

## 18 WHAT ROME WAS BUILT WITH

along the banks of the great chasm into which the waters of the Aniene precipitate themselves, and shows horizontal beds of alternating tufa and travertine, attaining a thickness of nearly 500 feet'.<sup>1</sup> This stone is of quaternary recent and contemporaneous formation.<sup>2</sup> It was extensively employed by the Romans, especially before the introduction of marble, for all building purposes as also for sarcophagi.

The quarry most extensively worked during the Roman Empire was that of del Barco, situated rather above the Bagni delle Acque Albule, on the right of the river Aniene. The travertine of Tivoli is very porous, whitish or cream coloured, hardens under exposure, is easily sawn into slabs, is submissive to the chisel and an excellent building stone in every respect. It is sufficient to mention the Colosseum as a proof of its durability.

The Emperor Augustus largely employed this stone with the white marble of Carrara for building purposes and for innumerable restorations.

Travertine was employed in the construction of the Theatre of Marcellus, the Arch of Drusus, the tomb of Cecilia Metella,<sup>3</sup> and for the Colosseum, which was begun by Vespasian and completed by his son Titus. This Amphitheatre held 80,000 spectators, and, says Martial, 'every work of toil yields to Caesar's Amphitheatre; fame shall tell of one work for all.'<sup>4</sup>

Towards the end of the fourteenth century, Paul II built the Palazzo di Venezia with stones taken from the Colosseum; and in 1540 Paul III employed it for the Palazzo Farnese. The travertine of the

<sup>1</sup> *Building and Ornamental Stones*, by E. Hull.

<sup>2</sup> Jervis, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Epigrams of Martial, I, On the Amphitheatre (Bohn).