

I had every reason to feel deeply grateful to the Viceroy and the Indian Government for the generous consideration thus shown to me and my work. But the period of seven months' stay in England, to which my deputation was at first limited, proved, as I had feared, wholly insufficient for the task. Two successive extensions which the Secretary of State, after reference to the Government of India, kindly sanctioned, added to the above period an aggregate of ten months. By dint of great exertions I could thus complete while in England those important portions of my task for which it was indispensable to have ready access to my archaeological finds deposited in the British Museum, as well as to the manifold expert help I needed for their detailed study and reproduction. The difficulty of these labours had been considerably increased by the uncertainty as to the length of time available for them. Yet before I left England I had managed to conclude the arrangements for the decipherment and publication of all the varied finds of MSS. and documents; to prepare and pass through the press the numerous plates of antiques; to supervise the drawing, &c., of the detailed map from original surveys which accompanies this work, and, last but not least, to bring out my *Sand-buried Ruins of Khotan*, which in many respects has formed a necessary preparation and complement to the present work.

After my return to India at the close of 1903 I devoted every moment of leisure I could spare from my duties as Inspector-General of Education and Archaeological Surveyor, North-west Frontier Province and Baluchistān, to continued work on my report. But in spite of all efforts its publication might have been delayed for years, had not the Government of India, in order to enable me to resume my explorations in Chinese Turkestan in the spring of 1906, been induced to set me free once more by the grant of six months' special duty from October of last year. It was during these busy winter months in Kashmīr, while many practical preparations for my new journey claimed attention, that the greater part of my text was written.

From the reasons which explain why this final report could not be presented earlier, I now turn with pleasure to the duty of recording my acknowledgements to those scholars and friends without whose valuable collaboration and kind help this work could not have been completed in its present form. First among them I must mention my artist friend, Mr. FRED. H. ANDREWS, late Principal of the Mayo School of Art, Lahore, and now Director of the Art Department, Battersea Polytechnic, whose devoted exertions have effectively furthered my labours ever since my return from Chinese Turkestan. His wide knowledge of ancient Indian art, especially of the Graeco-Buddhist style, his familiarity with the products of many old Eastern industries, and his own high artistic abilities, exceptionally qualified him to assist me in the arrangement, description, and illustration of my collection of antiques. The detailed descriptive list of these included in the report is wholly his work, though, having myself checked and revised it, I must accept full responsibility for its contents, and in particular for the data as to the origin of individual antiques. Without the painstaking accuracy and fullness of Mr. Andrews' descriptions it would probably have been impossible for me to complete my report at a time when some six thousand miles separated me from my collection. The value of Mr. Andrews' descriptive list will be all the more appreciated by students of the early arts and industries of Central Asia since, according to a decision of the Indian Government, the whole of the archaeological finds will now be distributed between the museums of Calcutta and Lahore and the British Museum. As comparison of the original objects will thus be difficult, their use for future researches will mainly depend on the details furnished by the descriptive list and on the illustrations given in the plates. For the preparation of the latter and for the investigation of all questions affecting the technical and art aspects of my finds, Mr. Andrews' expert help and advice have been of the utmost value to me. His unwearied assistance did not cease after I left England, and