

and splintered boards which once had formed coffins. Unfortunately the force of erosion had left no intact skeleton, not even a complete skull for measurement. Were these the remains of good Buddhists who preferred to be buried instead of being committed to the pyre after the Indian fashion, or was I here facing the burial-place of some heterodox community? There was nothing to give me the answer.

While I was still at this camp a select band under Ibrahim after three days' search succeeded in tracing a number of ruined dwellings south-eastward which, hidden away amidst high and closely packed sand-cones, had escaped discovery five years before. A reconnaissance by the Surveyor had fixed their position in a line stretching east and south-east of the southernmost ruins explored in 1901, and supplied sufficient reason for shifting my camp thither on October 27th. No camels were available, and once more I had to fall back upon my labourers for the transport of the most needful camp-kit and what water we had left in tanks and skins. Then after a tiring tramp of some five miles under loads we set vigorously to work, and by the end of a second day these eight or nine dwellings with their out-houses and cattle-sheds had been searched.

Most of them were small and poorly built, as befitted the homesteads occupying what was evidently the easternmost fringe of the ancient settlement. Others on island-like 'witnesses,' rising over ground which had been lowered by wind erosion fully twenty feet below its original level (Fig. 99), were too clear of drift sand to retain much of antiquarian value. One large ruin, however, had fared better and, having evidently been occupied by a person of some consequence, yielded up Kharoshthi tablets in numbers. Fences and groves of fruit trees near it were remarkably well preserved; in one of the latter I found the bleached trunk of a mulberry tree still rising to some fourteen feet in height, while remains of thick vines lay twisted beneath the sand.

A strong north-east wind was blowing during these days, and the fine sand driven before it made the work of