

Mount Hymettus near Athens, and were more extensively worked by the Romans than the Greeks; partly because the bluish hue of the marble was the fashion in Rome, and partly because the quarries were nearer the sea than those of Pentelicus.

In early times Hymettian was used by the Greek sculptors, but when Parian was once known and appreciated, hardly any other marble was employed for fine pieces of work.

Strabo says that near Athens is quarried the beautiful Hymettian marble, as also the Pentelicon;¹ and Xenophon mentions that it was exported.

Pliny in speaking of the house of L. Crassus says: 'There were to be seen erected in the atrium four columns of marble from Mount Hymettus, which in his Aedileship he had ordered to be brought over for the decoration of the stage;² and this at a time, too, when no public buildings even as yet possessed any pillars made of that material.'³ Valerius, who wrote about this proceeding, considered it a great sign of weakness. That Hymettian was one of the first marbles brought to Rome is proved by Pliny's narration.

This marble is known to the Roman stone-cutters as *Marmo Greco Fetido* (fetid Greek marble) and *Marmo Cipolla* (onion marble), because when sawn or rubbed it emits a fetid odour.

From an inscription we learn that the quarries of this marble were imperial property.⁴ The colour is bluish white, the crystals large and brilliant, and it is nearly always banded or zoned with grey or bluish grey.

¹ Strabo, *op. cit.*, Book ix, chap. 1. 23.

² When in his capacity of Aedile he gave theatrical representations for the benefit of the public.

³ Pliny, *op. cit.*, Book xvii, chap. 1.

⁴ Bruzza, *op. cit.*