

WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1910.

BRUMIDI, THE MICHAEL ANGELO OF THE CAPITOL

Italian Painter's Best Work Is Found in the Frescoes and Friezes of the Rotunda of the Capitol.

By JOSEPHINE GILLENWATER TIGHE.

(Excerpted from the August Fine Arts Journal.)
Constantino Brumidi has been referred to by lovers of his inimitable work as the "Michael Angelo of the Capitol." His magnificent frescoes, more especially the canopy and the frieze in the rotunda, are viewed each year with admiration and wonder by the thousands of tourists and art lovers who visit the National Capitol.

The rotunda guide explains to the attentive sightseer that Brumidi was an Italian; that he received \$20,000 for painting the canopy, and that, unfortunately, he died before finishing the frieze.

And that is about the sum total of the known history of the man who practically transformed the interior of the Capitol. The bare, staring walls blossomed into voluptuous beauty under the magic of his art; many of the stateliest rooms of the building bear the touch of his tireless brush, and testify to his consummate skill as a mural decorator.

Life Story Like Romance.
It is a strange fact that the encyclopedias, art biographies, and gazetteers do not contain the name of Constantino Brumidi—that he is excluded, as it were, from their halls of fame—and yet the life story of this artist whom the gods so favored with artistic cunning reads like a romance.

Constantino Brumidi was born in Rome June 20, 1855. His mother was an Italian and his father a Greek. When a very small child he evinced a taste for drawing, and a teacher was procured for him.

How swiftly and well he pursued his studies is evidenced by the fact that he was admitted as a student of painting and architecture at the Accademia di San Luca when only thirteen years of age. Here he applied himself perseveringly, surrounded by an atmosphere of art and with examples of the noblest works of the great masters constantly before his eyes. It was while at this academy that he began the study of the art of fresco; an art, by the way, in its highest elements almost forgotten. He also commenced the study of sculpture under Canova, and his plastic work attracted the attention of Thorwaldsen.

Attains Fame Early.

The art of fresco was the most attractive of the different branches that young Brumidi had delved into, and he entered with avidity into perfecting himself along this line. At thirty he had painted frescoes in several palaces of his native land, and at thirty-two came under the notice of Pope Gregory XVI, who commissioned him, with three other well-known Roman artists—Podesta, Cogniatti, and Capalti—to restore the Raphael frescoes in the loggia of the Vatican. This was indeed an honor for the young artist.

After the accession of Pius IX to the papal throne Brumidi painted that prelate's portrait for the Vatican gallery, and so highly did Pope Pius appreciate the work that he commissioned the artist to paint a replica for himself, and presented Brumidi with a gold medal.

Soon after Brumidi became a captain in the national guards, but continued his work upon the Vatican walls. In 1848, when Rossi was assassinated and Pius IX fled to Gaeta, Brumidi was ordered to execute commands that would turn the guns of his company upon the oppressed. This he positively refused to do, and at midnight his house was surrounded by cordons of soldiers, the artist-captain dragged from his bed and thrown into prison. Here he was confined for thirteen months. At the end of that time, through the intervention of the Pope, who had resumed his throne, Brumidi was released, with the understanding that he would at once and forever leave Italy.

Comes to America.

In 1849 Brumidi, then a man of forty-four, bade farewell to his native land and took passage for America. Arriving in New York, he had little difficulty in his work gaining recognition. His work of the most importance in New York is the altar piece, "The Crucifixion," in St. Stephen's Church. It is the largest painting in oils in the United States.

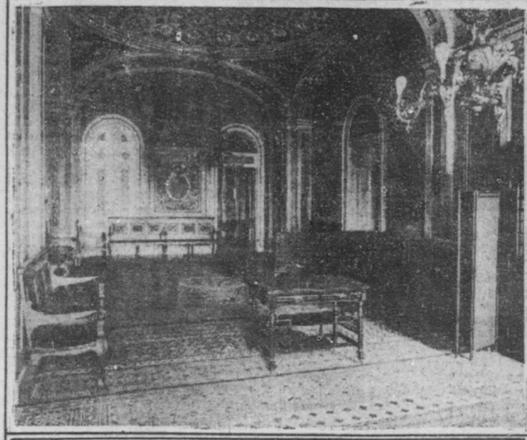
From New York he went to Mexico, where he executed the picture of the "Holy Trinity" in the cathedral in Mexico City. Upon the completion of this work he journeyed to Philadelphia, and there painted the notable pictures of St. Peter and Paul in the Philadelphia Cathedral.

