

this last a species of small rodent. On our left we had an incessantly changing mountain panorama, countless pinnacled summits coming into view one after the other, while countless other jagged tops became successively lost to sight behind us. The perspective was confusing; it was difficult to grasp the real architecture of the system, seen thus from the saj, and without having an opportunity to cross it transversely. As you look towards the east, the range appears to send out an endless series of spurs arranged *en échelon*; but when you look towards the north you see nothing but, apparently, a single continuous, uninterrupted chain. Passing the lower end of a glen, and glancing up it, you see, a long way off at its upper end, a line which you take to be the main crest of the Kuruk-tagh. The peaks nearest to our route, being those by which I plotted my map, appeared to belong to a subsidiary range,

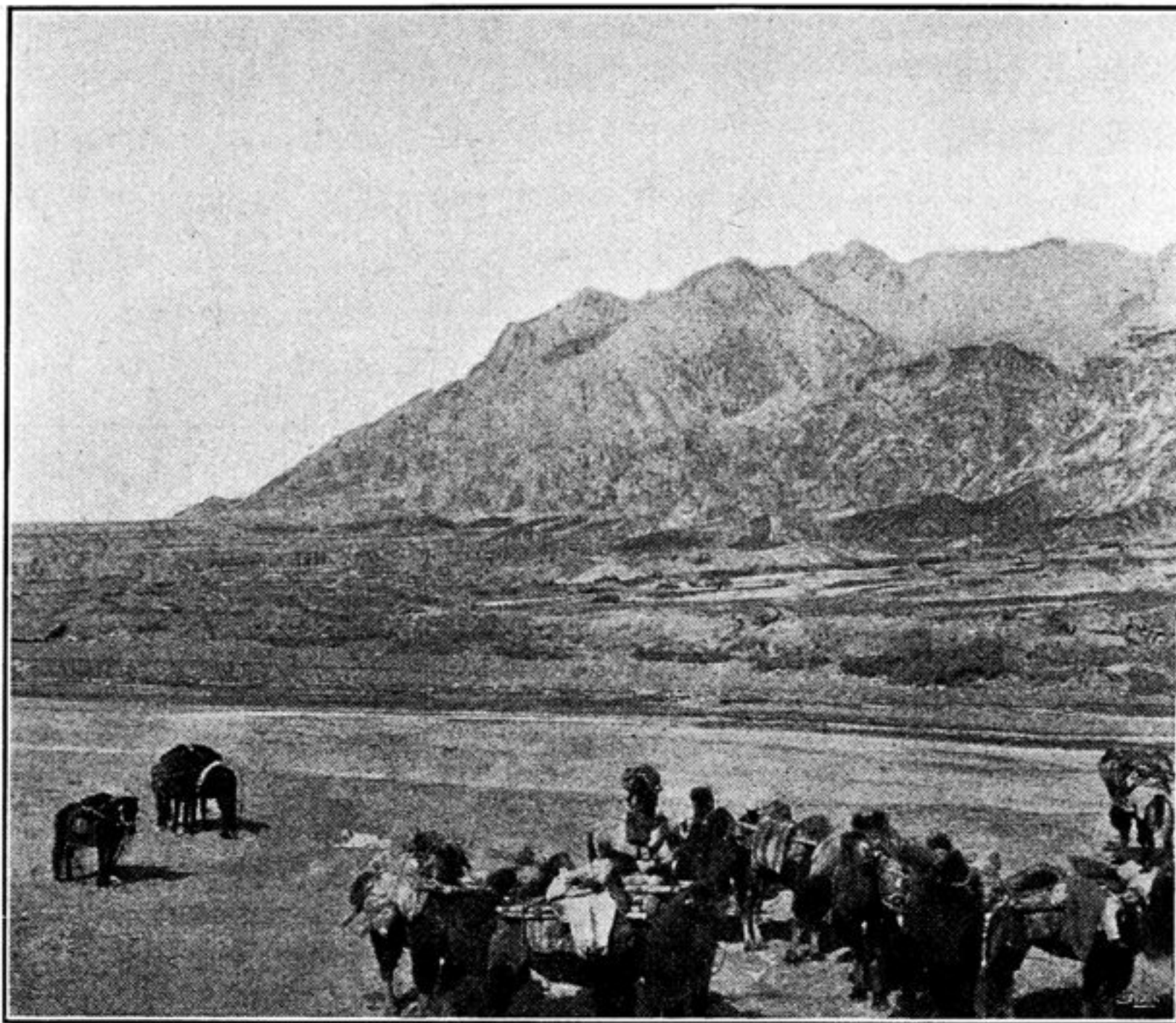


Fig. 15. MOUNTAIN SCENERY ON THE ROAD BETWEEN SUGET-BULAK AND KURBANTSCHIK.

lying parallel to the main range and broken by all the transverse glens; but this was probably only an illusion. As an actual fact what we see from the saj consists only of the subdivisions of the transverse spurs, and of ramifications of the main chain which present themselves in shortened perspective. The transverse glens or valleys run southwards between these ramifications, starting close up against the main crest, and terminating in the saj after they emerge from the mountains. The colouring of the mountains was subdued and faint, the chief tones being brown, violet, red, grey, and yellow, and these were still further softened by the light clouds that drifted abovehead. On the right, that is towards the south, the detritus slope of the saj stretches evenly, in its barren desolation, down to the level plain in which the Kontsche-darja has from time to time shifted its bed and its position. The belt of forest beside this stream was no longer visible; in the far distance the horizon brightened up in some places, while in others it was veiled in a thick haze. But on