

out in the shape of pebbles. They are hard to work, but once worked they might grace sanctuaries of the gods, and they are especially fitted to adorn swimming-baths and fountains.<sup>1</sup>

Lampridius relates that Heliogabalus paved the courts of the Palace on the Palatine with stones of Lacedaemon and porphyry;<sup>2</sup> this particular mode of decoration of the luxurious Romans causes Seneca to say, 'Not contented with having riches, they trod them under foot,' and Statius declares, 'I trod regardless on a mass of wealth.' Quantities of this stone were cut up for making pavements and mosaics, and it was used most frequently in combination with the ancient red 'porphyry', and called *Opus Alexandrium*.

Serpentino Verde Antico was known to the Romans as *Lapis Lacedaemonius* because it was found in Lacedaemon; also as *Lapis Taygetus* because it was quarried from that mountain; as *Lapis Croceus*, from Croceae, a town near Mount Taygetus, and finally as *Lapis Spartanus*, Croceae being near Sparta. Procopius called the stone *Lapis Smaragdinus* on account of its green colour.

'At Levetsova, near the ancient Krakeae (or Croceae), between Sparta and Gythium, are old quarries of Labrador Porphyrite, dense olive-green masses of felsite with crystals of felspar, forming lode-like masses in micaceous shale.'<sup>3</sup> The French rediscovered these ancient quarries, which were worked both by the Greeks and Romans. The stone is extremely hard, and obtainable only in pieces of small dimensions, being employed almost entirely for pavements and inlaid work. Eurycles, the Spartan architect, is said to have used it in the decoration of the Baths of

<sup>1</sup> Pausanias, *op. cit.*, Book iii. 21. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ravestein Catalogue.

<sup>3</sup> *Stone*, vol. xxiv, No. 1, 1902.