On his way to Mexico, Brumidi had stopped for a time in Washington, and so charmed was he with the city that he decided to make it his permanent residence. In 1854, noting the adaptation of the walls of the Capitol to fresco, he asked permission to put on them some of his work. Gen. Meade, then in charge of the building, was not greatly inclined to grant the request, but persistent application on the part of Brumidi, who appreciated the tremendous possibilities, finally succeeded, and the Italian artist entered the Capitol—for life.

Example of Mural Work.

His first work was the decoration of the Agriculture Committee room, the central figure of the design being "Cincinnatus at the Plough." This work is considered to be the finest example of mural decoration in America. The fresco called forth such admiration that Brumidi was successively engaged to decorate the President's room, the state reception room, the Senate corridors, and other committee rooms.

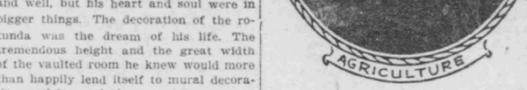
The vaulted corridors in the lower floor he skillfully ornamented in arabesque, after the manner of the Vatican loggia, in flowers, fruits, birds, and animal figures. The introduction of animal life into wall decoration was a departure in America and aroused some protest, but Brumidi continued the painting of them, securing the knowledge that the artists of the Renaissance, among them Raphael, laid all the kingdoms of nature under contribution. To-day these corri-



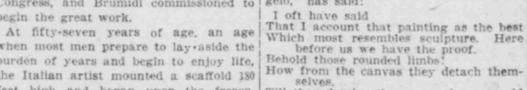
SENATE WAITING ROOM DECORATED BY BRUMIDI



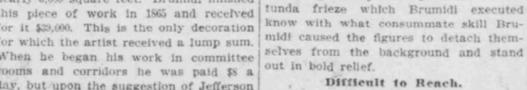
AGRICULTURE



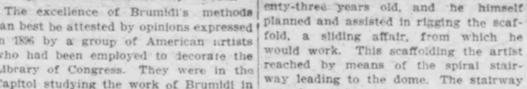
COMMERCE



WAR



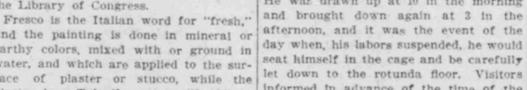
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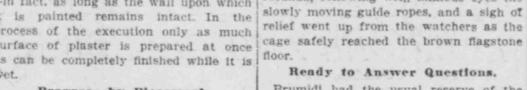
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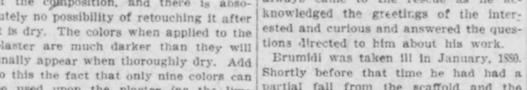
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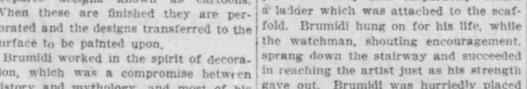
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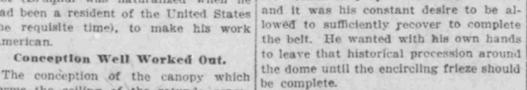
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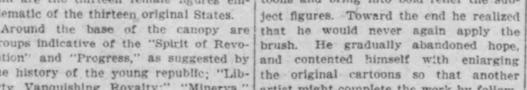
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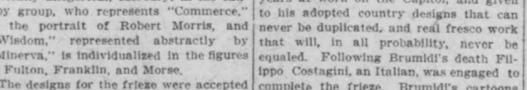
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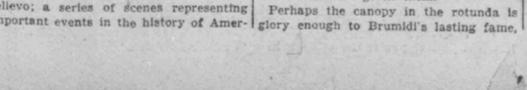
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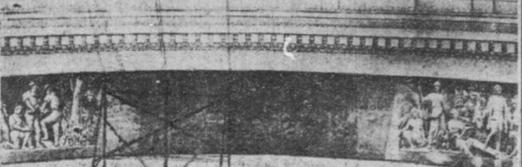
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CINCINNATUS AT THE PLOUGH - BY BRUMIDI - SAID TO BE THE FINEST EXAMPLE OF MURAL PAINTING IN AMERICA.



