



Fig. 28. Remains of *mesas* on the eastern edge of the Lop depression

round the horizon. Looking S 15° W, we saw small, gently rounded hills, the extreme westerly slopes of the peninsula we had crossed, belonging to the southernmost outer chain of the Pei-shan. To the south-west and W. S. W. the line of the horizon was as level as that of the sea; and this was just the direction in which Lop-nor should be. To the W. N. W., very faint and low down, was visible the outline of a mountain chain — the Quruq-tagh; and to the north-west, north and north-east also bluish mountains were to be seen.

Having completed our observations at this point, the end of our second advance into the Lop depression, we returned in our own tracks to camp No. 135. We had secured no real link-up with Altmish-bulaq; but we had seen so much that we could be confident that the missing 170 km of our motor reconnaissance between Korla and Anhsi would not present any great obstacle to the laying down of a motor road, if the project were ever seriously entertained. I am convinced from my experiences that it will be possible to find a practicable way round to the north from our turning-point to Altmish-bulaq as easily as in the parts of the Pei-shan we had put behind us.

A monument composed of eight empty petrol drums was erected at camp No. 135. Three of them were filled with sand, to give stability to the pyramid-shaped sign. Travellers or road-builders in days to come will find it, for no-one is likely to come and take it away.

TURNING BACK EAST

We were now on our return journey, free from the time-consuming business of map-making, and passing one after the other of our old camping-grounds. We had not got far on the 11th when the front spring of the small car broke. It had been