

TWO PERSEPOLITAN CASTS IN THE U. S. NATIONAL MUSEUM.

By CYRUS ADLER.

A private expedition was sent out from England with the assistance of Lord Saville, in the winter of 1891, for the purpose of securing molds of the sculptures and inscriptions at Persepolis.

Although frequently drawn, and even photographed,* it was important that these splendid monuments of Persian sculpture should be presented to the archaeologist and student of art in a more worthy form.

Some excavations were found necessary in order to uncover sculptures which were partially or wholly buried. These were made under the direction of Mr. Herbert Weld Blundell, whose observations are recorded in an interesting paper read before the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists.†

Under date of March 10, 1892, the Hon. Truxton Beale, then U. S. minister to Persia, in a communication to the late Hon. James G. Blaine, Secretary of State, announced that he had obtained permission from the Persian Government to remove some objects from Persepolis for the U. S. National Museum. Upon reaching Persepolis, however, Mr. Beale saw that nothing very characteristic could be obtained without grossly defacing the ruins. The detached parts that had fallen to the ground were huge drums and capitals of columns, each of which weighed many tons. Their transportation across the desert and two ranges of mountains was therefore out of the question.

When Mr. Beale arrived at Persepolis, he found that Mr. Blundell was already engaged in taking molds of the bas-reliefs and cuneiform inscriptions on the walls, for the British Museum. Mr. Blundell presented to Mr. Beale two molds for the U. S. National Museum. These were shipped to Washington and there cast. These two molds were the first ever taken of Persepolitan inscriptions.

* Die achämenidischen und sassanidischen Denkmäler und Inschriften von Persepolis, etc. * * * zum ersten Male photographisch aufgenommen von F. Stolze. Herausgegeben auf Veranlassung des fünften internationalen Orientalisten-Congresses zu Berlin. 2 Bde. Berlin, 1882.

† See Proceedings of the Congress (London 1893), vol. 11, pp. 537-559. The molds were made by Mr. Giuntini and are for sale by Mr. Cecil H. Smith, 3 The Avenue, Fulham Road, London, SW.

The paper molds were most carefully made and the Museum modelers succeeded in securing excellent casts, as the accompanying plates show.

A Spanish diplomat, Garcias Silva Figueroa, who was sent as ambassador to Goa, a fortified Portuguese settlement on the west coast of India, about 250 miles from Bombay, by Philip III, had his interest excited by some monkish tradition and stopped on his way back at Persepolis. "He was on the ground in 1618 and was the first, not only to put on record any description of the ruins that even approached sober accuracy, but also to give an account of the strange characters that covered them." (Francis Brown.)*

In view of this fact it is not without interest that the first mold taken at this place should have been brought back to the United States by an American in the diplomatic service of his country.

Mr. Blundell's work was eminently successful. In a letter from London, under date of August 30, 1892, he wrote:

They (the moldings) have all arrived safely and they comprise nearly all the best known examples of the bas-reliefs at the group of palaces and halls at Persepolis and the figures of Cyrus at Meshed Murghab.

The inscription on pl. 1 is in the language of Ancient Persia, and is written in the Persian cuneiform character. It was engraved at the command of Artaxerxes (III) Ochus, who reigned 358-344 B. C., or, according to some, from 359-338 B. C.

Ochus was a ruler of great vigor, and under him the Empire took a new lease of life. Phœnicia and Cyprus, which had been Persian colonies, rebelled, but he reduced them to submission. Egypt he reconquered. The accession of Ochus to the throne was marked by his murder of three brothers; according to some, of his entire family. His own death was by poison at the hands of his vizier.

