

extend a good long way towards the east or east-south-east, although it was for the most part screened by hills.

Along the northern shore runs a broader strip of strand, and behind it the gravel-and-shingle hills rise precipitously. This strip is sandy and grassed over, and there the sheep caravans from Ladak are wont to halt beside a couple of elongated marginal lagoons. Immediately at the back of these hills, which are very sharply defined next the flat strand, come steep foot-hills, and beyond them again the great rugged masses of rock.

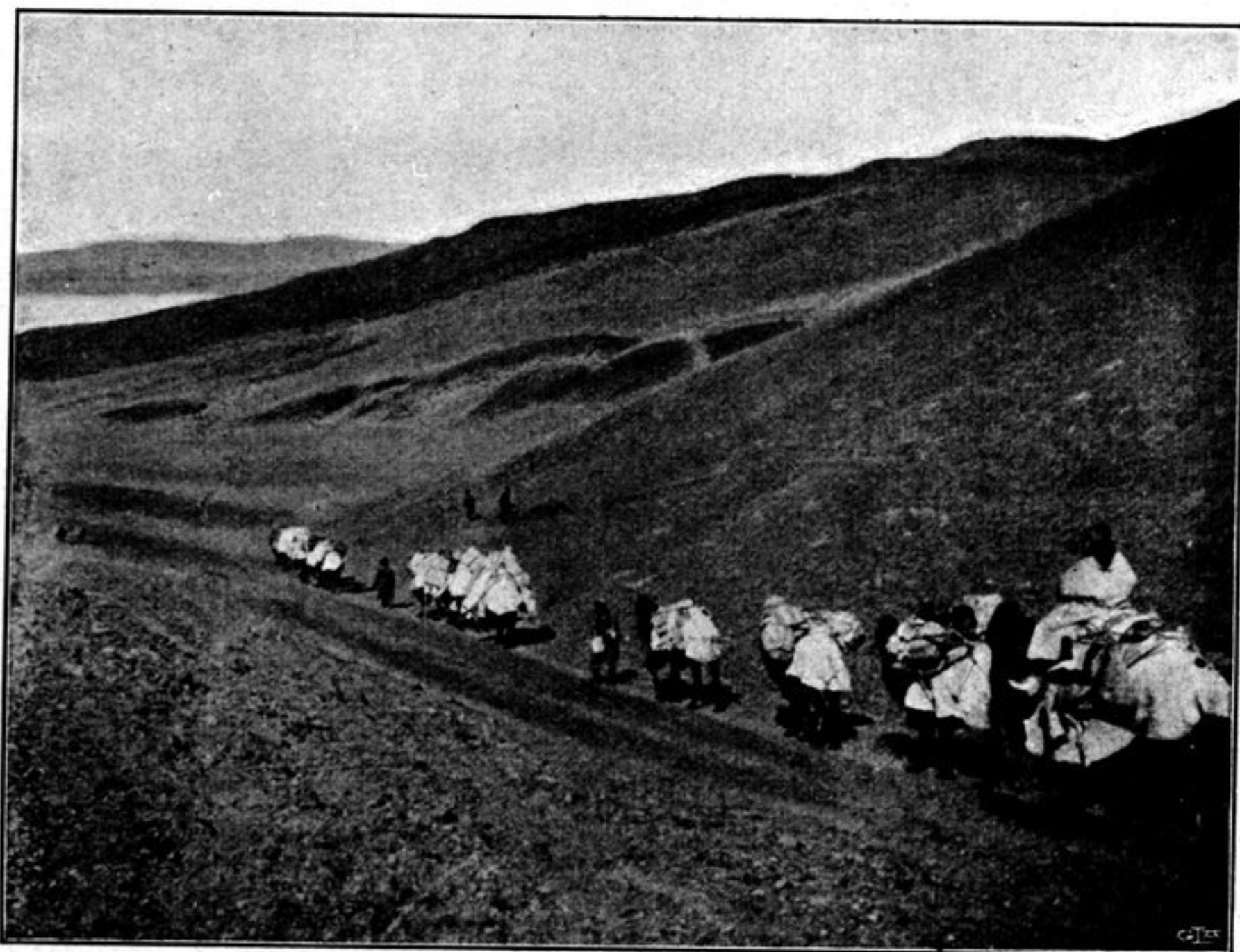


Fig. 167. MARCHING DOWN TO THE TSO-NGOMBO.

We pitched Camp CXXXVIII near the western end of this flat strip of shore, choosing the point that would give us easiest access to the fuel on the island. A beach-line, running at about 1 m. above the then existing level, appeared to indicate that the lake will sometimes rise higher than it was at that time (winter); though it may also be the result of the continuous shrinkage of the lake, or may be quite simply caused by the beat of the waves. The only place in which the lake was not frozen over was where the river empties into it, and in the vicinity of the island there were a couple of open »lanes» through the ice. Everywhere else the entire extent of the lake was sheeted with ice. Yet it was only in the narrower parts, for instance the sound between the island and the shore, that the ice was strong enough to bear; farther out it thinned away to a mere film. Between the shore near our camp and the eastern extremity of the island we obtained the following soundings — 1.65, 4.45, 5.23, 6.35, 3.60, and 1.36 m., the lake there being thus rather shallow. In all probability there are greater depths in the middle; although, to judge from the flatness of its shores, the whole of this eastern part is fairly shallow. The lake, like the river, swarmed with fish, and they were especially easy to catch around the island, on which some fresh springs issued. The water of two of these