SENATE WAITING ROOM DECORATED BY BRUMIDI



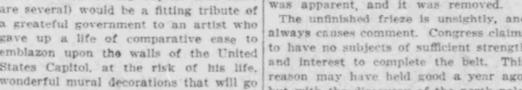
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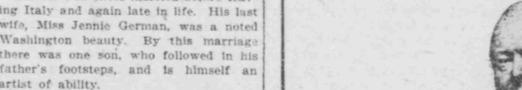
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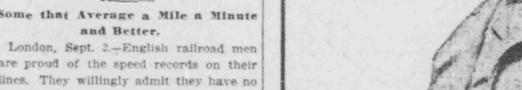
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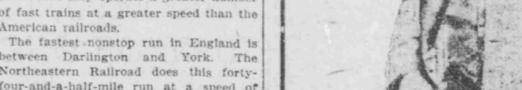
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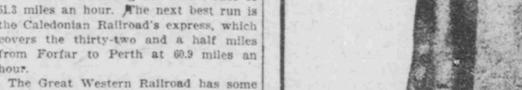
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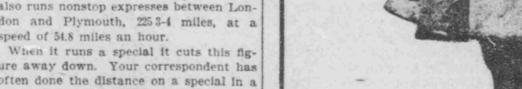
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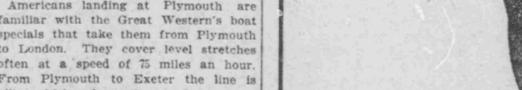
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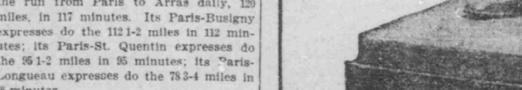
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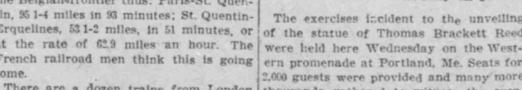
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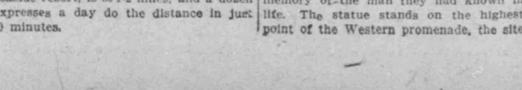
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MANUFACTURE OF SODA.

A Result of French Revolution—Discovery of Soda Lake in Africa, From the London Daily News.

The European powers have pretty well divided Africa between them, and it looks quite civilized on an up-to-date map, but apparently there are still big tracts which are terra incognita, judging from the announcement that a company is being formed to exploit a great lake of soda, discovered last year in the East Africa Protectorate.

If, as is said, it covers an area of some 40,000 square miles, it is by far the biggest lake in Africa, exceeding by 14,000 square miles the area of the Victoria Nyanza, and being capable of accommodating the whole of Scotland with it as an island, with at least 10,000 square miles of soda to spare.

The manufacture of soda is one of the most important of chemical industries, and those engaged in it will watch with interest the opening up of this immense source of supply. Time was when ocean plants supplied the raw material of soda, and it was the French Revolution which effected the first great revolution in the making of that necessary article of everyday use.

The National Convention, seeing France isolated from the rest of the world, created patriotic scientists to save the country from a threatened soda famine, and, as a result, Leblanc invented his process for the manufacture of soda from coal, lime, salt, and sulphuric acid.

RUSSIANS GREATEST LOVERS.

Hallie Ermine Rives-Wheeler Talks Enthusiastically of New Home.

"The Russians are the greatest lovers in the world," said Hallie Ermine Rives-Wheeler, author, who has just arrived from St. Petersburg, where her husband is in charge of the American embassy. "Of all the international marriages in Russia I do not know of any that are not happy. Russians have much sentiment as well as chivalry. They do not marry for money. They live by the heart, and that is the safest guide post on the road to happiness." Mrs. Rives-Wheeler talked enthusiastically of her new home.

