

help me so long as the Sia remained in Polu, severe punishments being threatened for every act done in my favour.

My Chinese money, supplemented by 100 sarrs borrowed by Mohammed Joo at Kiria, was only sufficient to pay my expenses for a few days more at Polu, and I was therefore obliged to hasten out of Chinese territory by the shortest route, through the Polu gorge. Three days before setting out I sent three men to deposit chopped straw, corn, bread, and wood, some at a dangerous part of the route and the remainder at Kha Yak Day. While the abortive negotiations had been proceeding at Polu, Niaz Akun and his caravan were at Imam La, where forage was plentiful, and when I was making ready to resume my journey they returned towards Polu. Heavy rain, however, was falling, and the Kurab River at Polu was much swollen, so that Niaz Akun and two of his men in crossing had a narrow escape from drowning. Niaz Akun ought to have seen that the ford, which was becoming more dangerous every minute, was impracticable, but he persisted for a little longer in his attempt to bring the caravan to the Polu side. A strongly built pony he had just ridden across became very restless at being separated from his companions, and, breaking loose, plunged into the foaming torrent to rejoin them. He was speedily swept off his legs, and in a few seconds was carried down the river for several hundred yards to a bend, where he managed to regain his feet so as to be able to rejoin his companions. Both Niaz Akun and the other men were indifferent to the fact that those on the further side of the torrent were soaking wet, hungry and without shelter, fuel, or supplies. Notwithstanding Niaz Akun's scouting of my efforts, I set myself to devise means to transfer some wood and one night's provisions for their relief, and for this purpose I used two lengths of Alpine