

Rectangular tablets, of the official type, with closely fitting wooden covers serving as envelopes; double wedge-shaped tablets, as used ordinarily for short demi-official communications; oblong boards and labels of wood containing records and accounts of all kinds, were all represented among the remains of this first ruin.

The men soon learned to scrape the sand near the floor in the approved fashion and, content with announcing their finds, to leave the careful removal of them to me. Familiar as my previous explorations at the site had made me with the outward shapes of these records, I could not help feeling emotion, when I convinced myself on cleaning them from the fine sand adhering, that a number of the rectangular and wedge-shaped letter tablets still retained intact their original string fastenings, and a few even their seal impressions in clay (Fig. 95). How delighted I was to discover on them representations of Eros and a figure probably meant for Hermes, left by the impact of classical intaglios! To be greeted once more at these desolate ruins in the desert by tangible links with the art of Greece and Rome seemed to efface all distance in time and space.

Equally familiar to me were the household implements which this ruin yielded (Fig. 85). Remains of a wooden chair decorated with elaborate carvings in Graeco-Buddhist style, weaving instruments, a boot-last, a large eating tray, mouse-trap, etc., were all objects I could with my former experience recognize at the first glance, while the various methods employed in building the plaster and timber walls could be demonstrated at once for the practical instruction of Naik Ram Singh. In spite of the wind-erosion which had lowered the adjoining ground to a depth of fifteen feet below the original level and destroyed a portion of the structure, the kitchen and the remains of out-offices and rush-wall enclosures were still traceable.

Laden with the spoils of these first few hours' work, we retraced our steps in the afternoon to the ruins of a far larger structure quite close to our camping-place. Here the walls and any objects which may have once been left between them proved completely eroded, though the