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CHICAGO SUNDAY TRIBUNE
Decorations for State University Library

Illo Well
1890
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PART FIVE.
This Part Contains Eight
Pages.

The Chicago Sunday Tribune.

MARCH 26, 1899.

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This Part Contains Eight
Pages.

DECORATIONS FOR STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

Four Composition Subjects Cho-
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Principal Colleges of
the University.

Artist Wells, Selected to Paint
the Frescoes for the Ro-
tunda, Has About Com-
pleted His Work.



M. R. NEWTON A. WELLS is now at work painting the frescoes in the Rotunda of the State University, located at Urbana. The work was awarded upon competition about a year and a half ago, the committee selecting Mr. Wells because he was the most domestic and especially adapted to the subject for which they were designed.

The secondary data, plans, and elevations, architect's specifications, etc., were furnished him, and in due time small designs in water color were sent on, upon which a favorable decision was passed, and Mr. Wells at once set to work in his Paris atelier to evolve the working drawings of the four great frescoes included in the commission. The frescoes are to be placed on the upper walls of the rotunda, which is entered after passing the vestibule and off which are the reading-room and stackroom. The rotunda is oblong and the panels, which form a sort of frieze, are of two lengths, two will be 25 ft. and the other two 20 ft. long, and each about 12 feet in height, the figures in the composition to be life size.

FOUR SUBJECTS.

The four composition subjects chosen will typify the four principal colleges of the university, literature and arts, agriculture, engineering, and science. "The Sacred Wood of the Muses" is the title of the first composition. It is a classical subject, containing about twenty-five figures, representing philosophy, poetry, music, and art. The studies for the landscape for this work were made in the garden of the Luxembourg and at Versailles. The scene represents the classical age and Plato, Homer, Aristotle, and others are grouped, each with his followers, who are actually learning the lessons expounded by their worthy masters.

To represent agriculture Mr. Wells has composed a provincial called "Arcadia," which is treated also from the classical standpoint, the figures being in the old Greek costume. The picture typifies the return of the harvesters at the close of day, the first fruits, so to speak, of the harvest season. Domestic animals are also introduced. The provincial is also typical of the different stages of life. On the extreme left are two small children in the land, and closely following are a young woman and her lover bearing garlands of vine and clusters of grapes.

FAMOUS MODELS.

A man and a woman bearing a little child typify the family life, and the old man with the scepter is a prominent figure. The model which posed for this figure is one of the oldest and most noted in Paris, having been used for Pallas de Chirac for more than forty years. The introduction of the domestic animals is a striking feature, and an interesting item in regard to the sculpture, which is being left by a fourth, in that Mr. Wells obtained the drawing for it at the house of the artist in Paris from which Rosa Bonheur painted her noted picture, "The Horse Fair."

The entire composition is graceful and harmonious, and the coloring, in common with all the frescoes, warm and effective. The fresco representing science is called "The Laboratory of Minerva." The subject is allegorical and the figures are treated classically. An allegorical figure of science stands in the center surrounded by various figures, seated, representing the sciences from which our industries are drawn—mechanics, electricity, navigation, shipbuilding, chemistry, geology, and war.

MODERN VULCAN.

Each of the frescoes is beautiful in its special significance, but the one representing engineering, the only modern subject, is called "The Forge of Vulcan." Taken from the thirteenth century standpoint, and showing an immense steam hammer forging a large, a magnificent figure, stands in the foreground, and the various workers are distributed at their proper places around the forge, the master directing the work. The effects of daylight and twilight will be prominently portrayed. The draw-

ing of this interior was made at Cleveland, where is located one of the largest steam locomotives in the country.

PRELIMINARY WORK.

The task to prepare these studies is by no means an indifferent one. The drawings and models, which were made in Paris for the purpose, covered a space of six months, and an entire year of more models, the studies being in the majority of cases first made from the study, the correct drawing of the anatomy.

One not intimate with the methods of preparing a set of working drawings for such work involved. In the first place, the figures are posed and the details worked out. A study must then be made for the correct drawing of the entire composition and another for the color scheme.

The fresco entitled "The Sacred Wood of the Muses" is now nearing completion, and Mr. Wells expects to finish the series during the course of the year. It is expected that the four large working drawings will be shown at the coming exhibition of the Architectural club, which opens at the Art Institute.

Mr. Wells is a pupil of Benjamin Constant and Jean Paul Laurens, and was working in the Academie Julian at the same time as the Lyndebcker brothers, now well known in art circles. For several years Mr. Wells was an art instructor in an Eastern college, but feeling that he could do something better than spend his entire life in the school, he resigned his position, went to New York and opened a studio, and at the end of a year went abroad, staying about three years. It was while studying abroad that he learned of the competition for the decorations of the State University's library, and this is his first important work of the kind since his return.

Mr. Wells is a man of education and culture, and the university has secured his services for a course of lectures upon the history of painting, to be given during the present winter.

Mr. Wells was an exhibitor at the World's

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The library that will be adorned by these decorations had, only a few months ago, but few volumes and a few students. The collection has been selected with reference to the literary and scientific studies required in the several courses.

The large library hall is open throughout the day for study, and the reference work. On the same day as the library is the reading-room of the university, well supplied with daily papers and the more important weekly and monthly periodicals. The new library building will soon enable the university to offer its members still more improved facilities.

The library of the State Laboratory of Natural History and that of the agricultural experiment station are also open to students

of the university. They contain over 8,000 volumes and 12,000 pamphlets. These include 100 series of periodicals.

The institution was incorporated under the name of the Illinois Industrial University on the 25th day of February, 1887, and passed under the control of a Board of Trustees, constituted of the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the President of the State Board of Agriculture, as ex-officio members, and twenty-eight others, some appointed by the Governor. The chief executive officer, usually called President, was elected Henry, and he was made an ex-officio member of the board and presiding officer of the Board of Trustees and of the faculty.

In 1893 the Board of Trustees was reorganized by the reduction of the number of appointed members to nine and of the ex-officio members to two—the Governor and the President of the State Board of Agriculture. In 1897 a law was passed making membership of the board elective, and restoring the Superintendent of Public Instruction as an ex-officio member. There are now three ex-officio members—the Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and President of the State Board of Agriculture.

The university was opened to students on March 2, 1888, instruction being given in algebra, geometry, physics, history, rhetoric, and Latin. At this time work on the farm and garden of around the building was compulsory for all students, but the following year compulsory labor was discontinued, save where made a part of class instruction. In the autumn of 1889 a chemical laboratory was fitted up and practical work began. A botanical laboratory was introduced the following year. In January, 1890, a machine advance in instruction was made by the fitting up of a temporary mechanical shop with tools and machinery and in this little structure, especially built for a superior shop, was begun the first shop instruction in an American university. In the summer of 1891 a large brick building, the present engineering laboratory, was equipped for students' shop work in wood and iron. At the Philadelphia Centennial

a diploma of merit was awarded the exhibition from this department of women, as students, and when they have contributed about one-fifth of the total number in attendance. In 1897 the Legislature gave the university authority to confer degrees. In 1898, upon request of the student faculty, and trustees, the Legislature changed the name of the institution to the "University of Illinois." At this session of the General Assembly a measure was passed transferring the State Laboratory of Natural History from the Illinois State Normal University to the University of Illinois. This laboratory was created for the purpose of making a national library survey of the State, for which appropriations are made from time to time.

By an act of Congress of March, 1887, the national government appropriated \$10,000 per annum to each State for the purpose of establishing and maintaining in connection with the colleges founded upon the Ordinance of 1787, agricultural experiment stations. "To aid in acquiring and diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects connected with agriculture, and to promote scientific investigation and experiment respecting the principles and applications of agricultural science." Under this provision the agricultural station for Illinois was placed under the direction of the trustees of the university, and its grounds were located on the university farm. Buildings are located as often as once every three months and distributed gratuitously.

