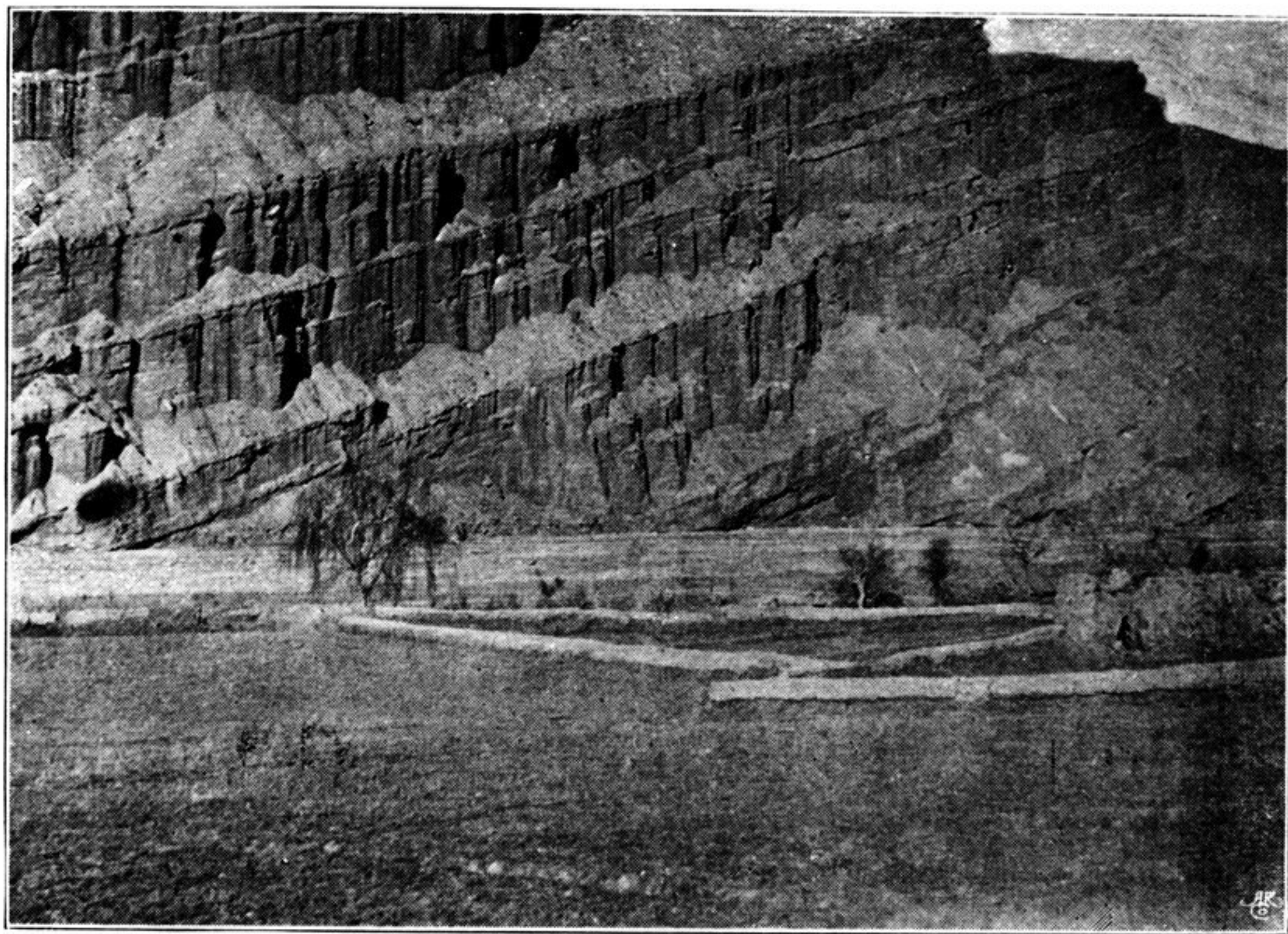


decidedly airy, and altogether would form an agreeable summer residence; but on that day, January 20, 1898, I would have preferred a less draughty abode. However, the place was preferable to the noisy and dirty serais inside the town, and my landlord supplied abundance of forage for the animals, thus lightening the labours of the caravan men, who well deserved a rest.

My rooms had been nicely carpeted through the kind-



PECULIAR GEOLOGICAL FORMATION IN THE ASGAN SAL VALLEY.

ness of Munshi Bunyard Ali, who ushered me into them with as much state as if I had been a personage of vast importance. These courtesies I accepted with all the dignity at my command, for, as my caravan bashi had shown me, it is inexpedient to belittle oneself in the East. Submitting to the inevitable, I conversed with the Munshi until, long after dark, the baggage animals arrived.