



# ITINERARIO LIBERTY



## The Town Hall of Montecatini

The desire of the municipal administration to obtain the use of the Archducal stables, to provide the city with a Town Hall where there were all the administrative post, telegraphic and telephonic offices, as well as those of Public Security, goes back to December 1909.

The stables were situated along Viale Verdi and the future area of the future Piazza D'Azelio, and in December 1911 the Municipal Council decided to entrust the planning to the local architect, Raffaello Brizzi, certain that the professional people in Montecatini could organize a modern, magnificent, artistic and genial project in a short time.

On 27th. August 1913 Brizzi, together with the engineer L. Righetti, assisted for the graphic, technical and decorative elaborations by Galileo Chini and L. Arcangioli, presented the operation project. Initiated towards the end of 1913, the building was only finished after the war, and only in 1920 all the municipal services previously scattered in various areas of the city were concentrated in it. The structure of the building is massive and elegant, in a classical style, with four pillars which support the balcony beneath three wide gateways, with the gates in wrought iron.

To increase the sober elegance of the building, various artistic motifs were introduced on the inside. On the lunettes of the vault which supports the large sky-light, Galileo Chini portrays the allegories of human activity, of building, of knowledge and of working in peace in 1919. The decorative cycle includes powerful figures of the worker, the farm worker and the intellectual.

On the ceiling of the Board Room, one may note the fresco painted by Luigi Arcangeli. There is the apotheosis of Italy armed with gladius and wrapped in the Italian flag, which stretches out on a carriage with two white horses towards victory. A great staircase welcomes whoever enters the building; a heavy wooden handrail and historiated banisters in wrought iron contain the grand staircase. Elegant lampposts, also in wrought iron, complete the refined taste of the complex. The large stained-glass windows are also the work of Galileo Chini.

In the gallery of the first floor, elegant niches contain the busts of illustrious figures which are part of the more recent history of Montecatini. The magnificence of the Building is still today an evident indication of the far-sightedness of the designers but, above all, of the Administrators of the time who aimed at, and rightly so, an inexorable future development of the city.