



COIN OF ARTAXIAS, KING OF ARMENIA

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supposes, but represent in abbreviation the name of the city where the coin was struck, *ΑΝΔΗδεων*, and that it is the words *ΑΡΤΕΜΙ · ΠΕΡΤ*, for *Αρτεμιδος · Περγαίας*, which allude to the figure of the Diana of Perga, whose worship was doubtless cultivated by the people of Andeda, as is proved by the coins described in the beginning of this letter, where we find the legend complete.

I remain, &c.,

H. P. BORRELL.

Smyrna, 22nd January, 1839.

[Read before the Numismatic Society, 25th April, 1839.]

II.

COIN OF ARTAXIAS, KING OF ARMENIA.

[In a Letter to the Editor.]

SIR,

DESIROUS to contribute to your valued Journal, I beg to offer a description, accompanied by an impression, of a very remarkable coin of Germanicus, which came into my possession some short time ago, but which passed into the hands of Mr. Steuart, and I believe is now in some collection at Paris. The following is a description of the coin :—

Obv.—GERMANICVS · CAESAR · T. ... Naked head in profile of Germanicus to the right.

R.—Two youthful figures standing; behind the one is inscribed GERMANICVS, and behind the other, ARTAXIAS. Germanicus, in military costume, holds in his left hand a lance, and with his right hand is placing a *tiara* on the head of the second figure, who is standing front face. *R.* 4. Weight $48\frac{1}{2}$ grains (English). (See Plate I. fig 1.)

The youthful figure, here represented receiving a tiara

from the hands of Germanicus, is Zeno, son of Polemon, king of Pontus, who received the name of 'Artaxias,' from Artaxata, the capital city of Armenia, when the Armenians accepted him as their sovereign, at the instigation of the Romans commanded by Germanicus. For an explanation of this coin, it is sufficient to quote a passage from Tacitus, and the reader will be struck with the harmony which exists between the subject on the coin, and the account of the event given us by the historian.

Speaking of the difficulties experienced in Syria from the conduct of Piso, Tacitus says: "He [Germanicus] was fully assured of the proceedings [of Piso], but Armenia claimed his first attention. He hastened, without loss of time, to regulate the affairs of that kingdom—a kingdom where caprice and levity marked the national character, and the situation of the country encouraged the inconstancy of the people. Armenia borders a great length of way upon the Roman provinces; then stretches to a vast extent as far as the territory of the Medes. Hemmed in by two great empires, that of Parthia and Rome, the Armenians are never steady to either, but with their natural levity, alternately at variance with both: with the Romans, from rooted aversion: with the Parthians, from motives of ambition and natural jealousy. In the present juncture, the people were fixed on Zeno, the son of Polemon, king of Pontus. The young prince had shown, from his earliest youth, a decided inclination to Armenian manners. The sports of the chase were his favourite amusements. He delighted in carousing, festivals, and all the pastimes of savage life. For these qualities he was high in esteem, not only with the populace, but also the grandees of the nation. In this disposition of men's minds, Germanicus entered the city of Artaxata, and, amidst the

acclamations of the people, *placed the diadem on the head of Zeno*. The Armenians paid homage to their new master, and, in the ardour of their zeal, proclaimed him king, by the name of *Artaxias*, in allusion to the place of his coronation.”¹

Hence this coin was struck to commemorate an important act of the Roman arms in the East, in the 771st year of Rome, or B.C. 18, and was one of the last of the many splendid services rendered by Germanicus to his country, as he died shortly after, a victim to the jealousy of that subtle monster Tiberius.

The coin was brought to me from Kaïsar, the ancient Cæsarea of Cappadocia, where it may have been struck, or perhaps in some other Asiatic mint, and I believe is unique.

I remain, your obedient humble servant,

H. P. BORRELL.

Smyrna, January 19, 1839.

[Read before the Numismatic Society, 23d May, 1839.]

¹ “Nota hæc Germanico; sed præverti ad Armenios instantior cura fuit. Ambigua gens ea antiquitus hominum ingeniis, et situ terrarum, quo, nostris provinciis late prætenta, penitus ad Medos porrigitur; maximisque imperiis interjecti et sæpius discordes sunt, adversus Romanos odio, et in Parthum invidiâ. Regem illâ tempestate non habebant, amoto Vonone: sed favor nationis inclinabat in Zenonem Polemonis regis Pontici filium, quod is, primâ ab infantiâ, instituta et cultum Armeniorum æmulatus, venatu, epulis et quæ alia barbari celebrant, procures plebemque juxta devinxerat. Igitur Germanicus in urbe Artaxatâ approbantibus nobilibus, circumfusâ multitudine, insigne regium capiti ejus imposuit: cæteri venerantes regem, Artaxiam consalutavère; quod illi vocabulum indiderant ex nomine urbis.”—*Annales, lib. ii. cap. lvi.*

Lipsius observes on the concluding sentence, *Ex nomine urbis*, “Mirum, cum jam ante plures reges eo nomine fuerint.” And Ryck remarks, “Vix inducor, ut a Taciti manu profecta credam ultima verba. Nam Zeno Artaxias appellatus non ab urbe Artaxata, ut hic dicitur, sed a conditore regni, seu primo Armeniæ rege Artaxia.”—[EDITOR.]