

## STONE FROM SPAIN

### *Marmor Schiston, Broccatello*

FROM Tortosa in Spain came the Marmor Schiston of the ancients, a richly-coloured fossiliferous marble. In colour it is a mixture of deep yellows and dull reds and purples, with innumerable fossils of a pale translucent brownish tint. The dull reds, yellows and purples vary to a great extent in depth of colour; sometimes they are pale and washed out, and again deep and clear; while the reddish purple colouring of the ground is predominant.

Dioscorides, who mentions this marble, asserts that it came from Spain, and compares its colour to that of saffron. St. Isidore of Seville also refers to it.<sup>1</sup>

Marmor Schiston is known to the Italian stone-cutter as Broccatello, from the Italian *broccato*, ancient gold cloth or brocade, referring to its rich colouring and marking.

Broccatello was not only largely used in Rome but also in Naples, whither it was brought in larger quantities by the Spanish viceroys.

The marble is to be seen in Santa Maria Maggiore and Santa Cecilia in Rome, and is still quarried near Tortosa.

<sup>1</sup> Corsi, *op. cit.*