The inscription is well known and has been frequently translated. †

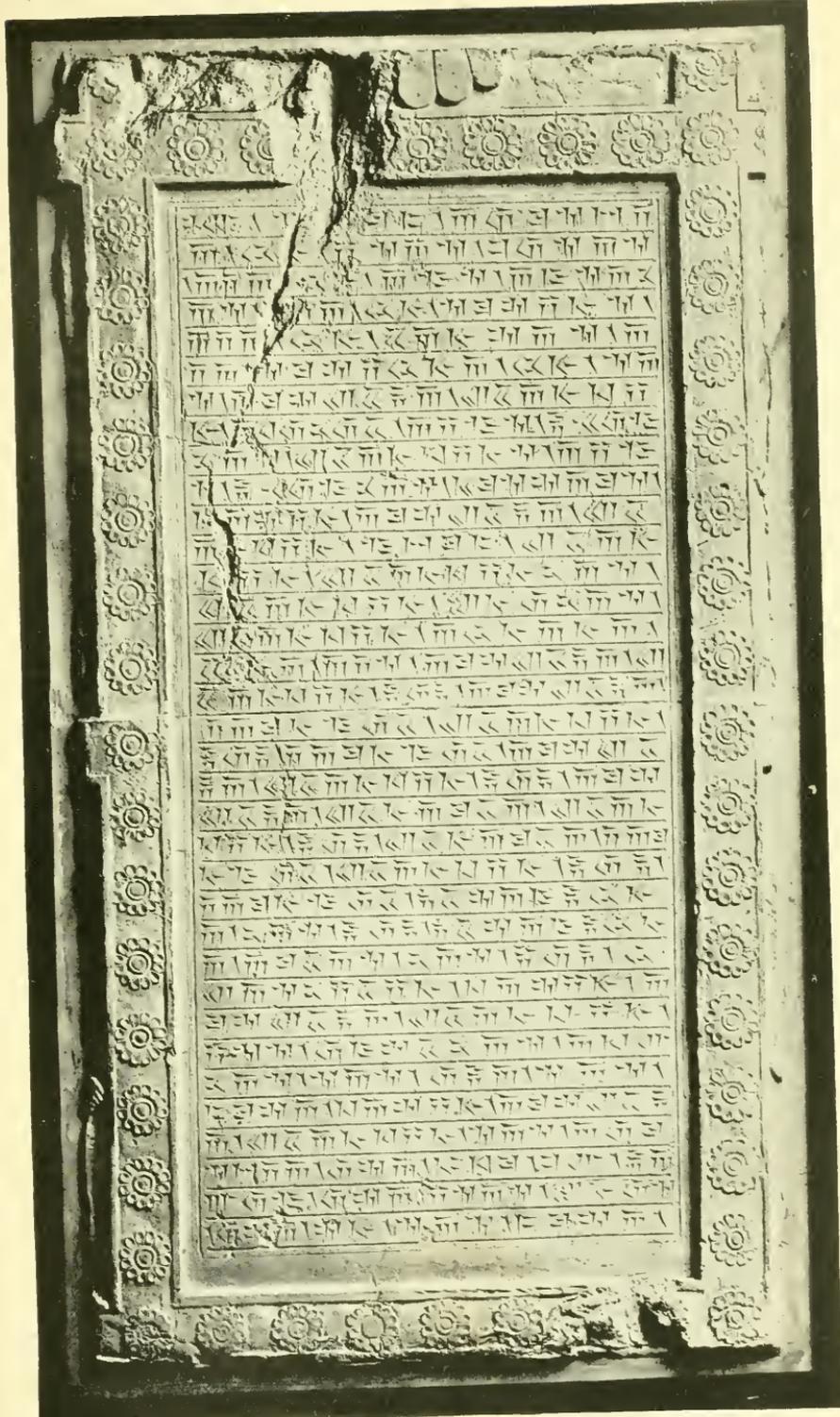
Most of the Achaemenian building inscriptions have the same style.

In Persepolis there are on the north side of Artaxerxes's Palace three identical old Persian inscriptions. The present inscription is, however, that from the west staircase. ‡

* His work, *De rebus Persarum epistola*, was published at Antwerp in 1620.

