

68 WHAT ROME WAS BUILT WITH

as an ornamental addition to the luxuries of life'.
The sentiment of the average Roman was ¹—

Leave to the Greek his marble nymphs
And scrolls of wordy lore.²

This at least was the feeling during the earlier Republic, but after many years of stubborn resistance the Romans at last succumbed to the enchanting arts of Greece, which they at first despised, and later affected to despise; and 'at last', as a French writer says, 'they were forced to bow the head beneath the brilliant yoke of luxury; and Greece, industrious, learned and polite, subdued by the admiration which it extorted, the ignorant, unlettered and rude barbarians who had conquered her by force.'

Thus the Romans learnt the art of employing marble for sculpture and decoration; and from Greece and its islands they obtained the stupendous quantity with which they beautified their city, of which such an enormous amount still remains to be seen after two thousand years of plunder and destruction.

Marmor Batthium, Bigio Antico ³

Although grey marble was used so extensively in Rome, the ancient writers left us no information as to where it was quarried, or by what names it was known.

The only clue we have in regard to its name we owe to Blasius Caryophilus,⁴ who said that the two statues of the Dacian kings in the courtyard of the Capitoline Palace were of Marmor Batthium, which the Roman stone-cutters call Bigio Antico.

There are many varieties of the ancient grey

¹ Gardner, *op. cit.*

² Antique grey.

³ Macaulay.

⁴ Corsi, *op. cit.*