For the more complete advancement of the State institutions founded upon the act of Congress of 1862, the United States government, by a supplementary act passed in 1890, made further appropriations. Under this amendment each such college or university received the first year \$10,000; the second, \$15,000; and thereafter \$1,000 per annum additional to the amount of the preceding year. This annual increase is to continue until the amount reaches the sum of \$25,000, which is then to be paid yearly thereafter. The total appropriation by the State of Illinois to the university for all expenses to date amounts to \$1,200,000.

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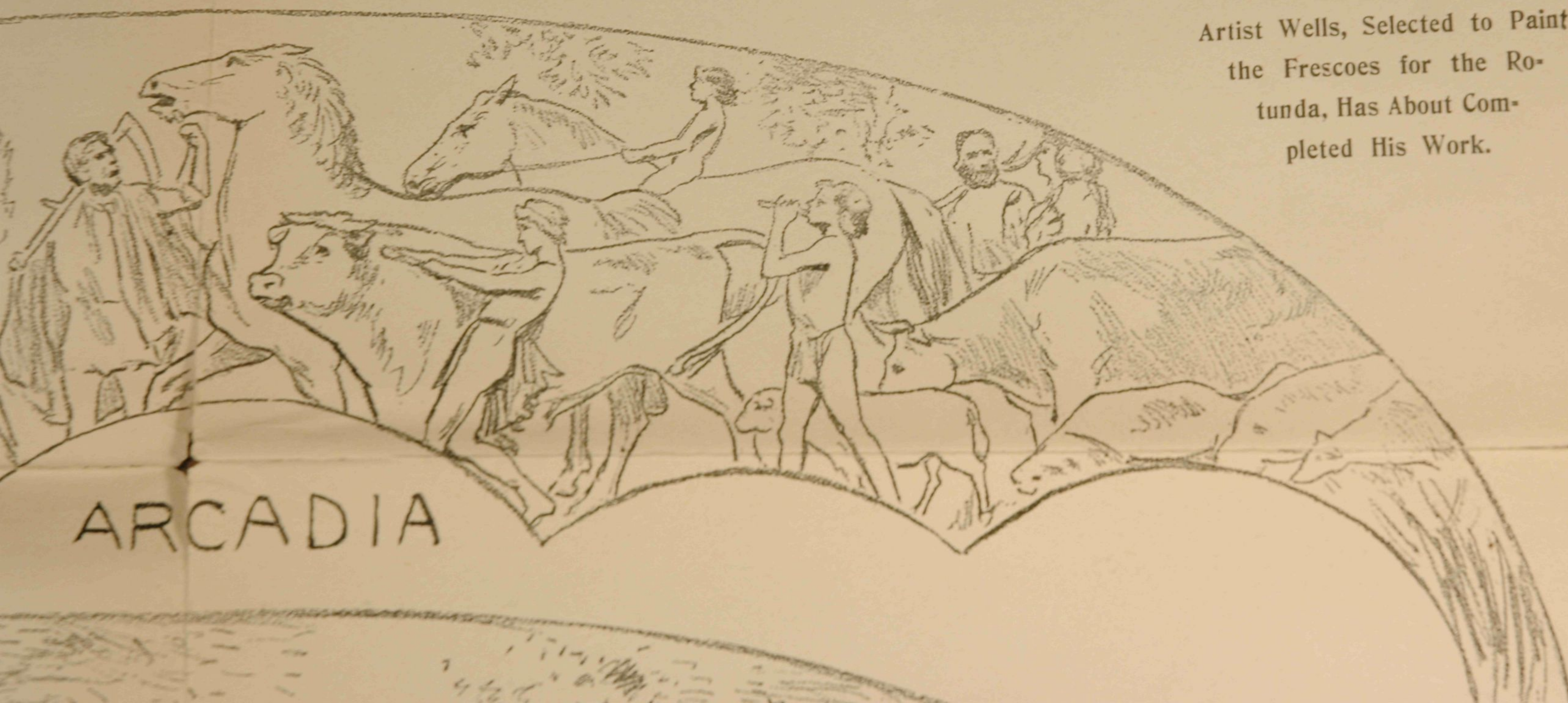
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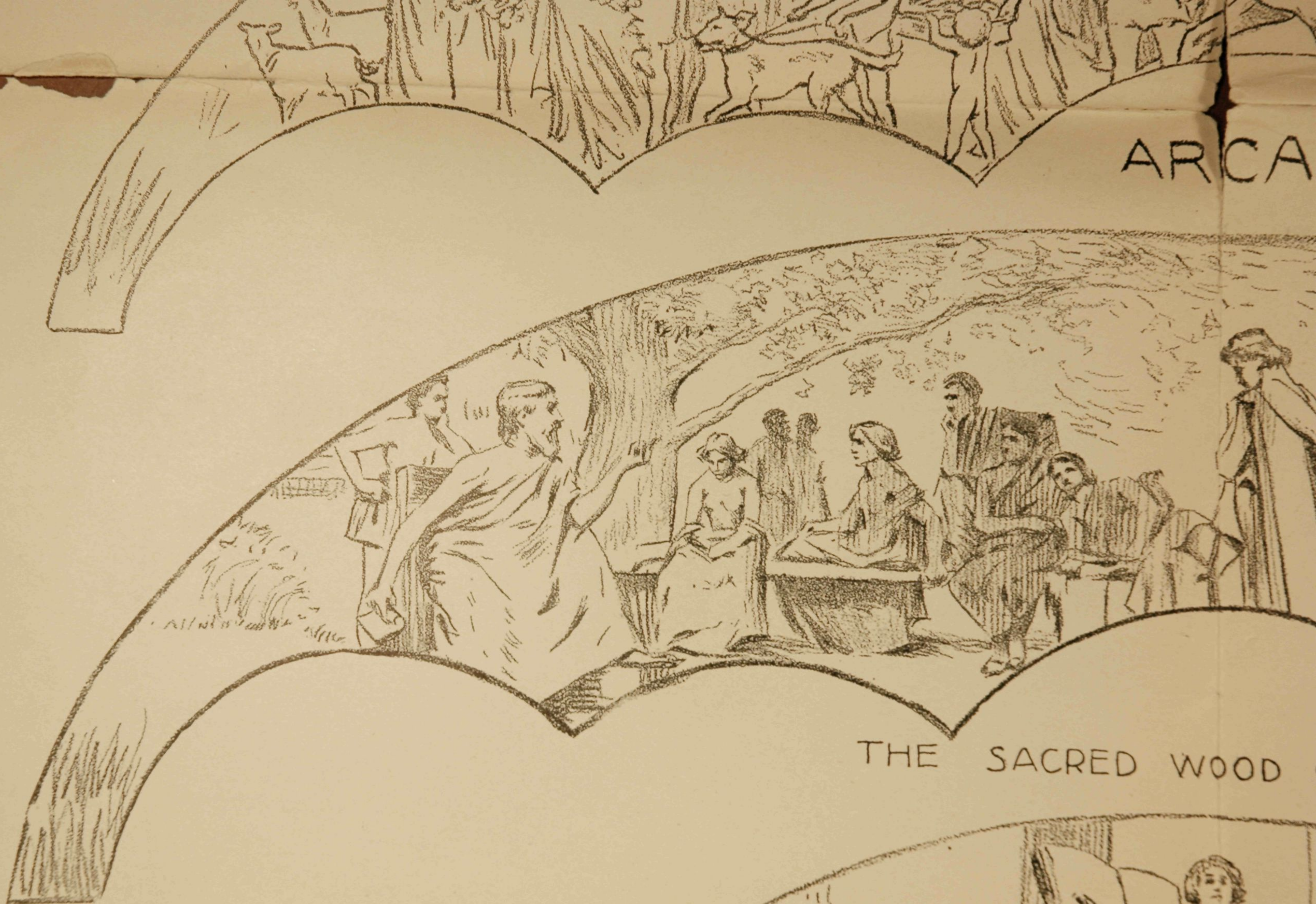
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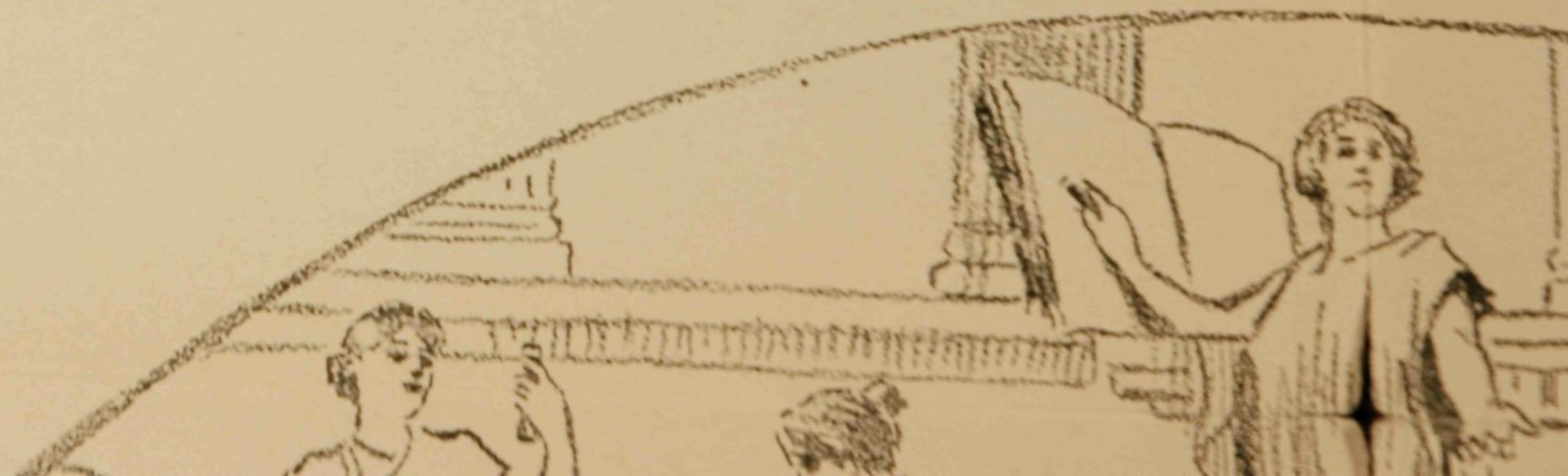


