

*Marmor Proconnesium, Marmor Cyzicum,  
Bianco e Nero Antico*<sup>1</sup>

Vitruvius says: 'In the house of Mausolus, a very powerful king of Halicarnassus, though all the ornaments are of Proconnesian marble, the walls are of brick.'<sup>2</sup> This proves to us that the marble was known and employed as early as the fourth century B. C., if not before.

Pliny<sup>3</sup> and Salmasius both mention this marble, the quarries of which were on the island of Proconnesus, later called Marmora, on account of its product; and the Propontis became known as the Sea of Marmora.<sup>4</sup>

The marble was also called Cyzican, because it was so extensively employed in the town of Cyzicus; as also in Constantinople, where it was especially valued and used during the reigns of Honorius and the younger Theodosius. There are several columns of it in the mosque of St. Sophia, which are the spoils of the Temple of Cybele at Cyzicus,<sup>5</sup> and Silentiarius, in describing the marbles of that mosque, says: 'The Proconnesian mountain which paves the whole wide floor lovingly lays down its back as a pathway for the foot of the beneficent Imperial City.'<sup>6</sup>

In ancient times Proconnesian marble was sent to Greece in large quantities to be employed for sarcophagi. At the present day the quarries supply Constantinople with slabs and blocks for the pavement of mosques and baths, and for tombstones.<sup>7</sup>

Some varieties of the marble are coarse and greyish, others white, and white with greyish stripes.

<sup>1</sup> Antique black and white.

<sup>2</sup> Vitruvius, Book ii (trans. Joseph Gwilt).

<sup>3</sup> Pliny, *op. cit.*, Book v. 44. <sup>4</sup> Champlin, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. <sup>6</sup> Paulus Silentiarius, *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> R. Walpole, *European and Asiatic Turkey*.