

ice was just at that spot intensified, and in fact there was a narrow passage left by which we were able to advance. It was however excessively contracted, sometimes only 10 m. across; and it was perfectly plain, that it needs but a slight increase in the glacial activity, such, for example, as one or two snowy winters followed by warm, bright weather, and this passage would be completely stopped, and it would be absolutely impossible to advance by that route. But the condition of things changes from year to year, and this is what our Ladakis meant when they said, they could not guarantee that this route would be practicable that year. Had the passage been blocked by the ice, we should have been forced to make the three days' detour to which I have already alluded. However the road was open, though there was only just room for us to get past without lifting the loads off the horses; and strange to say, we succeeded without having a single leg broken in the deep holes that gaped between the ice and the fragments of rock.

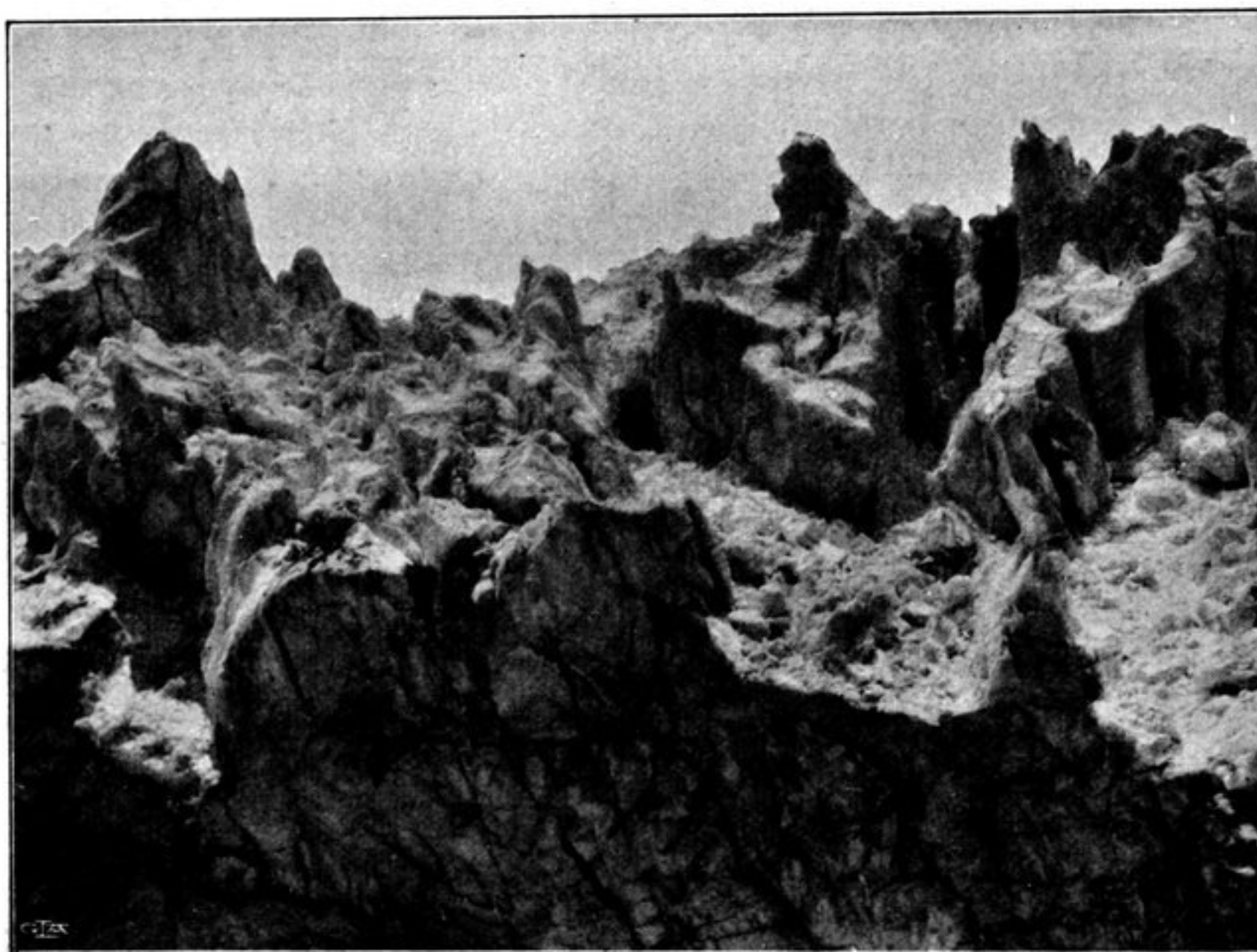


Fig. 334. ICE-FORMATION ON THE TOP OF THE KITSCHIK-KUMDAN.

After that we continued north-west up the glen, marching sometimes on the gravelly bottom, sometimes on the sheets of ice, until we came to the still bigger glacier-arms of the Tschong-kumdan. These do not however stop up the road, although there is but little room to spare. Their front, abruptly broken, almost vertical, indeed sometimes overhanging, is in general 20 m. high. The whole of the glen was here sheeted with ice, formed from the thaw-water. This glacier possesses far more moraines than the former, and a large portion of its arms is completely covered under grey detritus, through which the bare rock projects here and there. The ground-moraine appears however to be more developed than the top or side moraines, so far at least as it was possible to judge from the front of the glacier. It is surprising that there exists no trace of any frontal moraine; but not even the smallest ridgelet of gravel is thrust forward by the ice. Yet such must