

A HISTORY OF THE ORGAN



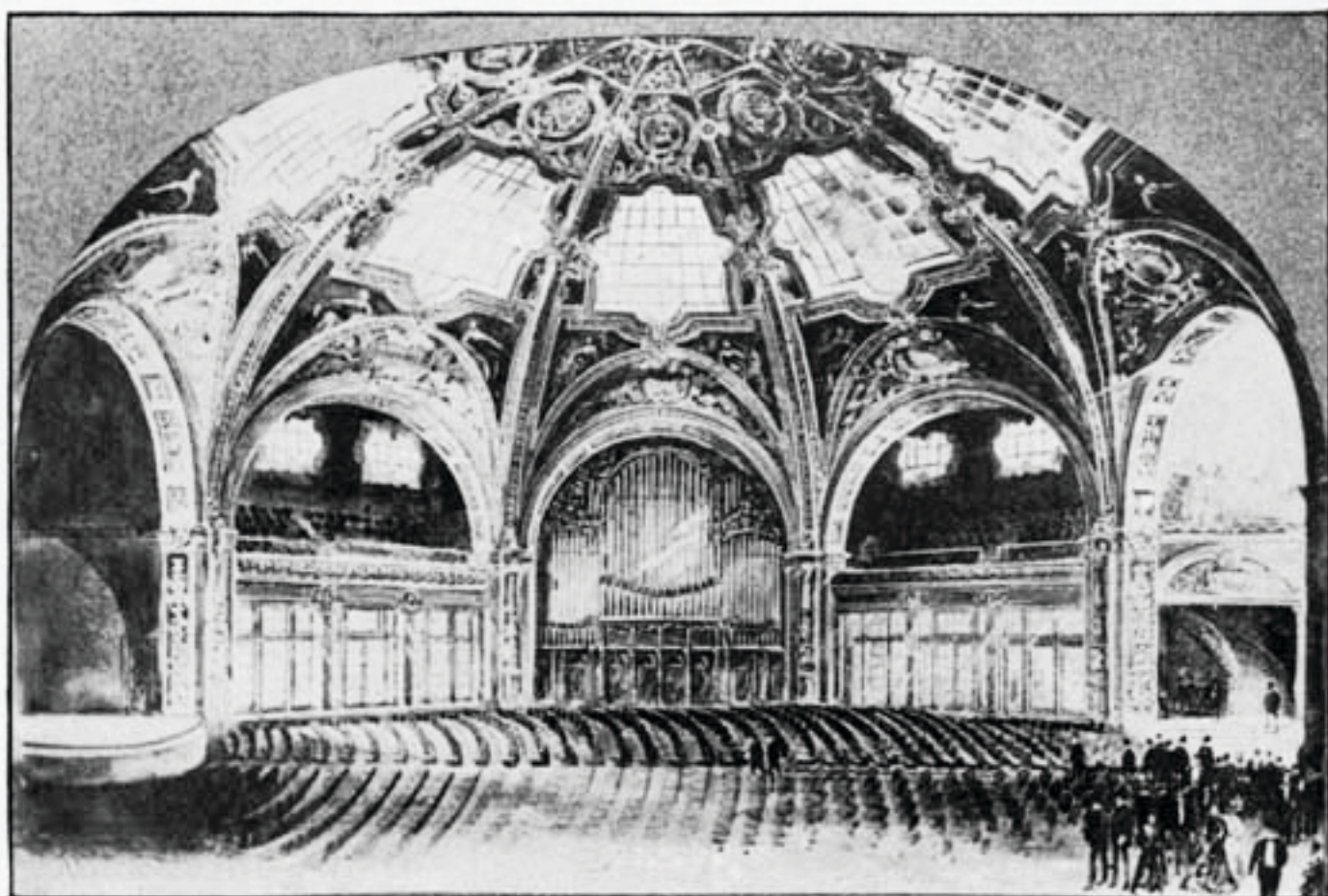
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The legend is that the god Pan first conceived the idea of the organ when he bound together reedy pipes of different lengths and played upon them for the entertainment of the nymphs and satyrs in his train. Homer sang of the Pandean pipes and the "gentle Amaryllis" of Virgil's first Eclogue loved the music of a similar instrument.

