

east breeze raised from the dug-up rubbish-heap, to mark and carefully tabulate every inscribed piece. Yet it was obviously necessary to keep accurate record of the relative position in which each object was found; for this might help to establish the chronological order and possibly the internal connexion of the dispersed documents. For three long working days I had to inhale the odours of this antique dirt and litter, still pungent after so many centuries.

The diversity in form and material of the documents was quite as remarkable as their good preservation. The first few hours' work brought to light complete Kharoshthi documents on leather (Fig. 42). The oblong sheets of carefully prepared sheepskin, of which altogether two dozen were recovered, showed different sizes but were always folded up in the same way into neat little rolls. The Kharoshthi text covering the inner surface is usually written in a clear clerical hand and the black ink has remained very fresh. At the head of each document I could read with certainty the same introductory formula already referred to as indicating official origin. The dating is given separately below, usually only by month and day.

Still more interesting information as to clerical practice was yielded by the abundant finds of Kharoshthi tablets. Many of those unearthed here still retained intact the original clay seals and strings with which they had been fastened (Fig. 44). There could be no doubt that wood was the general stationery. It was hence particularly fortunate that I could now definitely ascertain all technicalities connected with its use.

The wedge-shaped tablets (Fig. 38) which were in favour for short communications, especially those of a quasi demi-