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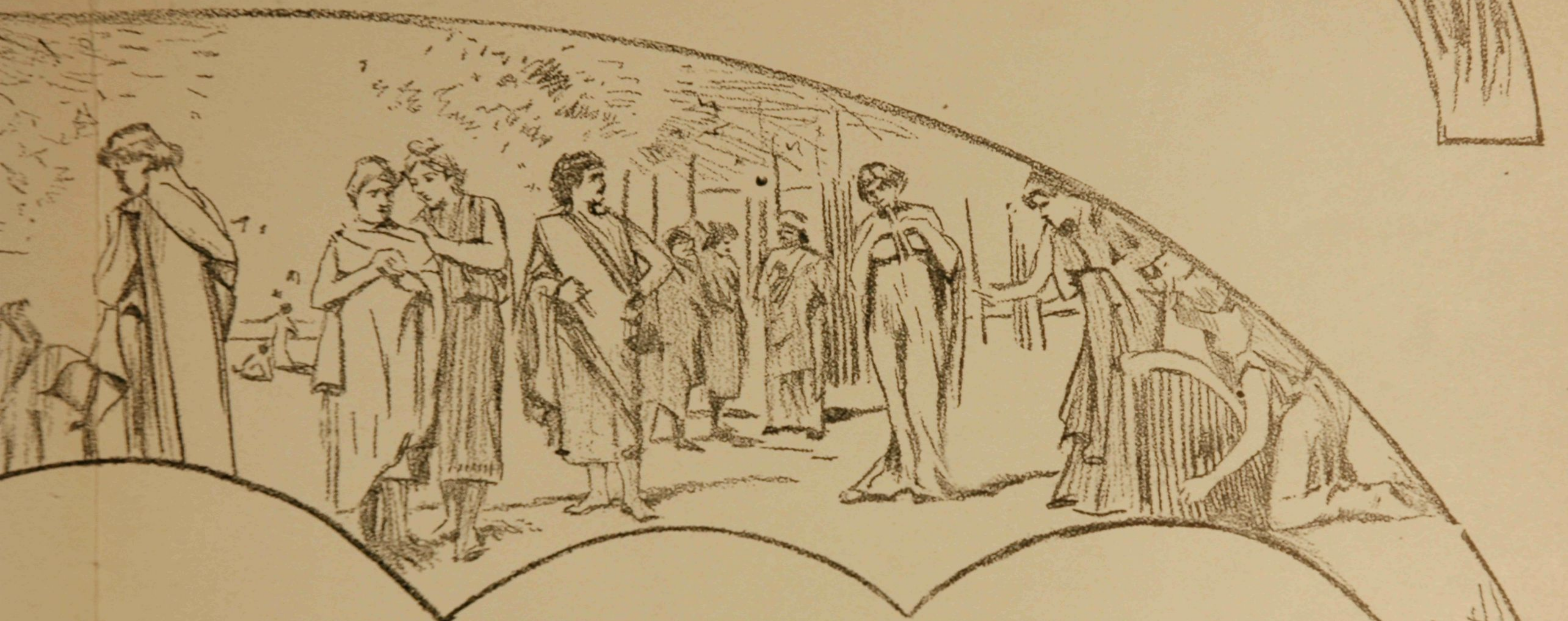


