

has greatly facilitated the passing through the press of these volumes. Besides the sketches and diagrams reproduced among the illustrations, I owe to Mr. Andrews' artistic skill the black and white drawing which has furnished the vignette for the title-page. My volumes could scarcely issue under a more felicitous emblem than this faithfully restored enlargement of the figure of Pallas Promachos as seen in several of the ancient seal impressions in clay excavated by me.

I shall always associate the remembrance of the labours given to the elucidation of my archaeological finds with the British Museum, where they found their first resting-place. I may hence fittingly record in this place my obligations to its authorities who readily accorded them shelter. Both in the Coin Department and in that of Mediaeval Antiquities, where my collection was successively accommodated, I enjoyed exceptional facilities for its arrangement, &c., MR. C. H. READ, Keeper of the latter Department, proving in particular a most helpful adviser.

I owed these facilities in the first place to the kind help of my friend Prof. E. J. RAPSON, then Assistant Keeper of the Coin Department, who during my absence in India charged himself also with the care of my collection. It was with a feeling of keen relief that I received the same friend's offer to undertake what from the first I had recognized as the most difficult of the philological tasks resulting from my explorations,—the decipherment and publication of the mass of Kharoṣṭhī documents on wood and leather recovered from the Niya Site. No scholar could have been better qualified for this arduous work. Prof. Rapson's preliminary papers show the advance he has already made in the task<sup>10</sup>. I owe it to Prof. Rapson's kindness that in chap. XI I have been able to indicate some results of his labours possessing special antiquarian bearings. The full publication of these documents, for which Prof. Rapson has been fortunate enough to secure the assistance of two distinguished *savants*, M. E. SENART, Membre de l'Institut, the decipherer of so many important Indian epigraphical records, and M. l'Abbé A. BOYER, had to be reserved for a separate volume which is to follow this report at a date that cannot yet be specified.

For the MSS. and documents written in Brāhmī characters, and showing texts partly in Sanskrit, partly in two non-Indian languages, Dr. A. F. R. HOERNLE, C.I.E., was from the first marked out as the most competent editor. The eminent Indologist has completed his edition of these finds. It would have been difficult to provide for their publication in connexion with this report except by a separate volume; and as Dr. Hoernle has recently undertaken, under the auspices of the India Office, the editing of a series in which all previous MS. acquisitions from Eastern Turkestan entrusted to his care are to be published, the inclusion in it of those Brāhmī texts has appeared more convenient. In the meantime Dr. Hoernle has placed at my disposal a valuable analysis of the Brāhmī documents and inscriptions, which has been of great help in describing these finds in chapters IX and XII<sup>11</sup>, and for which I wish to offer here my special thanks.

Among the Appendices contributed to my report there is none for which I feel more deeply grateful than that in which M. ÉD. CHAVANNES, Membre de l'Institut, has with masterly clearness analysed my finds of Chinese documents and inscriptions. It is not for me to appraise the exceptional qualifications which have rendered M. Chavannes the leading authority on all Chinese sources of information concerning the history and geography of Central Asia. The great help I have derived from his annotated translations of those finds, as well as from

<sup>10</sup> See below, pp. 326 sqq., 364 sqq.

<sup>11</sup> See below, pp. 257 sqq., 295 sqq., 439 sq.