

12 WHAT ROME WAS BUILT WITH

spoils of the more ancient temples and other buildings. Almost every building in Rome at the present day is resplendent with marble of endless variety and beauty.

During the reigns of the despot princes of Italy, marble was considered one of the choicest of spoils. Each prince, either ambitious to leave behind him a work bearing his name, or from a true love of art, or perhaps as an act of piety, built a church or chapel or some other building of importance, which was invariably decorated with costly stones.

During the Middle Ages, the Medici were the greatest patrons of the marble industry, and under the government of that house the quarries at Carrara were extensively developed.

Michelangelo many times visited Carrara, for the express purpose of choosing the material for work ordered by various members of that illustrious family. The quarries of jasper at Barga were also in the possession of the Medici, and supplied much of the gorgeous material employed in their church at Florence.

The great Sigismondo Malatesta of Rimini brought one hundred wagon loads of ancient marbles from S. Appollinare in Classe at Ravenna (the second richest marble city of the world) for the decoration of his own temple of S. Francesco at Rimini. The people of Ravenna complained bitterly to the Doge Francesco Foscari, saying that Sigismondo had despoiled their church. Sigismondo then sent two hundred gold florins to the Abate, which settled matters to the satisfaction of all parties.¹

The industry of the scarpellino is still a thriving one in Rome and many are the queer dusty little

¹ See *Sigismondo Malatesta*, by Edward Hutton.