

of a wild animal is a rare and seldom sight. All day we did not see a single living creature, except a species of small Crustacean (*Gammarus pulex*) which exists in the freshwater pools and is described by Prof. Leche in the Zoological Section of this work. To come upon the footprint of an orongo antelope or the droppings of a kulan was almost an event for the caravan, though at the same time these discoveries inspired in us the faint hope of soon finding grazing of some sort.

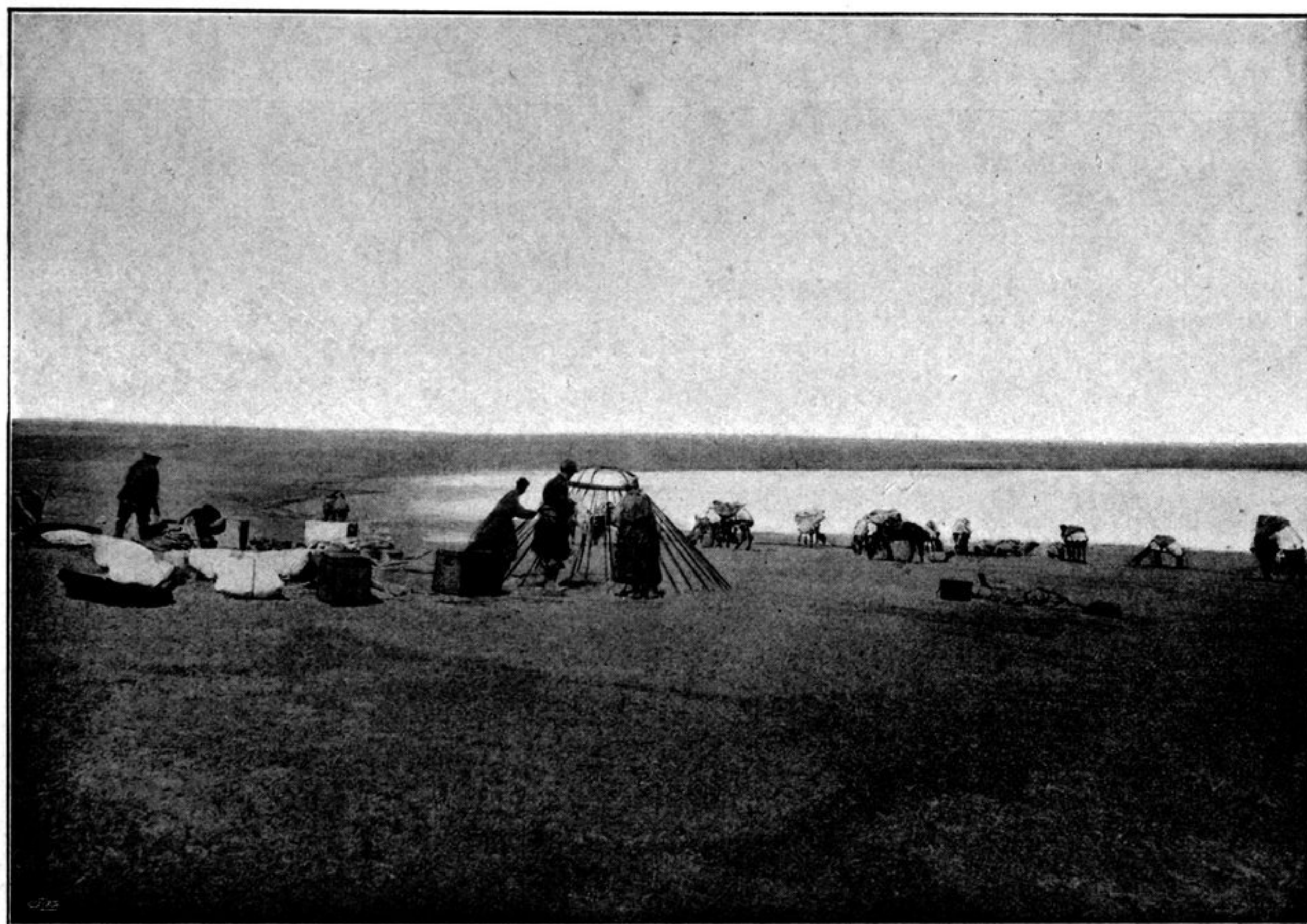


Fig. 342. LOOKING EAST FROM CAMP XXIII.

The country was again favourable for travelling, and we kept on down the valley to the west-north-west. The ground was firm enough to bear us; such soft marshy tracts as did exist were easily avoided. A short distance after we forded the brook, it emptied itself into a large frozen freshwater pool, and around it were a great number of similar sheets of water filling every depression. Thus the big broad latitudinal valley which we were following does not possess any continuous drainage effluent, but is divided by low swellings into a series of separate basins. For the whole distance that we were able to see, this valley was bordered on the north by the main range of the Arka-tagh, while to the west-north-west we perceived the great mass that we had also seen from our camp beside the lake of the year before. On the south the same valley is bordered by a not particularly high range; this I preferred to make a circuit round, that we might not tax the strength of the caravan unnecessarily. Whilst marching along its northern foot we crossed over a number of