

manuscripts is under the care of the first and second archivists who have two assistants. Whatever work is done there, must be done with sunlight, for by a wise rule, no artificial lights of any kind are allowed within the place.

In the apartment formerly occupied by the once famous pharmacy of the monastery, are at present the printing and lithographing establishments. These had a wide name when the arts of printing and lithographing were still in their infancy, but now they are somewhat behind the times. Though the work turned out is good, it is done with machinery which was out of date half a century ago.

For many centuries Monte Casino was very rich, having had an immense revenue arising from the donations made to it by different Princes and Dukes, and also from the riches that were brought to it by many wealthy men who assumed the Benedictine habit. This income the monks spent in the cause of religion and in works of charity, a host of indigent people being dependent on the monastery for their daily subsistence. But now all this is changed; for Monte Casino is no longer the property of the monks, at least in the eye of the law. The government which now guides or misguides the destinies of Italy, has a wonderful penchant for taking care of what does not belong to it. Within the last twenty or thirty years it has taken under its kind protection nearly every convent and monastery in Italy, not to speak of the many churches that have also fallen a prey to it. Being composed for the most part of Jews and Freemasons, one of its chief objects is to destroy all religion; and being in the depths of bankruptcy, its motto is:—"Get money,—honestly if possible, but get it anyhow." The suppression of the monasteries, and the seizure of their revenues, offer a safe

and easy mode of satisfying these two paramount desires at one and the same time, and accordingly, without the least scruple, the government steps in and declares that the monastery belongs to the state, and not to the Order that built it. Still it would not at all wish to be set down as a legalized robbing institution, but tries to make the monks believe that it is all done for their own good. From the fact that all the members of the community have taken a vow of poverty, it concludes that they cannot legally hold any property; and lest anyone, taking advantage of this should attempt to run away with the monastery, the Government kindly takes charge of it, just to keep it for the monks like the frugal mother with the baby's dime.

Monte Casino, like the rest, is now the property of the Italian government. Only a few monks and lay brothers are allowed to remain *as caretakers*, and these have to depend for their support on other branches of the Order; for none of them except the Abbot and one or two others receive any stipend from the state in compensation for the revenues taken away from them. But though the palmy days of the Monastery are gone, the hospitality of the monks still continues to be offered to strangers with unaffected kindness and courtesy. Several suites of rooms are set apart for the accommodation of visitors, and a cordial welcome is never wanting. May this home of learning and piety—the cradle of the grand Order which has given to the Church no fewer than twenty-seven Popes, and five thousand canonized saints, be soon restored to its rightful owners! When the memory of the robber king and his infamous hirelings shall have been forgotten, may future generations see verified the hope of its illustrious well-wisher—
FLORENT!

—T. O. M. '91.

Rome, December, 1891