"St. Petersburg is full of a charm all its own," she said. "A city of golden domes, bells and snow, and three-horse sleighs with velvet-capped coachmen five feet across in green or violet fur-lined leathers. There is a splendor and sparkle to the winter streets entirely unlike other cities I have seen. The houses are heated by birch wood in porcelain stoves. Their method of heating is perfect, and when I look out of my window it is hard to believe that it is 20 degrees below zero."

"Many sides of the life there have interested me, but for color and music and poetry of motion the royal ballet is completely satisfying."

"The long white nights of Russia seem strange to the foreigner. During June I could read and write without artificial light until 11 o'clock at night. People who go camping during that period have to paint their tents black so they can sleep."

FAST TRAINS IN EUROPE.

Some that Average a Mile a Minute and Better.

London, Sept. 3.—English railroad men are proud of the speed records on their lines. They willingly admit they have no long-distance trains like the New York-Chicago limited trains of the Pennsylvania and New York Central, but they boast that they operate a greater number of fast trains at a greater speed than the American railroads.

The fastest nonstop run in England is between Darlington and York. The Northeastern Railroad does this forty-four-and-a-half-mile run at a speed of 61.7 miles an hour.

The Great Central's expresses cover the twenty-two and a half miles between Leicester and Nottingham at the rate of 61.3 miles an hour. The next best run is the Caledonian Railroad's express, which covers the thirty-two and a half miles from Forfar to Perth at 60.9 miles an hour.

The Great Western Railroad has some remarkably fast trains. Its nonstop expresses cover the distance between London and Bristol, 118.14 miles, at a speed of 59 miles an hour. The Great Western also runs nonstop expresses between London and Plymouth, 225.34 miles, at a speed of 54.8 miles an hour.

When it runs a special it cuts this figure away down. Your correspondent has often done the distance on a special in a trifle under four hours, and once the management of the line offered to make the run in three hours and thirty-five minutes.

Americans landing at Plymouth are familiar with the Great Western's boat specials that take them from Plymouth to London. They cover level stretches often at a speed of 75 miles an hour. From Plymouth to Exeter the line is hilly, which reduces the speed.

The French railroad men, too, have some fast expresses that they may boast about. The Northern of France covers the run from Paris to Arras daily, 129 miles, in 117 minutes. Its Paris-Burgundy expresses do the 112.2 miles in 112 minutes; its Paris-St. Quentin expresses do the 95.12 miles in 85 minutes; its Paris-Longueueux expresses do the 78.34 miles in 78 minutes.

This summer the French railroads speeded up their Paris-Berlin expresses. The morning train from Paris is timed to the Belgian frontier thus: Paris-St. Quentin, 55.14 miles in 53 minutes; St. Quentin-Epernelles, 33.12 miles, in 31 minutes, or at the rate of 62.9 miles an hour. The French railroad men think this is going some.

There are a dozen trains from London to Birmingham, just 119 miles, that cover the distance in 120 minutes to the tick. From London to Brighton, a popular seaside resort, is 50.12 miles, and a dozen expresses a day do the distance in just 60 minutes.

The excellent incident to the unveiling of the statue of Thomas Brackett Reed were held here Wednesday on the Western promenade at Portland, Me. Seats for 2,500 guests were provided and many more thousands gathered to witness the exercises. There were many prominent visitors from Boston, New York, and other Eastern cities, who came to honor the memory of the man they had known in life. The statue stands on the highest point of the Western promenade, the site being a magnificent one, overlooking a great stretch of beautiful country.

The statue was modeled in Paris by Burr C. Miller, who not only worked from accurate photographs, but who had the advantage of having seen Mr. Reed many times during his Congressional career, and who met him frequently in New York after his retirement from public life. The memorial gives a fine idea of the statesman as he looked up to about two years before his death.

Portland's memorial to Thomas B. Reed, which was unveiled last Wednesday in presence of big crowd.

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GIRL INSURGENTS QUICKLY AT ODDS

Vain Attempt to Conserve the Beaux of the Town.

BACHELOR GIRLS ORGANIZED

Plan to Teach Young Men of Owensville, Ind., Their Duty—They Find It Better to Pay Fines Into the Treasury Than Be Neglected by the Eligible Men—A Decided Success.

