

The greater part of the bottom of the glen is choked with granite detritus and stones, all of them round and water-worn, though amongst the coarser gravel there occur long, narrow strips of sand, built up by the current into sand-banks. As far as we possibly could we travelled along these strips of sand, the riding being far easier there; and we were fortunately able to travel in that way for the greater part of the day. Below Tschong-jangal there was a considerably greater amount of detritus.

Even at this point I fancied I could almost detect a decrease in the relative altitude of the mountains, though at the head of every fresh side-glen we caught glimpses of lofty and imposing snowy crests enveloped in clouds, partly shrouding their outlines. Thus on both sides the main ranges were at a considerable distance from us, the ranges that is whose spurs and offshoots abut upon the river, descending to it in a series of greyish brown terraces, platforms, and knobby protuberances. About 50 m. above the bottom of the glen grottoes and hollows have been scooped out in the face of the cliff, obviously the result of fluvatile erosion at some former period.

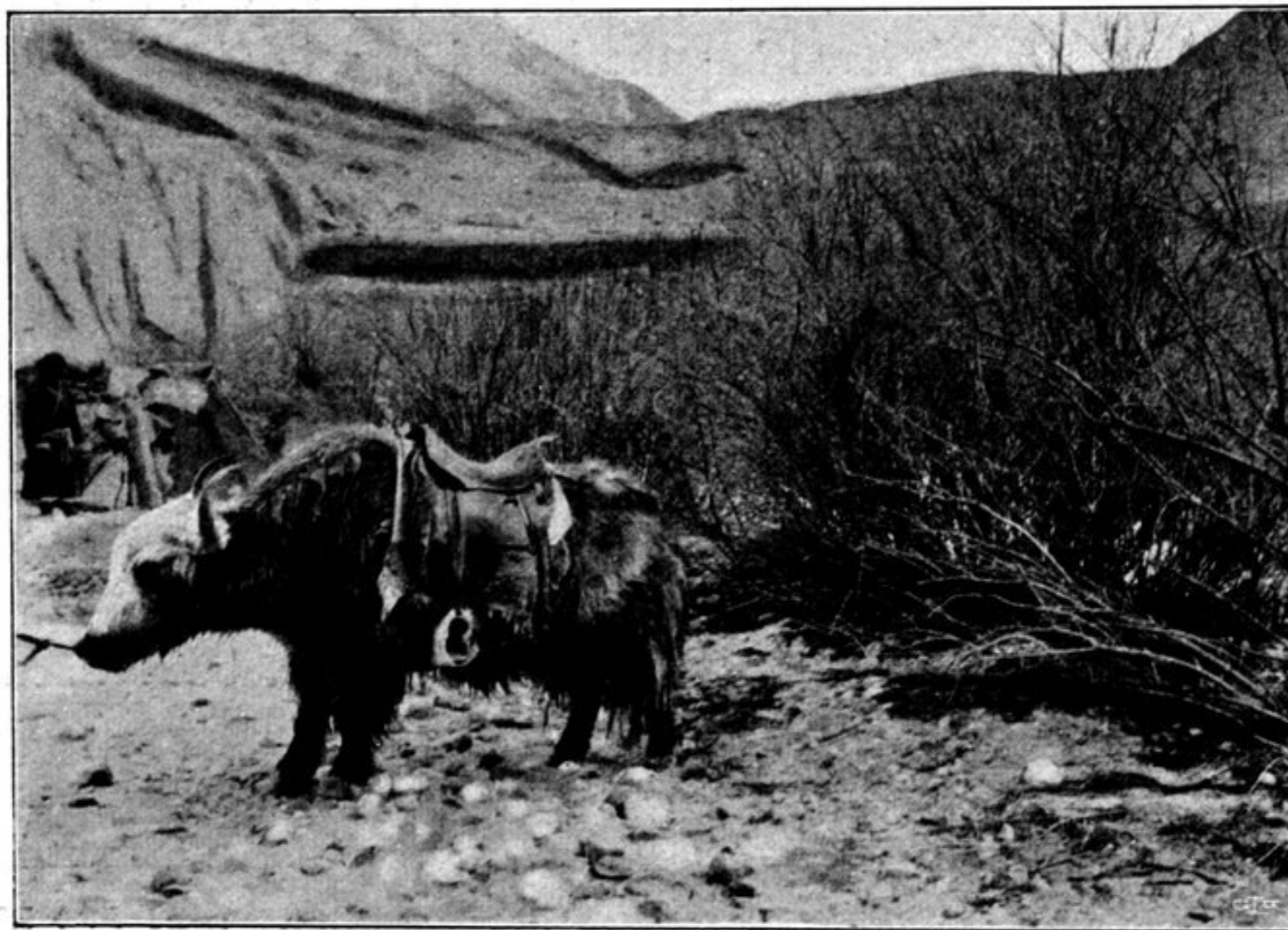


Fig. 323. MY RIDING-YAK.

The balghun bushes now became far fewer in number, but small thickets of wild briars gradually took their place. During the latter part of the march we observed a few scattered *artschas* or junipers on the slopes and crests of the mountains. Still not a sign of animal life. I dare say that the wild sheep, as well as the antelopes and kulans, avoid this relatively confined locality, preferring the opener mountainous parts where they can keep a good look-out for their enemies.

In the beginning of the march we passed a side-glen coming from the west; this, I was told, is called Darsang-garmo, and has in its upper part grazing-grounds for cattle and sheep in the winter. Farther on is the outlet from the east