THE SACRED WOOD

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ARCADIA



WOOD OF THE MUSES



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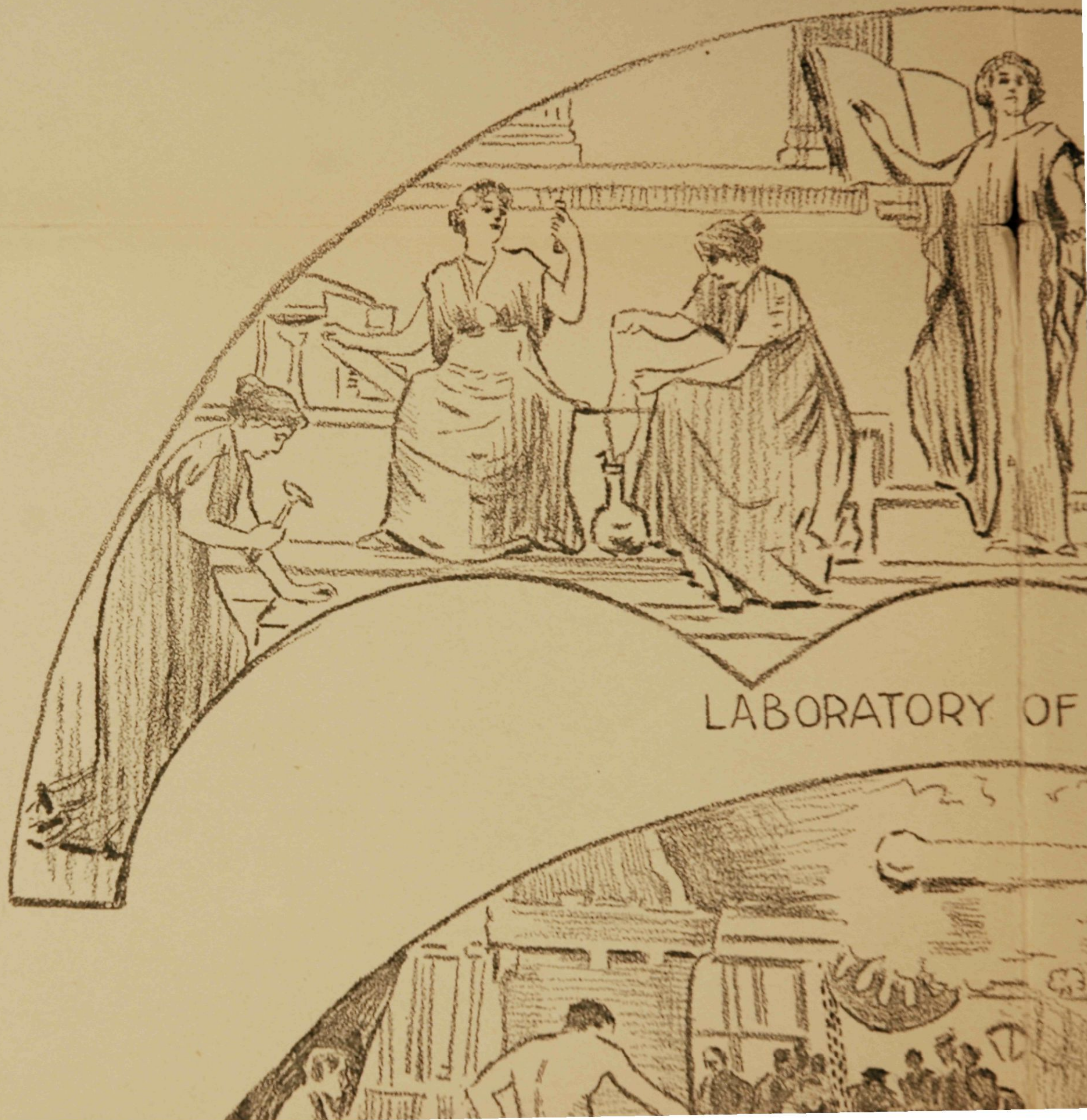
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The frescoes are to be placed on the upper walls of the rotunda, which is entered after passing the vestibule and off which are the reading-room and stackroom. The rotunda is oblong and the panels, which form a sort of frieze, are of two lengths; two will be $37\frac{1}{2}$ and the other two $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, and each about 12 feet in height, the figures in the composition to be life size.

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The four composition subjects chosen will typify the four principal colleges of the university, literature and arts, agriculture, engineering, and science. "The Sacred Wood of the Muses" is the title of the first composition. It is a classical subject, containing about twenty-five figures, representing philosophy, poetry, music, and art. The studies for the landscape for this work were made in the garden of the Luxembourg and at Versailles. The scene represents the classic age and Plato, Homer, Aristotle, and others are grouped, each with his followers, who are earnestly learning the lessons expounded by their worthy masters.

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By an act of Congress of March, 1887, the national government appropriated \$15,000 per annum to each State for the purpose of establishing and maintaining, in connection with the colleges founded upon the Congressional act of 1862, agricultural experiment stations, "to aid in acquiring and diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects connected with agriculture, and to promote scientific investigation and experiment respecting the principles and applications of agricultural science." Under this provision the agricultural station for Illinois was placed under the direction of the trustees of the university, and its grounds were located on the university farm. Bulletins are issued as often as once every three months and distributed gratuitously.

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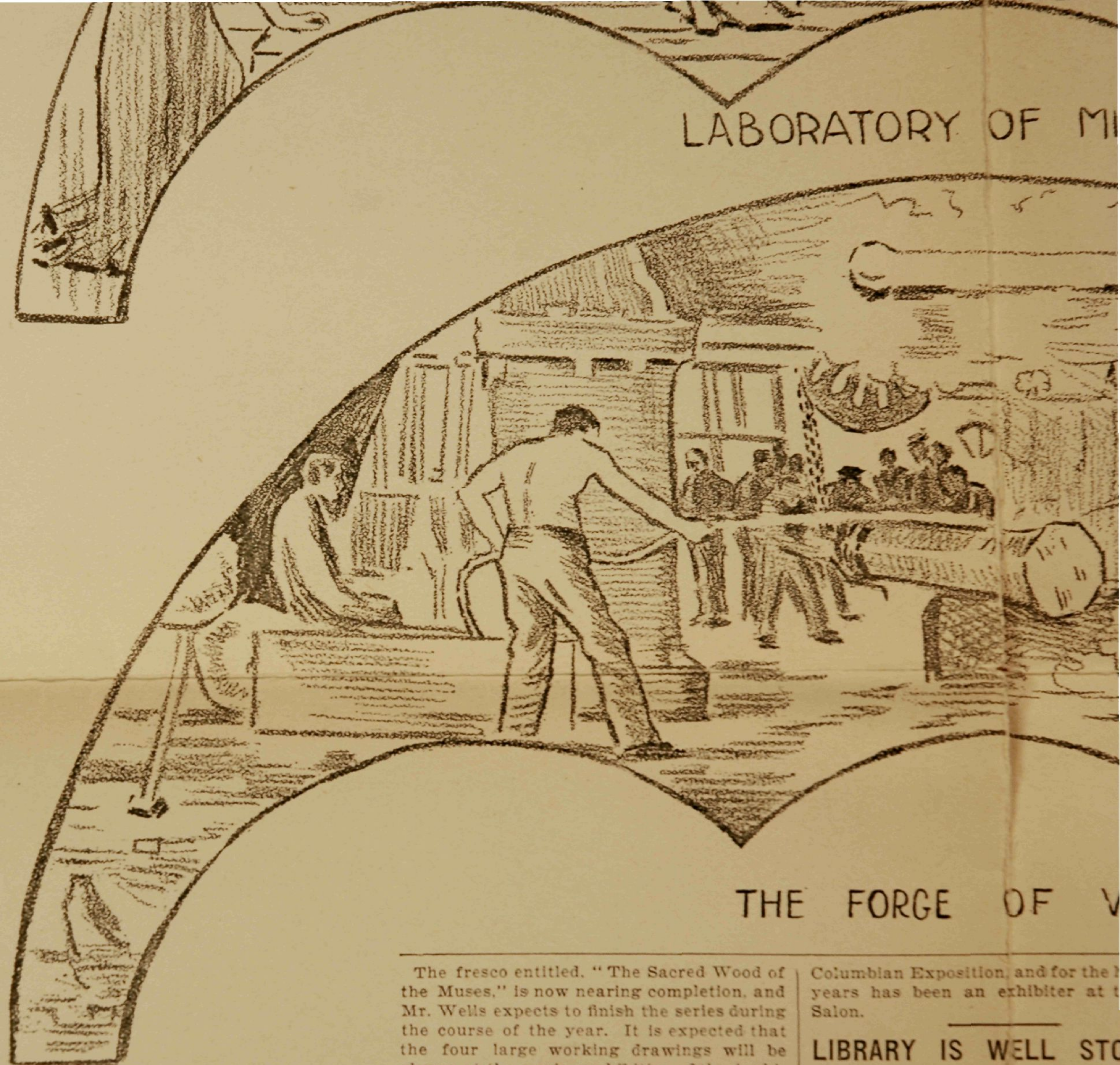
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FAMOUS MODELS.

