

each under a deputy of the satrap. The provinces were subject to the satraps, and the satraps were subject to the king. The duties of the provincial subjects were to furnish men for the royal army, ships for the royal navy, and money for the royal treasury. The provinces were joined to the capital, Susa, by military roads, the most important of which was the great royal road from Susa to Sardis, fifteen hundred miles long. The person of the king was exalted above that of other men. He sat upon a throne made of gold, silver and ivory. His garments were of richest silk. To serve him was the highest mark of nobility. To minister to his comfort, one dignitary was chosen to carry the royal parasol, another the royal fan, while other officers were appointed to perform other equally honourable duties.

Persian Army and Navy.—The chief support of the royal authority was the army drawn from the different provinces. When called together, it was marshalled by nations, each with its own costume and subject to royal officers. The footmen were armed with the sword, the spear, and their favourite weapon, the bow, in the use of which they were expert. The cavalry was an important branch of the army, and was very effective when fighting upon an open plain. The choicest part of the Persian army was the "Ten Thousand Immortals," so called because their numbers were perpetually maintained. On the sea the Persians were able to gather from their subjects a large number of ships, mostly biremes (ships with three banks of oars) armed with iron bows. With such an army and navy the Persians had already conquered Asia, and hoped to conquer Greece and Europe.

Persian Civilization.—As the Persians were chiefly a conquering and ruling people, they were not distinguished for their intellectual achievements. Whatever art they possessed was mostly a mere reproduction of that of Assyria and Babylon. Their architecture and sculpture, as seen in the ruins of Persep'olis and other places, show no evidences of marked originality. While using an Aryan speech, the Persians adopted for writing the wedge-shaped characters of their predecessors. They made no contributions to science;