

indeed find some shepherds, who were in charge of 600 sheep and several horses belonging to a baj in Tschertschen. They numbered in all 18 persons and are said to spend the entire year up amongst these mountains, only changing their pasture-grounds from time to time. Most of them dwell in wretched earth-caves, partly covered over with *kigis*, or »felt carpets», though they likewise possessed a couple of rough and ready tents. They obtain their supply of water at this season and in winter from springs. The reason the Unkurluk-saj did not then carry a drop of water was, that the cold was considered to be still too great up in the region of its sources. Summer would not make its appearance there for a month yet, that is not until the end of June; it is then that the young grass shoots up and the water begins to come down the glen. The only warm months are July and August; autumn begins early, and the winter is bitterly cold. The wild animals embrace arkharis and *kökmät* goats (*Pseudois Nahoor*), and sometimes wild yaks. The last-named had been especially numerous during the preceding autumn. Other members of the local fauna were kulans (sometimes), wolves, and bears. Mountain-partridges were numerous; we heard them calling to one another all over the mountains.

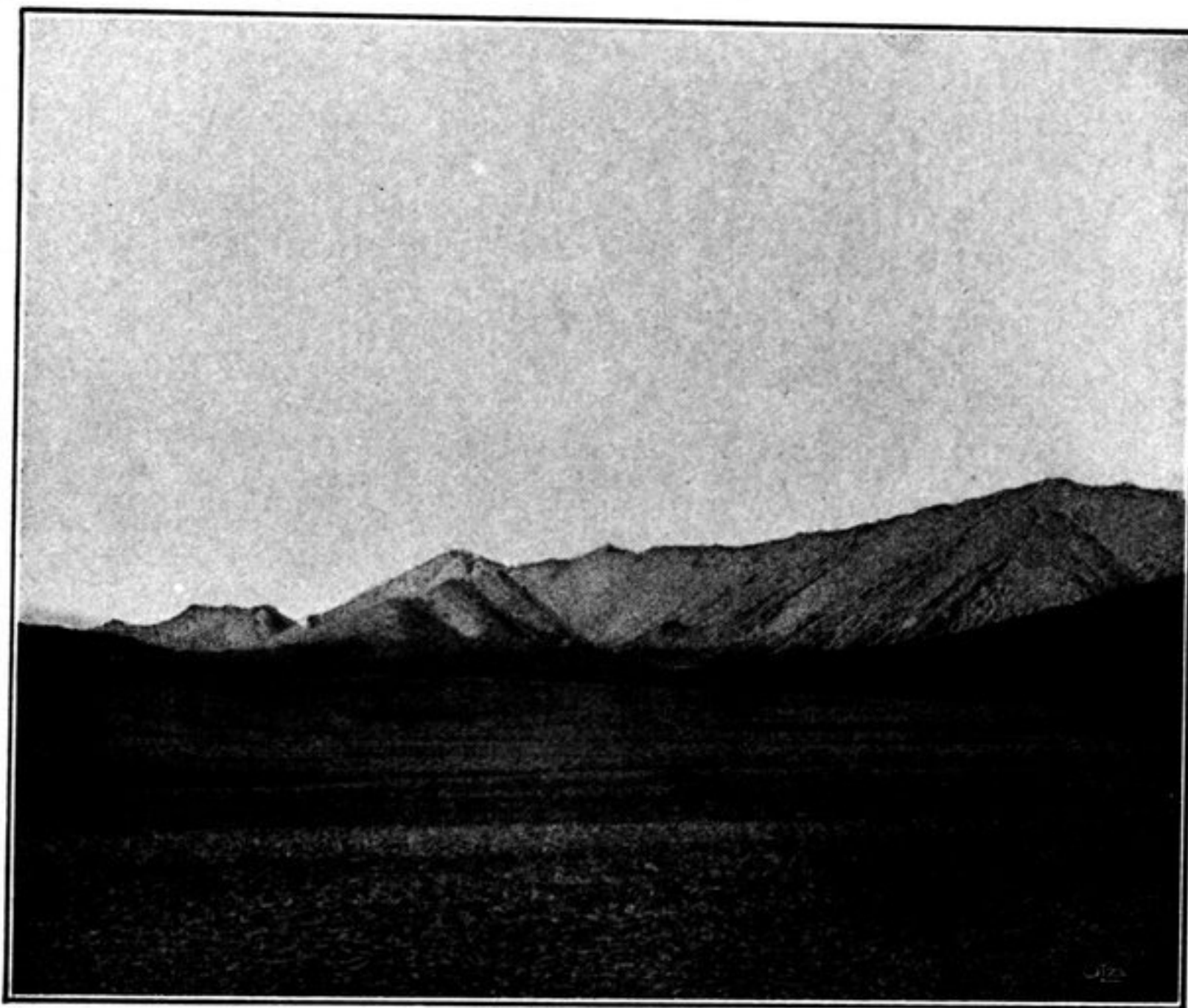


Fig. 321. MOUNTAINS NEAR UNKURLUK.

I was told, that there are two tracks in the upper part of the glen of Unkurluk, the more easterly one being the nearer and the more convenient, though at that season it was considered unsuitable because of the last snow-fall; we were accordingly advised to choose the other and more westerly road.

The greater part of the day's march was amongst soft earthy ground, though gravel of red and grey granite was common in the bottoms of the glens. These latter assumed the form of hard rock in only a few places. Where we debouched into the Unkurluk-saj we observed light green schists, and at Camp VII mica-