A man and a woman bearing aloft a little child typifies the family life, and the old man with the scythe is a prominent figure. The model who posed for this figure is one of the oldest and most noted in Paris, having posed for Puvis de Chavannes for more than forty years. The introduction of the domestic animals is a striking feature, and an interesting item in regard to the stallion, which is being led by a youth, is that Mr. Wells obtained the drawing for it at the horse market in Paris from which Rosa Bonheur painted her noted picture, "The Horse Fair."

The entire composition is graceful and harmonious, and the coloring, in common with all the frescoes, warm and effective. The fresco representing science is called the "Laboratory of Minerva." The subject is allegorical and the figures are treated classically. An allegorical figure of science stands in the center surrounded by various



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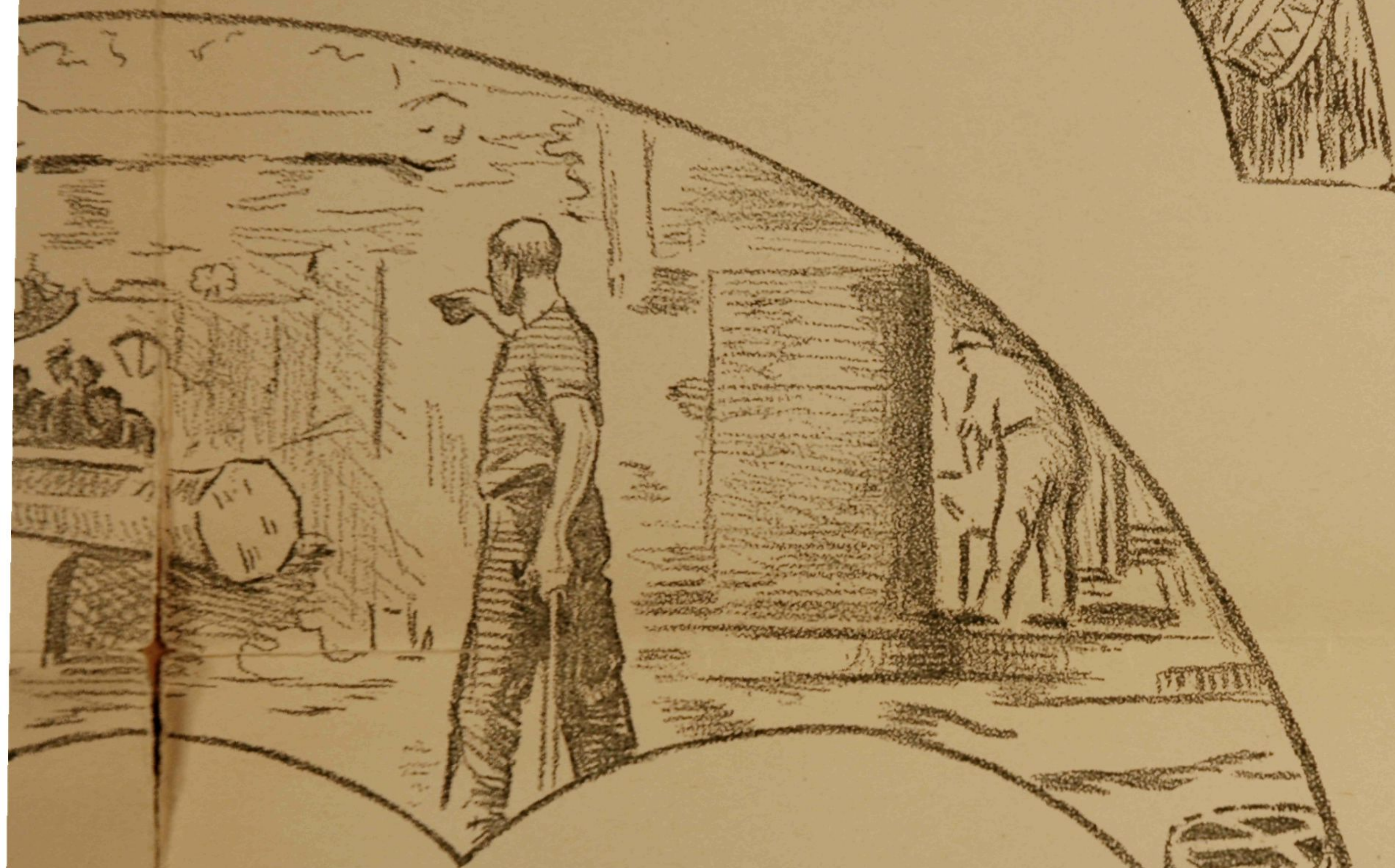
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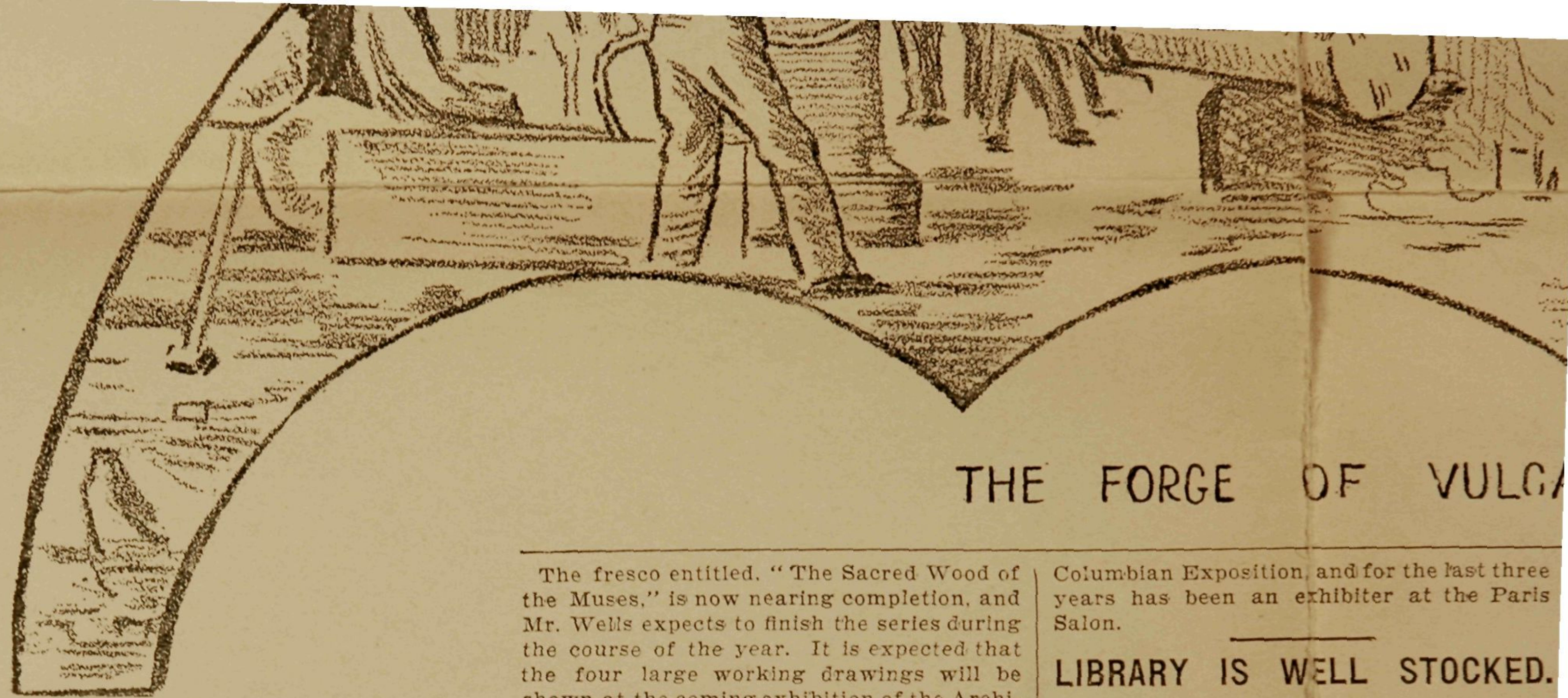
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Each of the frescoes is beautiful in its special signification, but the one representing engineering, the only modern subject, will appeal to many as being the strongest. It is called "The Forge of Vulcan," taken from the twentieth century standpoint, and shows an immense steam hammer forging a modern steamer shaft. The master of the forge, a magnificent figure, stands in the foreground, and the various workmen are distributed at their proper places around the forge, the master directing the work. The effects of daylight and firelight will be prominently portrayed. The draw-



