

The extent of these explorations is sufficiently indicated by the length of time spent over constant travel and field-work, more than two years and a half, and by the aggregate marching distance of close on ten thousand miles. As to the importance of the results achieved, it will be enough to mention that it was recognized by the Royal Geographical Society, soon after my return at the commencement of 1909, with the award of the highest distinction in its gift, the Founder's Gold Medal. Owing to the abundance of interesting discoveries made on this expedition, it will take years to complete the full scientific publication of its results in spite of the help afforded by the collaboration of a large number of savants. Even then such a Detailed Report will, by reason of its bulk and cost, necessarily remain beyond the reach of the general public.

I fully realize the necessity of enlisting the interest of this wider public for a field which has yet much to reveal as regards the far-spread influence exercised by the ancient civilization, religion, and arts of India—a field, too, in which British scientific enterprise was rightly the first to assert itself. I feel, therefore, grateful for the permission accorded to me by His Majesty's Secretary of State for India to publish independently the present narrative. I have endeavoured to make it not merely a descriptive record of my personal experiences and observations amidst some of the most forbidding deserts and highest mountain ranges of Asia, but to give in it also the first-fruits of the abundant 'finds' which came to light from ancient sites abandoned for long centuries to the desert sands. I hope the photographs and panoramic views here reproduced from among the many taken by me, the colour plates showing specimens of ancient art objects, and the well-executed maps indicating the surveys effected over wide regions by my Indian assistants and myself, will help the reader to