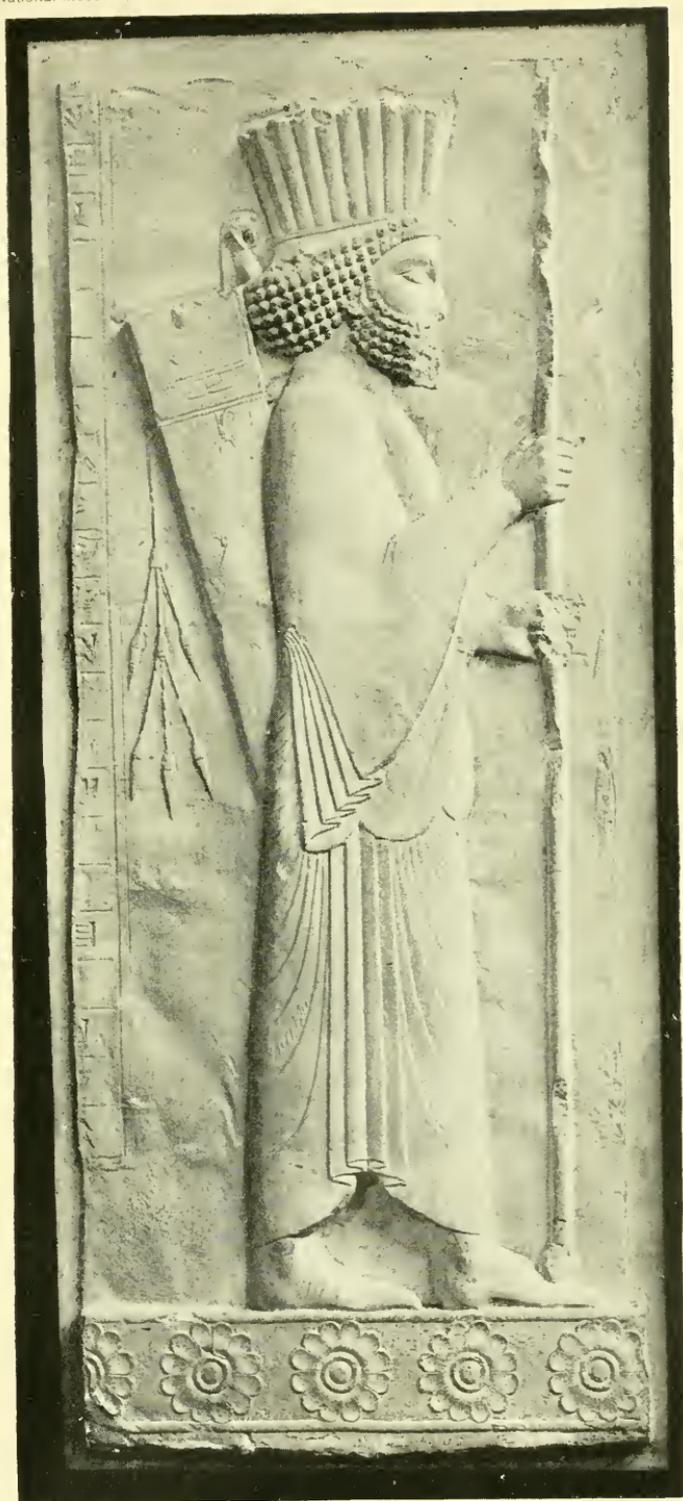
† Theodor Benfey: *Die persischen Keilinschriften mit Uebersetzung und Glossar*, Leipzig, 1847, p. 67 ff. Here it is wrongly ascribed to his predecessor. Oppert, *Journal Royal Asiatic Soc.*, Vol. x, p. 297. Rawlinson, *ibid.*, p. 341. *Die altpersischen Keilinschriften im Grundtexte, mit Uebersetzung, Grammatik und Glossar*, von F. Spiegel, zweite vermehrte Auflage, Leipzig, 1881, p. 128 f. The most recent translation of the inscription is by F. H. Weissbach and W. Bang. "Die altpersischen Keilinschriften" Leipzig, Hinrichs, being Vol. x., Pt. 1, of the *Assyriologische Bibliothek* of Friedrich Delitzsch and Paul Haupt, pp. 46, 47.