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The task to prepare these studies is by no means an indifferent one. The drawings and models, which were made in Paris for the purpose, covered a space of six months' close application and an outlay of more than \$1,000. Each subject required especial models, the studies being in the majority of cases first made from the nude, the thin drapery necessitating an absolutely correct drawing of the anatomy.

One not intimate with the methods of preparing a set of working drawings for such a task has no conception of the amount of work involved. In the first place, the picture is drawn to get the composition. Then the figures are posed and the details worked out. A study must then be made for the correct drawing of the entire composition and another for the color scheme.

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The library that will be adorned by these decorations had, only a few months ago, 30,000 volumes and 6,350 pamphlets. The collection has been selected with reference to the literary and scientific studies required in the several courses.

The large library hall is open throughout the day for study, reading, and reference work. On the same floor as the library is the reading-room of the university, well supplied with daily papers and the more important weekly and monthly periodicals, both literary and scientific. The new library building will soon enable the university to offer its members greatly increased library facilities.

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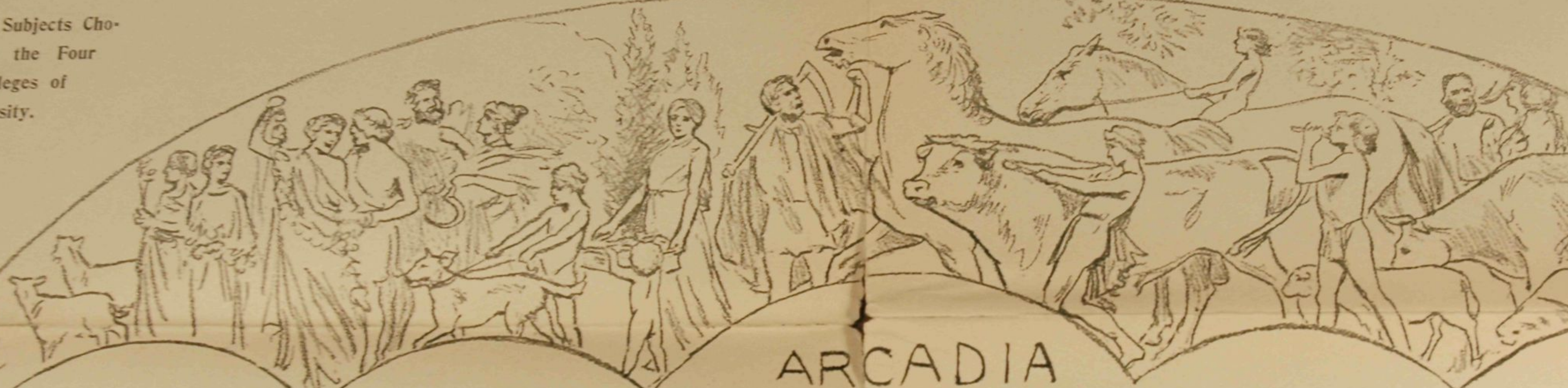
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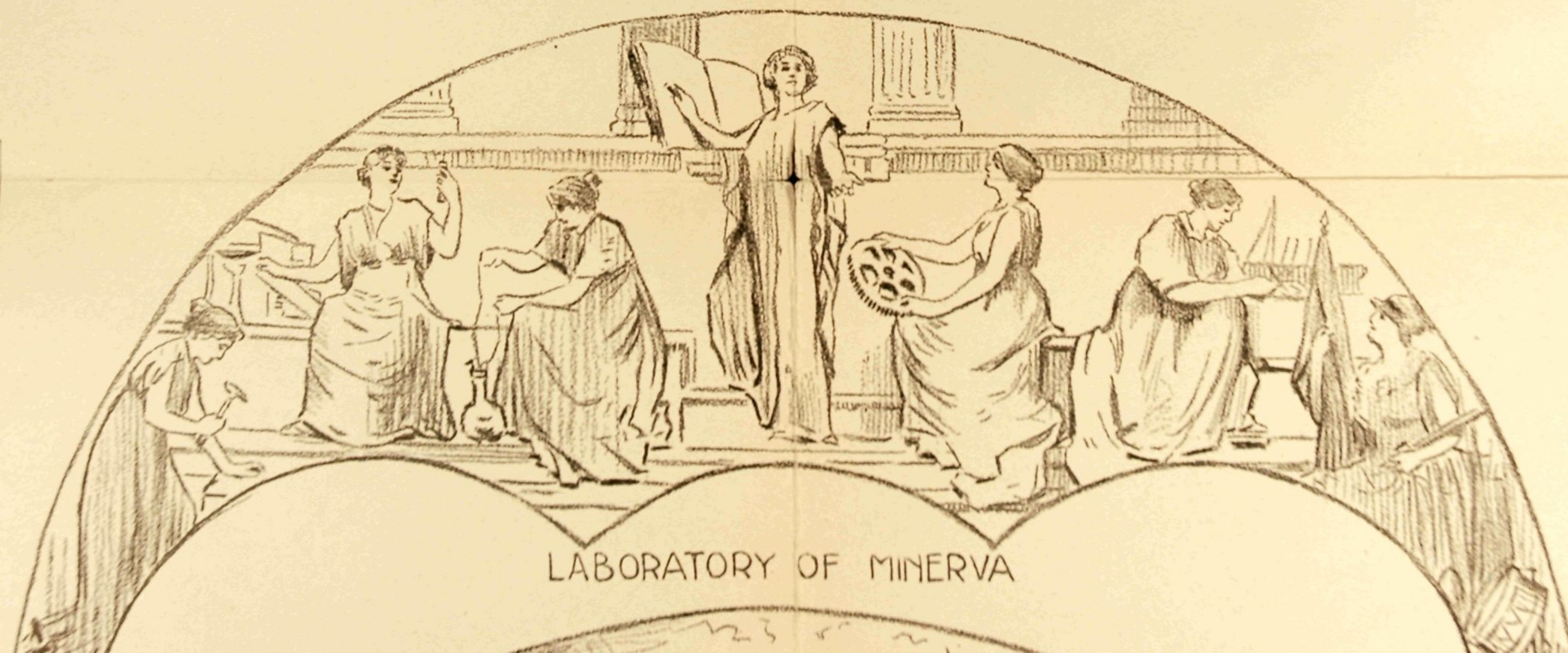
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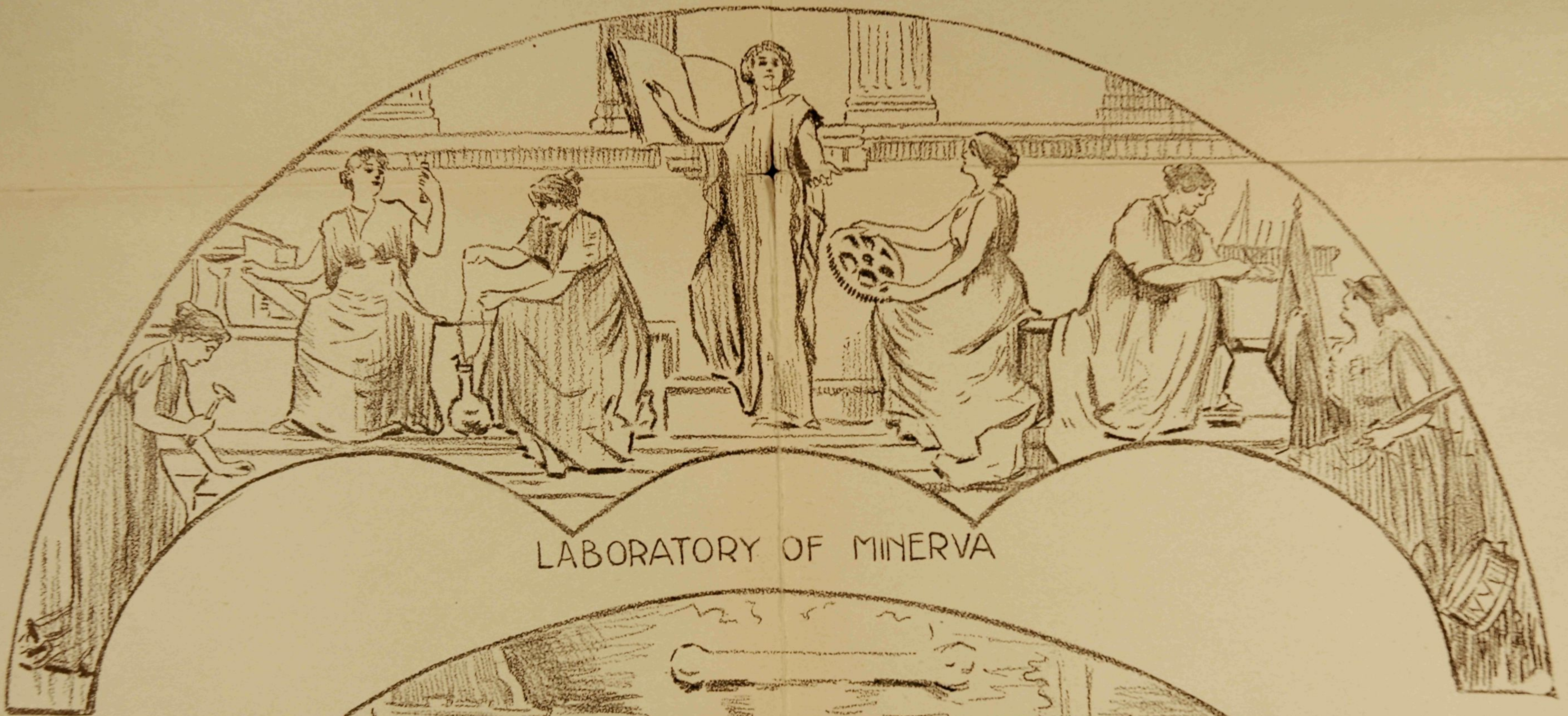
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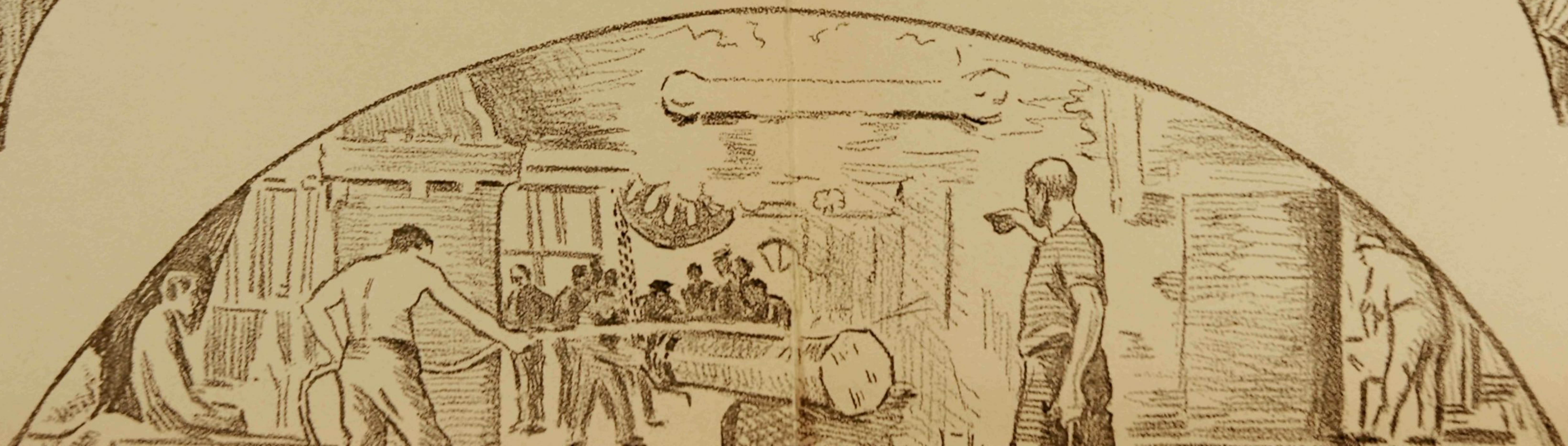
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By an act of Congress of March, 1882, the national government appropriated \$10,000 per annum to each State for the purpose of establishing and maintaining, in connection with the colleges founded upon the Congressional act of 1862, agricultural experiment stations, "to aid in acquiring and diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects connected with agriculture, and to promote scientific investigation and experiment respecting the principles and applications of agricultural science." Under this provision the agricultural station for the

THE SACRED WOOD OF THE MUSES



LABORATORY OF MINERVA



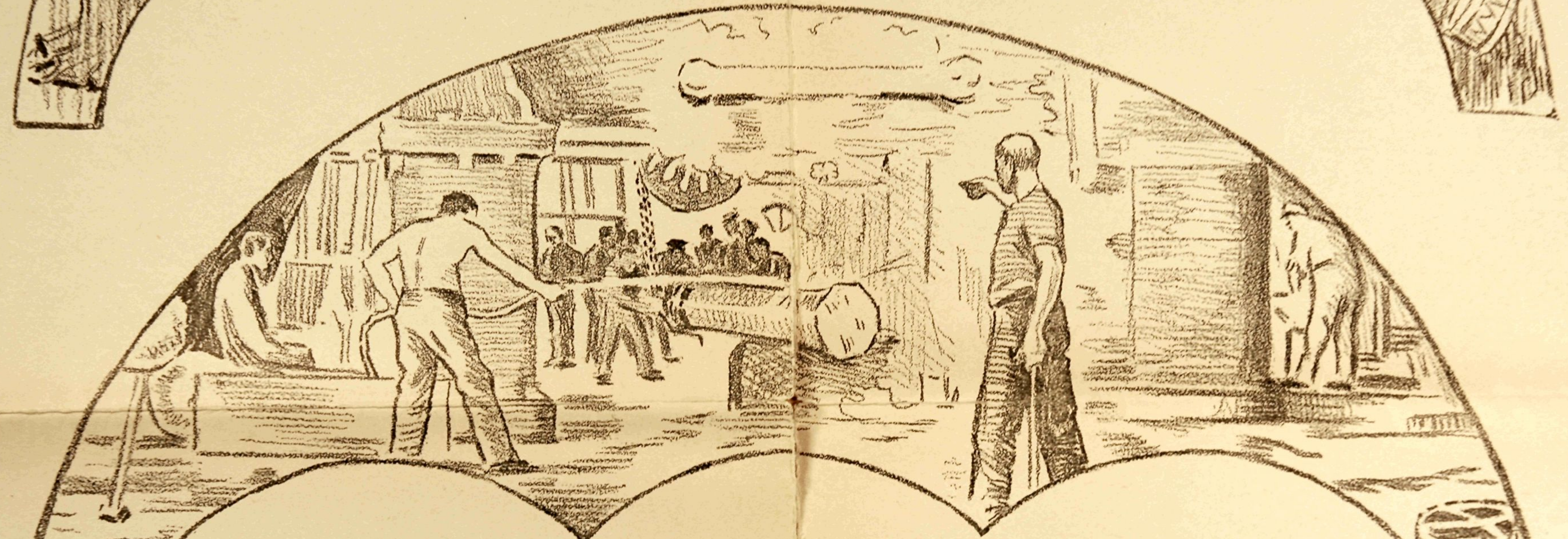
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LABORATORY OF MINERVA



