

*firn* basin, from which they proceed. Here and there black pinnacles and ridges of rock stick up through the great expanses of snow and ice. It seemed to me that with such weather as we were then experiencing the glaciers were growing actually bigger.

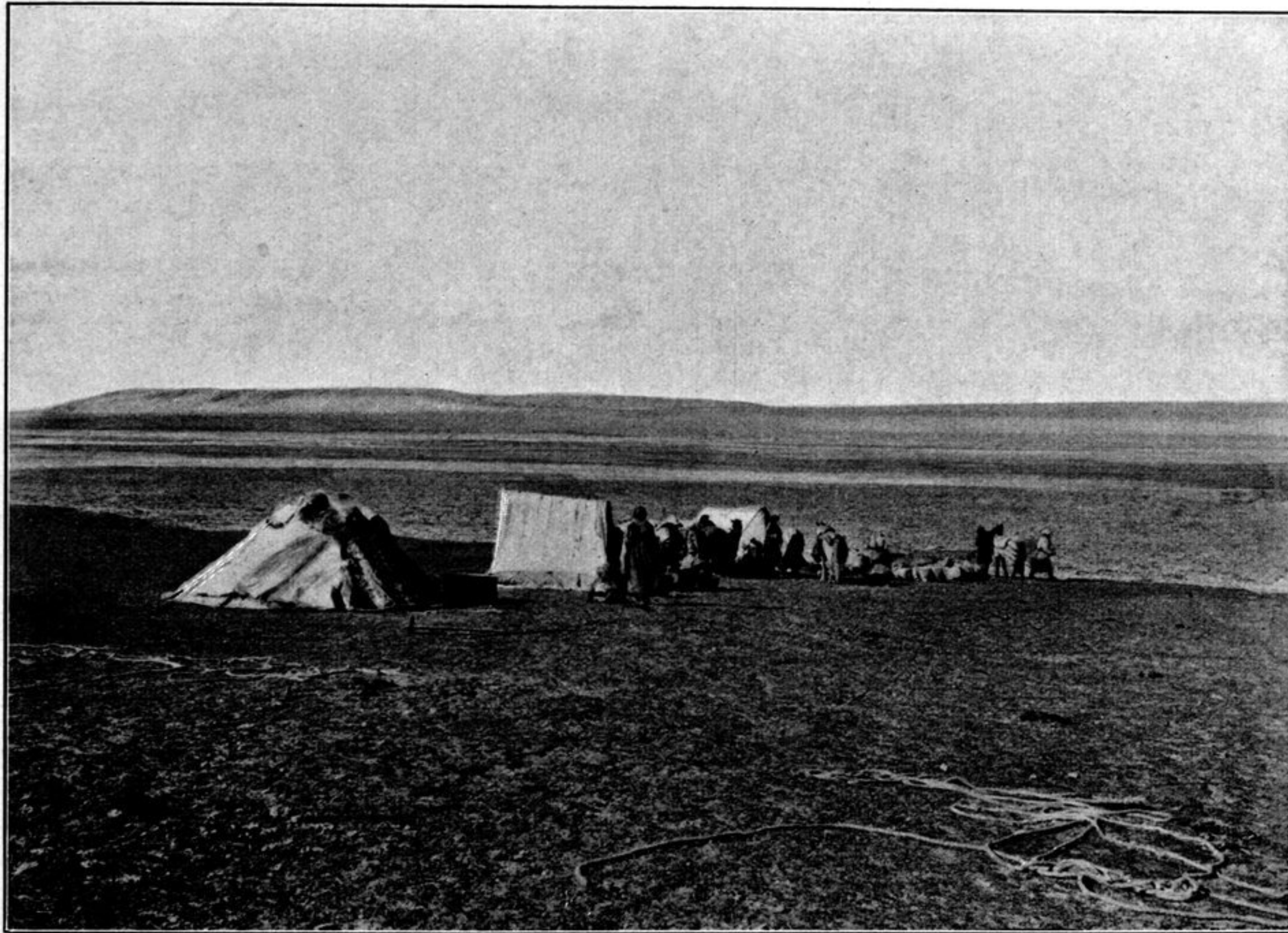


Fig. 373. LOOKING S 35° E FROM CAMP XL.

We saw herds of wild yaks in several directions, but all of them just at the lower margins of the glaciers; one big herd consisted almost entirely of cows and calves. We counted altogether over 300 head; evidently they are wont to gather in the summer from several directions up to these regions of perpetual snow, while in winter they break up into smaller companies. In these high altitudes they find their sustenance in moss, lichens, and short grass. As we drew near to them, they moved slowly off to yet higher regions. We also observed kulans and hares, but no antelopes or wild sheep.

The last part of the ascent up to the summit of the pass is rather steep, though it was the great attenuation of the atmosphere which made the climb appear more difficult and toilsome than it really was. The stream which we had hitherto followed had now come to an end, and we had also left behind us the last of the glaciers which go to feed it. The actual pass is as usual flat and greatly denuded, with soft rounded outlines. In fact it forms a slightly convex plateau from north to south and equally slightly concave from east to west. The surface consisted partly