‡ Published by Flandin & Coste, vol. 3, pl. 125. Photographed by Stolze, vol. 1, pp. 26, 27, 28, 41, 47, and 48. See Weissbach, p. 9. Spiegel states (p. 128) that the inscription is given by Rich, in *Nineveh and Persepolis*, Pl. XXIII; on p. 69 in the footnote he says of Rich (Babylon and Persepolis, Pl. XXIII): "The text he employed, however, was not that of Rich, but of a similar inscription on the east wall, copied by Westergaard and published by Lassen."



INSCRIPTION OF ARTAXERXES III OCHUS.

From a cast presented to the U. S. National Museum by Hon. Truxton Beale, United States minister to Persia.



BAS-RELIEF FROM PERSEPOLIS.

From a cast presented to the U. S. National Museum by Hon. Truxton Beale, United States minister to Persia.

The following is a translation of the inscription:

A great god is Auramazda, who created this earth, who created that heaven, who created mankind, who gave prosperity to mankind, who made me, Artaxerxes, king, the sole king of multitudes, the sole ruler of multitudes.

Thus speaks Artaxerxes, the great king, the king of kings, the king of countries, the king of this earth. I am the son of King Artaxerxes, Artaxerxes (was) the son of King Darius, Darius (was) the son of King Artaxerxes, Artaxerxes (was) the son of King Xerxes, Xerxes (was) the son of King Darius, Darius was son of (one) named Hystaspes, Hystaspes was son of (one) named Arshama, the Achamenide.

Thus speaks the King Artaxerxes: "This structure of stones I have built for myself."

Thus speaks the King Artaxerxes: "May Auramazda and the god Mithra protect me, and this land, and what I have made."

The other cast (Pl. 2) is no doubt a relief, "representing one of the royal bodyguards, probably one of the 10,000 immortals described by Herodotus, of whom 9,000 had at the end of their spears a silver apple, 1,000 a golden apple. He wears long drapery, sandals, and an upright quilted headdress; over his shoulders is slung a bow and quiver, and in his hands he holds upright a spear which terminates in a ball (probably the silver apple). This figure closely resembles the figures in the frieze of enameled bricks found by Dieulafoy at Susa, and now in the Louvre. It is from the stairway on the southeast side of the Palace of Darius." Height, 8 feet 8 inches; width, 2 feet 8 inches.*

LIST OF CASTS MADE FROM MOLDS SECURED AT PERSEPOLIS.

1. Throne relief, 25 feet 3 inches high, 9 feet 5 inches wide.
2. Stairway of Artaxerxes Ochus. Height, 7 feet 2 inches; length, 44 feet.
3. Figures ascending staircase representing persons bringing offerings to the king. Height, 4 feet 7 inches; width, 4 feet 11½ inches.
4. Frieze of figures and animals decorating the passage leading to stairway on the north side of the Hall of Xerxes. Height, 4 feet; length, 50 feet 1 inch.
5. Part of frieze belonging to same series. Height, 4 feet; length, 8 feet 4 inches.
6. Cyrus. Height, 9 feet 7 inches; width, 5 feet 1½ inch.
7. Immortal guard. Height, 8 feet 8 inches; width, 2 feet 8 inches.
8. King stabbing a monster. Height, 8 feet 4 inches; width, 4 feet 7 inches.
9. King stabbing a lion. Height, 8 feet 4 inches; width, 4 feet 7 inches.
10. Lion. Height, 1 foot 9 inches; width, 2 feet 3 inches.
11. Inscription of Xerxes. Height, 5 feet; width, 2 feet.
12. Base of a column.

* Flandin et Coste, III, pl. 1, 114, 115, general view; pl. 122 in general restoration. Stolze, I, pl. 44. Catalogue of casts of sculpture from Persepolis and the neighborhood, p. 10.