



CLAY IMPRESSIONS OF CLASSICAL SEALS, FROM KHAROSHTHI TABLETS.

CHAPTER XXV

DISCOVERIES IN AN ANTIQUE RUBBISH HEAP

THE excavations previously described plainly showed me that the ancient houses of this site had been cleared by their last inhabitants, or soon after their departure, of everything possessing intrinsic value. It was evident that I must base my hopes for further archæological finds mainly on any rubbish remains which might have been left behind. These hopes received gratifying confirmation in the course of a reconnaissance to ruins reported north of my camp. I sighted on that occasion over half-a-dozen groups of old structures scattered over an area of about three and a half miles from south to north and more than two miles across. In one ruin, greatly decayed and in no way attracting special attention, I had come upon a number of bleached tablets lying exposed, and a little digging had within half an hour brought to light nearly thirty inscribed pieces. Among them there were two novelties which, though small in size, could not fail to arouse my utmost interest. One was a fragment of a narrow piece of wood showing Chinese characters; the other a small strip of well-prepared leather, also fragmentary, with a line of Kharoshthi characters recording a date. These finds clearly betokened a rich deposit, and as the ruin in