

up into smaller sections. Round one of these sections, situated in the middle of the valley, the river describes a loop towards the south, flowing close in at the foot of the mountain; at its south-eastern corner stood two or three tents. The mountains which inclose the valley on the south are so low and scattered, that we might have travelled south without any especial difficulty.

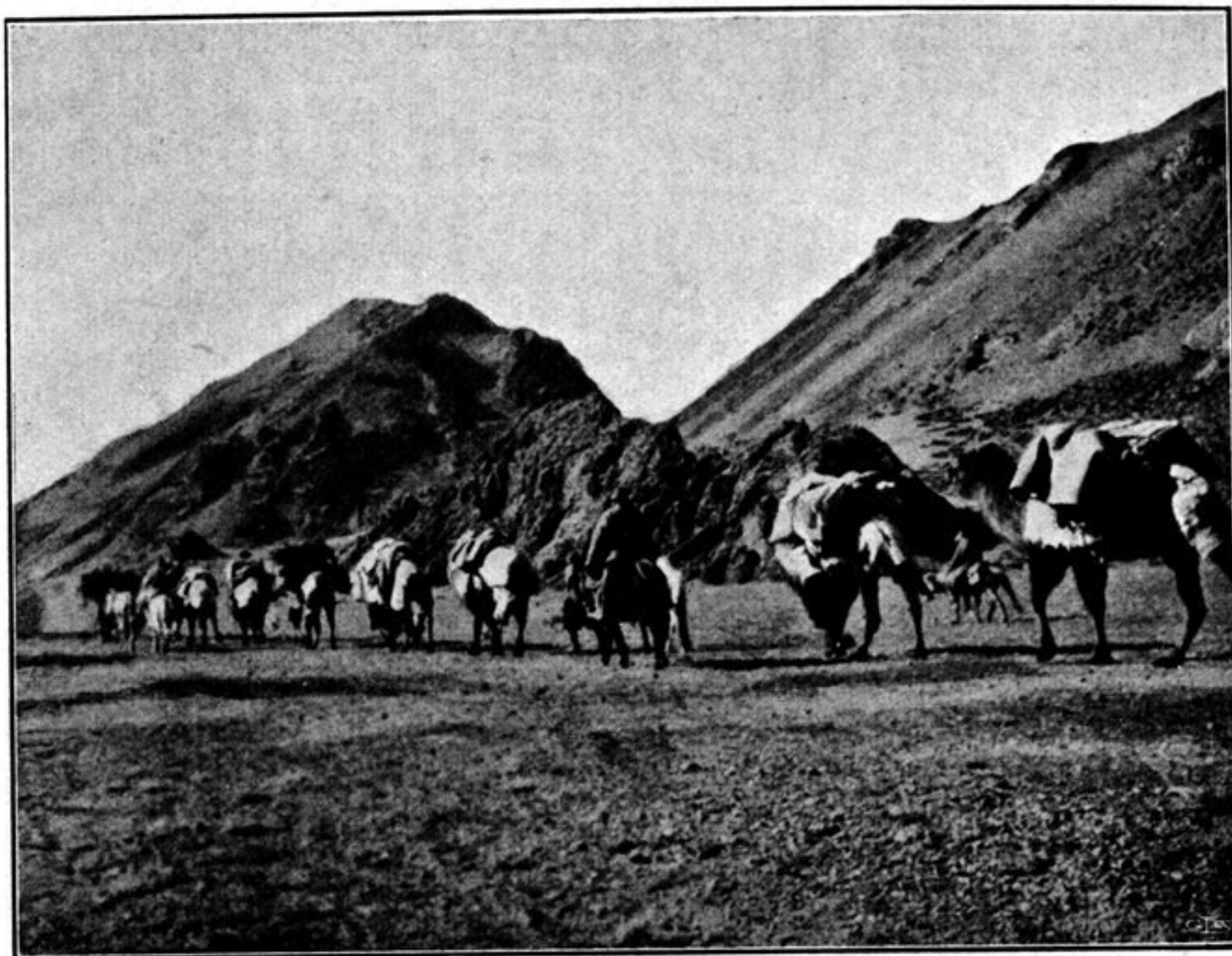


Fig. 72. EN ROUTE TOWARDS LADAK.

Leaving immediately south of us the section that the Bogtsang-tsangpo encircles, we again struck the river, flowing along a tolerably narrow valley between low ridges, that consisted of the same fine-grained rock as hitherto. In one or two places steep rocks jut out into the river, so that to get the camels past them we had to lead them in the water. After that we travelled along the left or northern escarpment of the river, at the foot of a sharp-edged and irregular crest. In several places we observed traces of encampments. At one spot four big stones were set up on end and propped one against another, the biggest being  $1\frac{1}{2}$  m. high; probably they serve to indicate the boundary between two different regions. Just before entering the narrow valley we also passed a sort of boundary of stones, rather small in size, but placed close to one another in a winding line, which appeared to serpentine away in both directions as far as we could see, showing up distinctly against the finer gravel with which the surface was strewn.

The narrow valley through which the river flows, and which is to be regarded merely as a part of the big valley, soon widens again, and in fact swells out into a broad expansion, or rather a spacious plain, with little grazing or none; the ground however was there hard and bore us readily, the only drawback being that it was literally honeycombed with the burrows of the earth-rats, putting me in mind of a worm-eaten tree. The last time we touched the river was where two branches unite, both coming from the south-west. Shortly after that we entirely