six weeks before, during the only snow-storm of the winter. Otherwise he neither ate, drank, nor rested.

"I vowed when I started," he said, "neither to eat nor drink till I found the camels, or got back to camp. And I vowed to run all night as hard as I could, and to spend the day in coming back to camp. I knew it would take all day to come back if I ran all night, because it would be uphill. And I knew a night in the open would kill me."

It was well that Handum Bai acted as he did. The un-