

massive. And as we now proceed farther east we shall find a similar change for the better taking place.

December 26th. This and the next following stages were remarkable for their monotony, for we now directed our march towards the east-north-east between

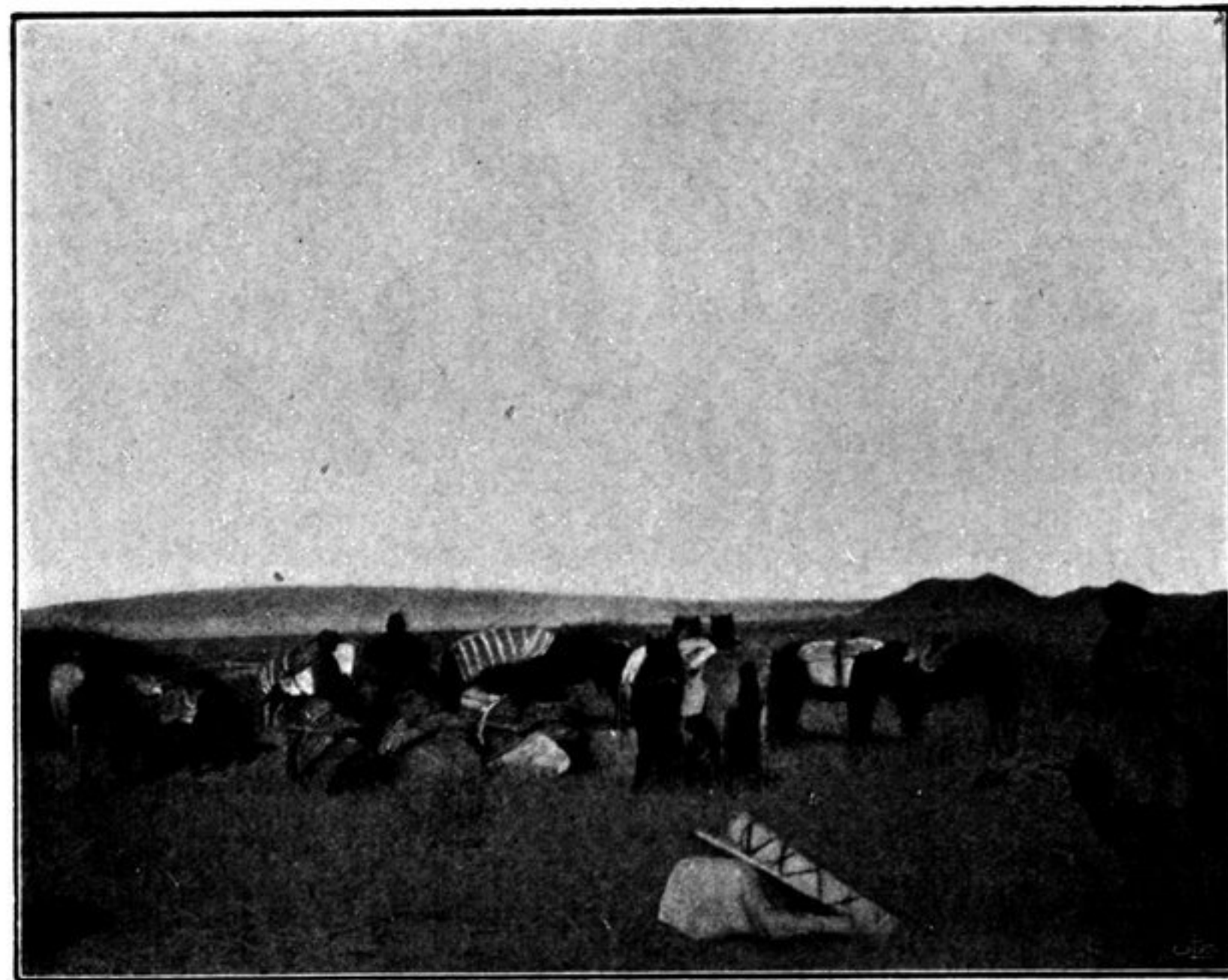
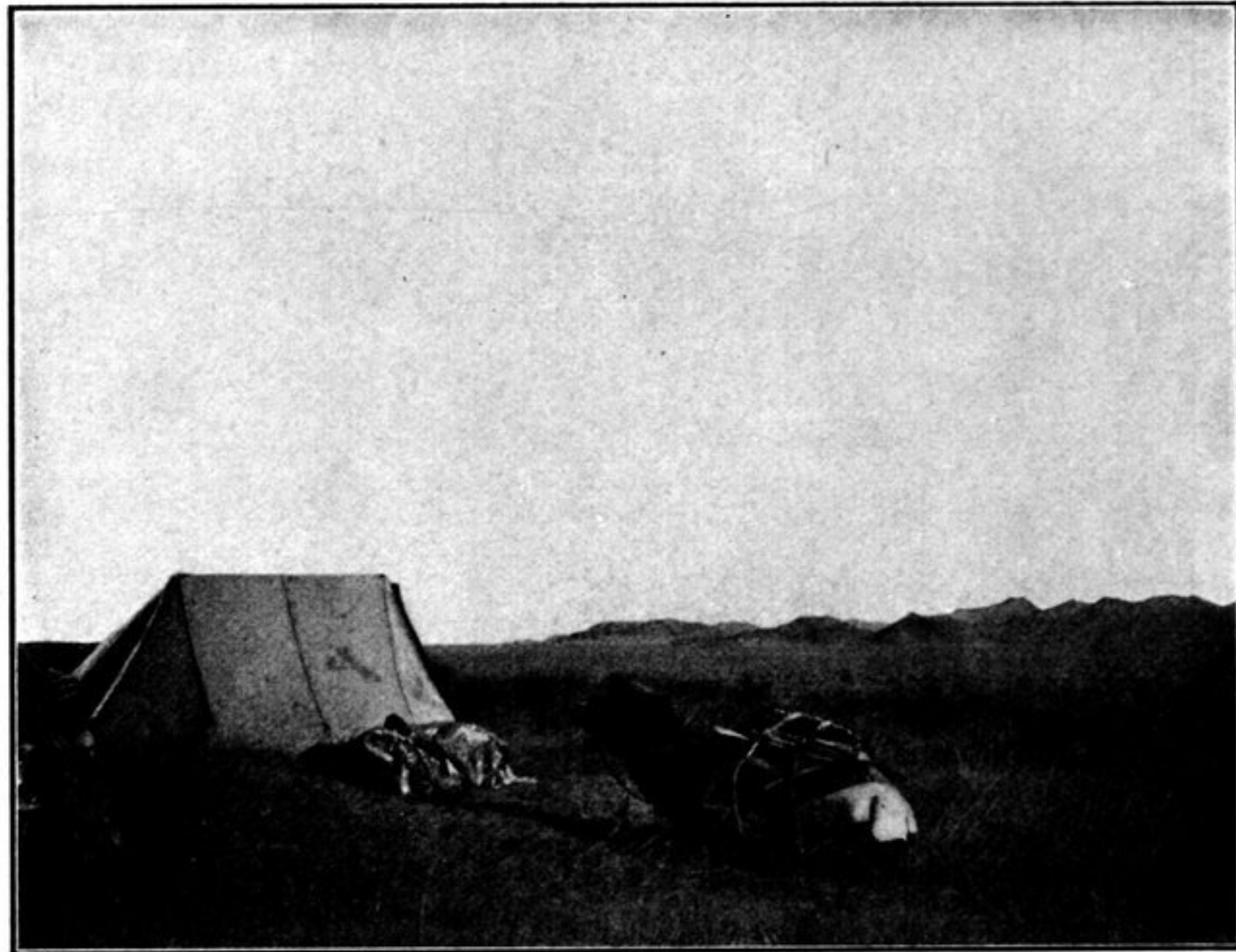


Fig. 247. SOME VIEWS FROM THE OPEN ASTIN-TAGH VALLEY.

the two main chains of the Astin-tagh, and the changes which the landscape underwent in the great latitudinal valley were inconsiderable. The characteristic feature of this valley is that it does not possess any decided fall in either the one direction or the other, but is cut up into a series of self-contained basins, each serving