

but that would not detract from the antiquity of its deep layers. The base of culture may be at a considerable depth beneath the plain. Hissar was probably a city of importance when Bactrian trade with China came past it via the Alai valley. Suitable presents to the viceroy would make it possible to dig there, and labor is only 35 cents a day (fig. 484).

There are many small kurgans and remains of ancient fortifications, canals, and dikes in the Hissar valley.

ABANDONED OASES OF FERGANA.

A rapid reconnaissance of chances for excavation in Fergana was made by stopping at intervals along the railroad in a private car, lent through the kindness of General Ussakovsky and General Ulianin.

Near Osh there are two small mounds with no surface indication of culture remains. No others were seen in that region and its natives say there are none. There is a kurgan at Marghelan, but west of there it is not until the railroad strikes

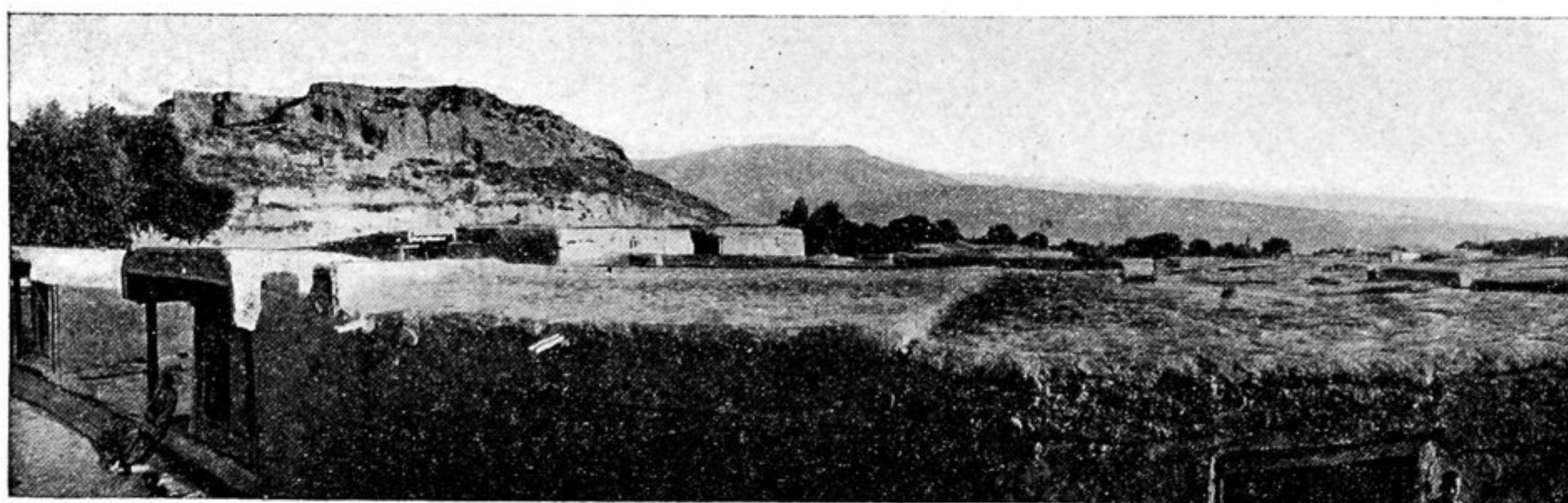


Fig. 481.—Iori Kurgan.

loess steppe near the kurgan Karaul Tepe, between Balyakandose and Rojevat, that kurgans are seen from it. As Kavast junction with the Tashkent Railroad is approached they become numerous, and from there on to Samarkand abound, because the area is all loess. The following sketch outlines are typical ones selected from a larger number. As their forms are in general rounded, it would seem that few of these kurgans are not so recent as those for instance on the Murg-ab delta; and it seems possible, since it is a region of uptilted piedmonts, there may be examples of great antiquity among them, though only one (Kara Tepe, western) of those examined was free from glazed ware on the surface.

Four of these—Kara Tepe (western), Eeman Tepe, and two river-cut mounds at Millitinskaya—deserve special mention; the first two because of their great size, the second two (fig. 485) because of their physiography.

KARA TEPE (WESTERN).

Kara Tepe (western) lies a few hundred feet south of the railroad, a little over 1.5 miles west of Obruchovo Station. Its citadel rises over 70 feet above its northern base and about 65 feet above the general level of the plain, and stands in