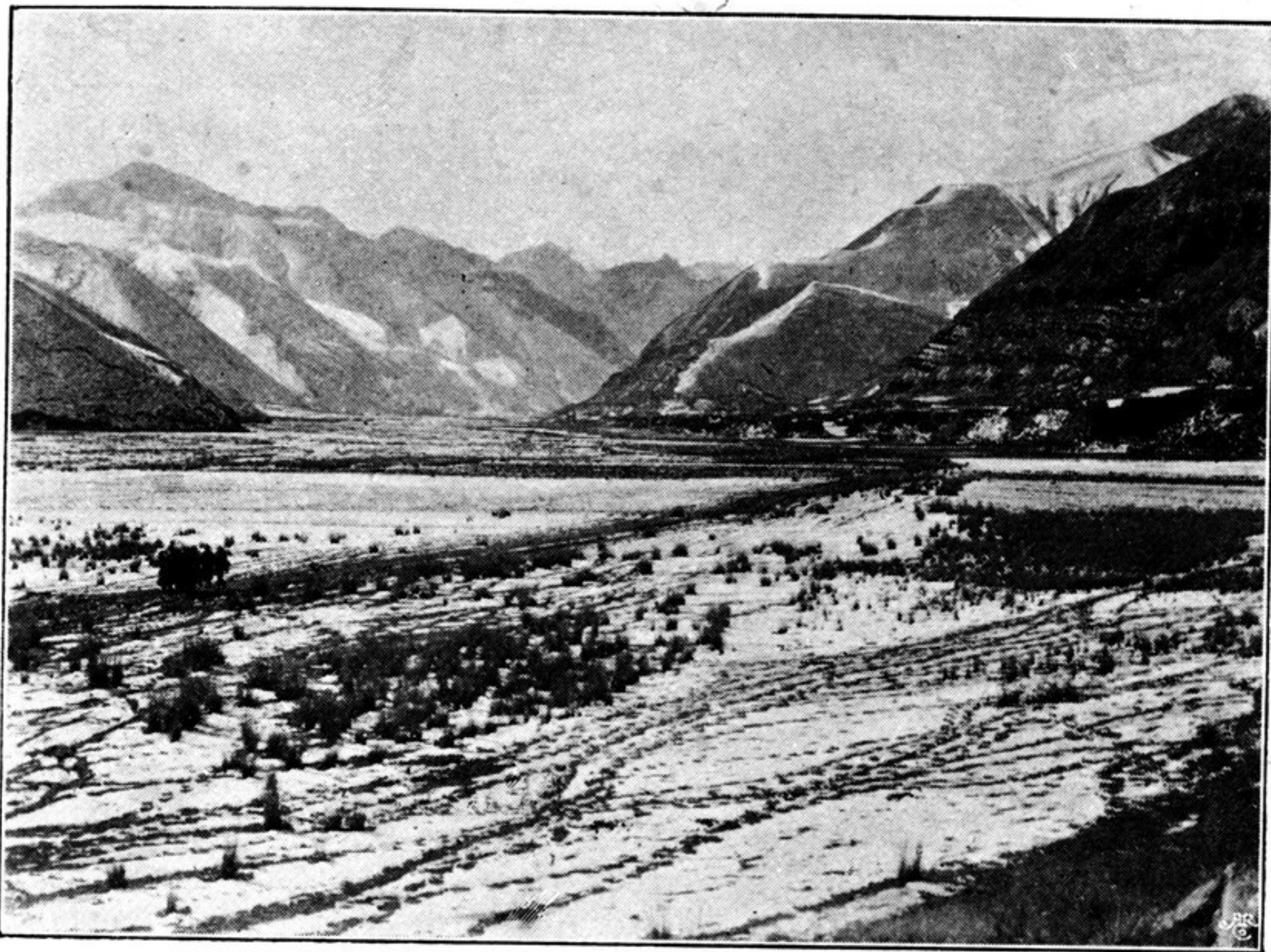


so I had him carried on my bed down the Asgan Sal valley, fortunately over good tracks, to Yarkand.

Ever since leaving Hunza, about the middle of October, we had traversed desert places, suffering privation and hardship. Now we were in a habitable country, where supplies were easily obtained. From Zumchi to Yarkand the whole country (with exception of but a few miles) is cultivated and fairly populous, but the breadth of the



GENERAL VIEW OF THE ASGAN SAL VALLEY.

cultivated area is restricted by the necessity for irrigation. Where this fails the country is a desert of loess, with sand here and there. The loess evidently reaches to a great depth, and at Tar Agzi its stratified formation, seen from a distance, resembles rocks. In contrast with the mournful wastes on either side, the Asgan Sal valley, with its cultivated land and its fruit trees, mostly apricots—and, at Oyung, pears too—seems a paradise.