THE FORGE OF VULCAN

The fresco entitled, "The Sacred Wood of the Muses," is now nearing completion, and Mr. Wells expects to finish the series during the course of the year. It is expected that the four large working drawings will be shown at the coming exhibition of the Architectural club, which opens at the Art Institute.

Mr. Wells is a pupil of Benjamin Constant and Jean Paul Laurens, and was working in the Academie Julien at the same time as the Lyndecker brothers, now well known in art circles. For several years Mr. Wells was an art instructor in an Eastern college, but feeling that he could do something better than spend his entire life in the school-room he resigned his position, went to Newport and opened a studio, and at the end of a year went abroad, staying about three years. It was while studying abroad that he learned of the competition for the decorations of the State University's library, and this is his first important work of the kind since his return.

Mr. Wells is a man of education and culture, and the university has secured his

Columbian Exposition, and for the last three years has been an exhibitor at the Paris Salon.

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Facilities for Study Are Excellent Now, but Will Be Greatly Improved Later.

The library that will be adorned by these decorations had, only a few months ago, 30,190 volumes and 6,350 pamphlets. The collection has been selected with reference to the literary and scientific studies required in the several courses.

The large library hall is open throughout the day for study, reading, and reference work. On the same floor as the library is the reading-room of the university, well supplied with daily papers and the more important weekly and monthly periodicals, both literary and scientific. The new library building will soon enable the university to offer its members greatly increased library

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The institution was incorporated under the name of the Illinois Industrial University on the 28th day of February, 1867, and placed under the control of a Board of Trustees, constituted of the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the President of the State Board of Agriculture as ex-officio members, and twenty-eight citizens appointed by the Governor. The chief executive officer, usually called President, was styled Regent, and he was made ex-officio a member of the board and presiding officer of the Board of Trustees and of the faculty.

In 1873 the Board of Trustees was reorganized by the reduction of the number of appointed members to nine and of the ex-officio members to two—the Governor and the President of State Board of Agriculture. In 1887 a law was passed making membership of the board elective, and restoring the Superintendent of Public Instruction as an ex-officio member. There are now three ex-

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ing of this interior was made at Cleveland, where is located one of the largest steam hammers in the country.

PRELIMINARY WORK.

The task to prepare these studies is by no means an indifferent one. The drawings and models, which were made in Paris for the purpose, covered a space of six months' close application and an outlay of more than \$1,000. Each subject required especial models, the studies being in the majority of cases first made from the nude, the thin drapery necessitating an absolutely correct drawing of the anatomy.

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MR. NEWTON A. WELLS is now at work painting the frescoes in the library of the State University, located at Urbana. The work was awarded upon competition about a year and a half ago, the committee selecting Mr. Wells' designs as being the most decorative and especially adapted to the object for which they were designed.

The necessary data, plans, and elevations, architect's specifications, etc., were furnished him, and in due time small designs in water color were sent on, upon which a favorable decision was passed, and Mr. Wells at once set to work in his Paris atelier to evolve the working drawings of the four great frescoes included in the commission.

The frescoes are to be placed on the upper walls of the rotunda, which is entered after passing the vestibule and off which are the reading-room and stackroom. The rotunda is oblong and the panels, which form a sort of frieze, are of two lengths; two will be $37\frac{1}{2}$ and the other two $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, and each about 12 feet in height, the figures in the composition to be life size.

FOUR SUBJECTS.

The four composition subjects chosen will typify the four principal colleges of the university, literature and arts, agriculture, engineering, and science. "The Sacred Wood of the Muses" is the title of the first composition. It is a classical subject, containing about twenty-five figures, representing philosophy, poetry, music, and art. The studies for the landscape for this work were made in the garden of the Luxembourg and at Versailles. The scene represents the classic age and Plato, Homer, Aristotle, and others are grouped, each with his followers, who are earnestly learning the lessons expounded by their worthy masters.

To represent agriculture Mr. Wells has composed a processional called "Arcadia," which is treated also from the classical standpoint, the figure being in the old Greek costume. The picture typifies the return of the harvesters at the close of day, the first fruits, so to speak, of the harvest season. Domestic animals are also introduced. The processional is also typical of the different stages of life. On the extreme left are two small children in the lead, and closely following are a young woman and her lover bearing garlands of vine and clusters of

FAMOUS MODELS.

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A man and a woman bearing aloft a little child typifies the family life, and the old man with the scythe is a prominent figure. The model who posed for this figure is one of the oldest and most noted in Paris, having posed for Puvis de Chavannes for more than forty years. The introduction of the domestic animals is a striking feature, and an interesting item in regard to the stallion, which is being led by a youth, is that Mr. Wells obtained the drawing for it at the horse market in Paris from which Rosa Bonheur painted her noted picture, "The Horse Fair."

The entire composition is graceful and harmonious, and the coloring, in common with all the frescoes, warm and effective. The fresco representing science is called the "Laboratory of Minerva." The subject is allegorical and the figures are treated classically. An allegorical figure of science stands in the center surrounded by various figures seated representing the sciences from which our industries are drawn: mechanics, electricity, navigation, shipbuilding, chemistry, geology, and war.

MODERN VULCAN.

Each of the frescoes is beautiful in its special signification, but the one representing engineering, the only modern subject, will appeal to many as being the strongest. It is called "The Forge of Vulcan," taken from the twentieth century standpoint, and shows an immense steam hammer forging a modern steamer shaft. The master of the forge, a magnificent figure, stands in the foreground, and the various workmen are distributed at their proper places around the forge, the master directing the work. The effects of daylight and firelight will be prominently portrayed. The draw-



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The trustees, on March 9, 1870, admitted women as students, and since then they have constituted about one-fifth of the total number in attendance. In 1877 the Legislature gave the university authority to confer degrees. In 1885, upon request of the alumni, faculty, and trustees, the Legislature changed the name of the institution to the "University of Illinois." At this session of the General Assembly a measure was passed transferring the State Laboratory of Natural History from the Illinois State Normal University to the University of Illinois. This laboratory was created for the purpose of making a natural history survey of the State, for which appropriations are made from time to time.



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For the more complete endowment of the State institutions founded under the act of Congress of 1862, the United States government, by a supplementary act passed in 1890, made further appropriations. Under this enactment each such college or university received the first year \$15,000; the second, \$16,000, and thereafter \$1,000 per annum additional to the amount of the preceding year. This annual increase is to continue until the amount reaches the sum of \$25,000, which is then to be paid yearly thereafter. The total appropriations by the State of Illinois to the university for all purposes to date amount to \$1,303,000.