

Fig. 135.

pear to be crowned with towers and walls. On the left side of the glen there is a small spring, the water of which was then frozen into stalactites, so that it was like a congealed cascade. Higher up in the bed of the watercourse there were occasional small fragments of ice, showing how the running brook had dwindled away. Still higher up, in an expansion of the glen, there was a little frozen pool, and there the ice was continuous; in fact the ground there was quite marshy, though just then as hard as stone. The grazing was exceedingly scanty, mostly moss; but the grass was by this so dry and frozen that it crumbled to pieces at a touch, like withered fir-needles. This locality is evidently visited by nomads, for we came across traces of a fire and any quantity of yak-dung. Kulans were numerous. At length we reached a convenient threshold pass at an altitude of 5137 m. On its south side the glen expands into a small level area, containing another marsh. To the N. 50° W. we perceived the end of another glen; probably it curves round and

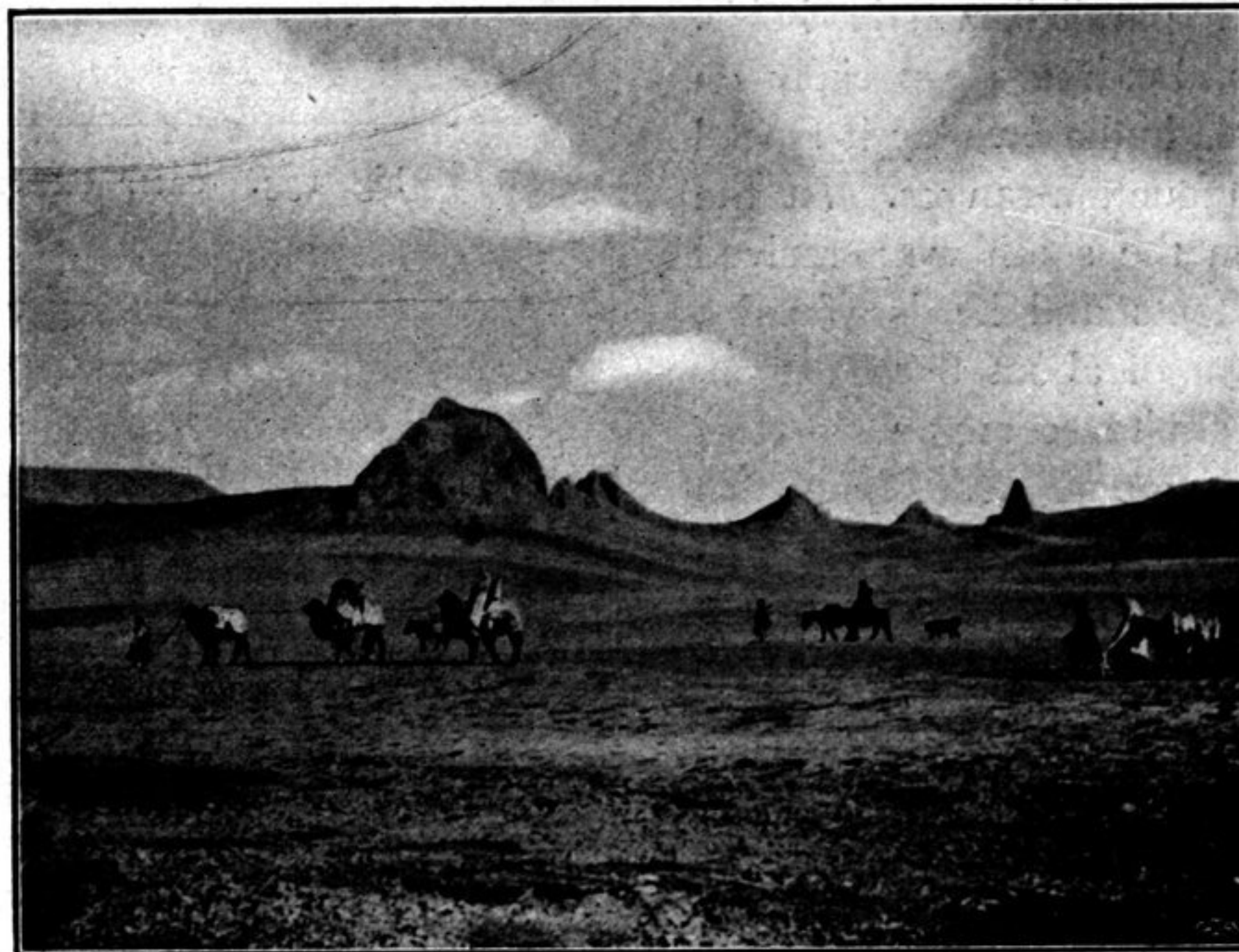


Fig. 136. NEAR CAMP CXXIX.

debouches upon the same latitudinal valley as that which we had recently followed. The mountains in that direction are called Tsegh. Leaving that locality on our left, we kept to the glen that runs down from the pass towards the north-east, but finally turns north and north-west. After that a relatively open, but greatly undulating country disclosed itself on the right, with wild, fantastic, abrupt crests and pointed peaks sticking up above its undulations. On the left, quite close to the main watercourse of the valley, rises a similar bluff, with a grotto and a stone wall at its foot. We made Camp CXXIX (alt. 5038 m.) a short distance beyond the point where the valley inclines towards the north-west. There we found a tiny spring in