

## PREFACE

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marking, or of some other peculiarity, and which for the most part bear no reference to the true geological character of the stone or the locality whence it comes.

There are several good collections of ancient marbles in Europe that are well worth seeing. The finest of these is in the University Museum, Oxford, England, and is composed of 1,000 fine slabs collected by Faustino Corsi in 1825 and sold to S. Jarrett, a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, who in 1828 presented them to the University. This collection contains excellent examples of all the stones seen in Rome, and a good collection of Italian marbles, a few of which were also employed by the Romans. A duplicate collection belongs to the University of Rome. Two other smaller collections were made by Belli about 1857; one for Cardinal Antonelli which is dispersed; the other is now in the Musée Cinquantenaire at Brussels, and consists of about 800 fair-sized slabs. There is also a collection in the British Museum of some 600 pieces presented by Mrs. Aldworth. In the preparation of this book I have been most courteously afforded every opportunity of inspecting these interesting and important collections.

The study of collections, however, is most unsatisfactory, unless the specimens are of unusual size. Small pieces of a marble are very deceptive; for instance, a block of variegated marble a foot square when cut up would easily yield fifteen or twenty