

many figures are represented in this wonderful work of art : for when one begins to count the number that adorn even one of the stalls, he finds a multitude of them that had at first escaped his notice. Perfectly formed faces not as large as a ten cent piece peep from behind the leaves of plants, and miniature figures of birds and other small animals, as delicately carved as the larger statues, are scattered about everywhere. Stowed away in a corner behind one of the seats, there is a figure which deserves special notice. It was made by the fifteen year old son of one of the artists engaged in the finishing, and represents an ancient warrior in the act of giving a thrust with his sword. The set of the limbs and the look of fierceness and determination in the features, are brought out perfectly by the young artist, whose name and age are cut in the circular shield which the warrior holds above his head.

From the choir, two flights of stairs lead to the subterranean chapel, which is cut out of the solid rock of the mountain. It also is fitted up for a choir, and is finished in wood whose carving is almost on a par with that in the upper one. The floor is perhaps the most substantial in the world : for it is nothing else than the rock of the mountain whose surface is levelled and polished. Tasso, during his residence at Monte Casino, took a special delight in attending the services in this little chapel.

One of the most important parts of the monastery is the library which will always have a peculiar interest for the scholar, as the place in which many treasures of the Greek and Latin writers were preserved during the centuries which preceded the invention of printing. Even in the early history of the monastery, copies of the rarest MSS. were made by the monks. The library contains over 20,000 volumes, nearly all of which are of great value and interest. Among the manuscripts may be mentioned a translation of Origen's commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans which dates from the 6th century, a Virgil of the 10th century, and a Dante of the 14th. Besides works on Theology, Ecclesiastical History, Liturgy, &c., which one would naturally expect to find in such a place, there are several which treat of Rhetoric, Poetry, Philosophy, Mathematics, Physics and Astronomy, and this shows how zealous the early monks were for the

advancement of the Arts and Sciences. The earliest printed book dates from 1459, and is made of parchment. Next in age comes the "Works of Lactantius" which was printed in 1465 at the Benedictine monastery of Subiaco, by two Germans who first introduced the art of printing into Italy. It is the second book which was printed in Italy, and the copies of it are very rare, there being only those of Monte Casino, Subiaco, the Vatican, Berlin, and two or three others.

But among all the interesting things to be seen at Monte Casino, the Archives easily hold first place. Begun by St. Benedict himself, they can now boast of an age of nearly 14 centuries. They comprise 90,000 different documents written on parchment, of which about 800 are diplomas and charters of Emperors, Kings and Princes, confirming various grants and privileges conceded to the monastery from time to time. The earliest of these bears the date 884, and is signed by Ajo, Prince of the Lombards. Many of them have their seals in gold, and at the heads of others are the portraits of the Princes by whom they were granted. There is also a collection of all the Bulls issued by the Popes regarding the monastery, from the 11th century down to our own times. Among the many valuable letters preserved in this place, there is one written by St. Thomas Aquinas to the Abbot of Monte Casino. The manner in which he addresses the Abbot at the beginning of this letter, is held up by the Benedictines as an undeniable proof of their assertion that the Angelic Doctor wore the habit of their order in Monte Casino for some years before he became a Dominican. The register in which visitors sign their names is also kept in the Archives. Although containing very little other than proper names, it is still an object of great interest. In it are inscribed in an endless variety of characters, the names and addresses of people from all parts of the world. Very many of them are those of Americans and Englishmen, among whom may be mentioned the poet Longfellow and W. E. Gladstone. The latter, whose name is still kindly remembered at the monastery, wrote the single word "Floreat," and the former, that verse from his "Psalm of Life" which begins :—"Lives of great men all remind us." The work of interpreting and translating the ancient