

have not very far to go to get their materials, neither the larger blocks of stone, nor the thin slabs of slate. These stone kists are always erected in the vicinity of a monastery or temple. So here: above the long village of Dschimre, straggling along the bottom of the valley, with its cultivated fields, its orchards, and its rows of willow and poplar trees, the monastery of the same name, Dschimre-gompa, crowns the summit of a dominating crag. On the west side of the bluff are several houses, the dwelling-places of the lamas, clinging like swallows' nests to the face of the cliffs.

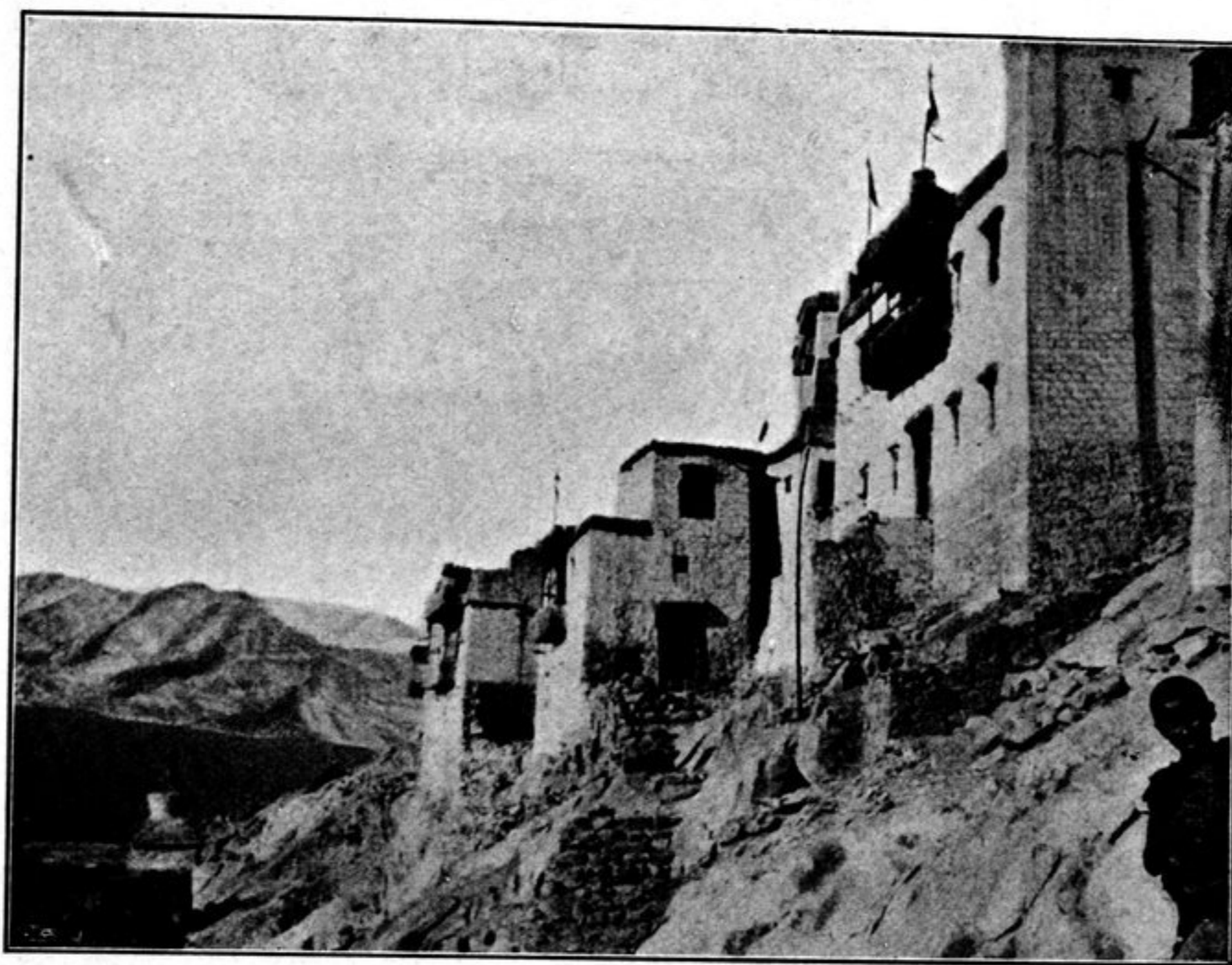


Fig. 277. THE FRONT OF TIKSE-GOMPA.

Here the glen is, I dare say, 2 km. broad, and is joined by several spring-fed streams. The mountains on both sides are still of great size, although gradually decreasing in altitude as they approach the Indus. There was however but a trifling quantity of snow on them; in fact everywhere, all the way to Srinagar and Murri, there was reported to be exceptionally little snow that winter. The pass of Tschang-la is generally wont to be so blocked with snow in the beginning of December as to be absolutely impassable; but we had found it practicably free, except that there was a patch a foot deep just under the summit of the pass on the south side, and snow also filled the interstices between the stones, but before we reached Tagar it had quite ceased. When we returned by that same route in April there was a greater quantity of snow on the Tschang-la.

A short distance below the temple we crossed over the now not inconsiderable river, and its energetically excavated bed. The bridge is constructed of logs in a single span, and looks anything but safe. But at that season we could easily ride across the river-bed itself, for it was half filled with sheets of ice. In the neighbourhood of the river-mouth, on its left side, stand the villages of Karru, Sabdschek, and Do. After doubling a granite spur on our right, we debouched upon the broad