Owensville, Ind., Sept. 3.—Whether Owensville society is to be disrupted and friendship of many years' standing are to be changed into bitter enmities is a question to be decided in the near future by the Bachelor Girls' Club, an organization formed several years ago and designed to show the young men of this place and the surrounding country that Owensville young women could be as independent as the young men.

The club grew out of conditions that are not exceptional in small towns. It had been noticed that the young men were inclined to visit the young women in the county seat ten or fifteen miles away, and on such occasions report that had it that they were very liberal with their money.

Here in Owensville, though, they were close with their earnings, and it was not infrequent that four or five girls went to show by themselves, and lined up before the soda fountains or around tables in the ice cream parlors and then had to foot the bills. The Sunday night beau was omnipresent, because there was no charge at the churches and he could always be depended upon for a little home dance when the girls furnished the music and supper.

Organize Bachelor Club.

This condition soon began to wear on the nerves of the girls, and especially when some of the most desirable of the young men found wives in the near-by town. Action was finally taken when twenty of the Owensville girls held a meeting and, after a very full and free discussion, as the minutes of the meeting put it organized the Bachelor Girls' Club with a constitution and by-laws that would make them independent of the Sunday night beau.

It was provided in the constitution that no member should accept the attentions of a young man to church "unless he had accompanied her or other members of the club to social functions where the cost of entertainment was not borne by the lady hostess," and under no circumstances "should any member of the club accept attentions of that class of young men who are recognized as church gals only." A church gallant was defined to be "a young man who always knows when Sunday night comes, but never hears of an entertainment where he can spend a dollar till three days after it is over."

Another class was defined as "the young man who washes his father's buggy Sunday morning and then drives fifteen miles to see some county seat girl in the afternoon, never seeming to realize that an Owensville girl would enjoy a buggy ride or eat bonbons and chocolate creams with as much zest as the more distant object of his attentions." Any member who should violate an article of the constitution or any of the by-laws was to be fined 5 cents for each offense.

A Decided Success.

For the first year of its existence the club was a decided success—not a "howling" success, as some of the members explained, for it was quiet and dignified, and brought some of the young men to a realization of the sins against which the organization was a protest. In fact the bi-monthly meetings of the club were scenes of congratulation, for there was hardly a member who did not report buggy rides or the calling of some beau with a box of candy.

Some of the older members, those who had become confirmed spinsters, heard these reports with anything but relief. They were in the minority, though, and if they protested the voice was one of envy and the younger set gave it no attention.

But on one night one of these spinsters was seen at church with a Sunday night beau and at the next meeting she deposited 5 cents with the treasurer without a word of complaint. The next Sunday night three of the spinsters had beaux and the treasury was enriched with 15 cents more. The younger girls looked on the unfortunates with pitying eyes, but made no comment.

The next Sunday night every spinster in the club had a beau, while all the other girls went to church alone.

Spinsters Have Escorts.

This proved to be the beginning of discord. In some of the beaux of the spinsters were good circumstances, and the average girls would regard them as catches. These flocked to the spinster Sunday night after Sunday night, and on two occasions one of them accompanied a spinster to a prayer meeting.

At the next meeting there was a scene. As one of the spinsters handed the treasurer a nickel one of the young girls who hadn't had a beau for two months asked with a sneer if the spinster's escort to church the Sunday night before was paying her fines. This was the signal for a debate, as the minutes put it, but to others it appears very much like a row, for the spinsters declared that it was nobody's business whom they went with if their fines were paid.

Somehow, but just how nobody knows, it got out that the younger members of the club would not object to paying a few fines themselves, and the next Sunday night the spinsters trudged to church alone and the younger set all had beaux. And for three Sunday nights in succession this happened, the girls paying the fines and the treasury showing a surplus that was really distressing.

But the girls had taken all the beaux away from the spinsters and the constitution and by-laws were things of jest among the young men and the bachelors of the town. Some of them hinted that it "was cheaper to pay the girls' fines than to put up for soda and cream and buy chocolates," and when this got to the ears of the spinsters they raised merry Ned at the next meeting, and it is believed that another meeting will mark the end, so bitter are the animosities that have been engendered.