In point of antiquity, these pipes rank with the lyre of Apollo, the inspiration of the modern harp. Both tradition and history yield the palm of precedence to these two ancient and kingly instruments.

Jubal first mentions the organ by name. Vitruvius has left a detailed description of a hydraulic organ. Atheneus and Hero of Alexandria give accounts of organs in which the pipes were joined together in a row, the longest being in the middle. There is a piece of sculpture on the obelisk of Theodosius at Constantinople which represents an instrument having eight pipes.

The organ was first introduced into church service about the year 670. In 755 the Greek Emperor sent one as a present to Pepin, King of France. During the Middle Ages the instrument received a great many improvements at the hands of the monks and friars, who realized what a subtle and powerful influence its music had over the masses. An old writer ascribes the rapid growth of the primitive church to this cause alone. The instrument became so popular that the great mediæval artists, inspired by its harmonies, painted saints playing on it, while angels listened! In fact, the influence of its music was so potent a factor in making the ritual of the primitive church attractive that some over-zealous reformers regarded it as an agency of evil and forbade its use! It is within the memory of the present generation that the organ was reintroduced into certain churches, whose ministers probably found that no mortal eloquence could attract and charm as its "concord of sweet sounds." The first organ key-board was introduced in the 11th Century, in the Cathedral of Madgeburg. Pedals were introduced about the 18th Century. Improvements have been so rapid and so marked during the last two centuries that the organ of to-day, equipped with the requisite stops, may be said to produce the effect of all the other instruments combined, excepting, perhaps, the vibrant chords and arpeggios of the harp. From the deep pedal-tones to its most delicate diapasons it has a range of sound-effects no other instrument possesses. Its keys, under the touch of a master hand, express every emotion of the human soul. Its magical power sways every animate thing. The influence of music is always elevating. That of the organ is especially so. Its full, rich chords arouse in man a desire to accomplish higher and better things; its softer tones, sweet as the song Ariel sang to quell the tempest and lull the winds to rest, soothe and solace with a potency that is almost superhuman.



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INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF MUSIC, SHOWING THE GREAT ORGAN

This instrument occupies a recess, prepared for it, in one of the arches of the auditorium of the Temple of Music, and is about thirty-six feet wide by forty-four feet high, with a depth of thirty-five feet. The key-boards are located several feet in advance and the player sits facing the organ. The displayed pipes are gilded on a rough surface and present a rich appearance, there being no wood-work above their toes. Staff, wrought out in a most elaborate design, takes the place of the usual case of wood; the casing of the console, however, is of quartered oak, carved and finished in the style most appropriate to such a noble instrument.

The key-frames and other adjacent work are in ebony finish and polished, contrasting effectively with the pure white rods of the stop action, the combination pistons, plates, etc. The adjustable combinations are reached from the organist's seat, and may be set to control any stop, or group of stops, at will. Each combination carries whatever pedal stops may be chosen by the player and may be changed, even while playing, should he so desire. The compass of the manuals is sixty-one notes, and the compass of the pedals thirty notes. The pedal keys are faced with white maple for the naturals and ebony for the sharps. There are five pedal movements, viz.: Balanced Swell Pedal, Balanced Choir Pedal, Grand Crescendo and Diminuendo Pedal, Full Organ or Sforzando Pedal, and the Reverse Pedal for Great to Pedal Coupling. All of the combination movements are controlled by pistons placed between the key-boards, and the couplings and tremolos by double-acting tilting tablets over the upper key-board. The console has a roll-top or sliding cover.

There are fifty-three speaking registers — fourteen on the Great Organ, fourteen on the Swell, eleven on the Choir, four on the Solo and ten on the Pedal. The wind supply on the organ, upon which so much depends, has

been amply provided for by three large bellows, each with double or vertical feeders, from which the wind is conveyed through trunks of great sectional area, to reservoirs near their respective chests, from which the wind is delivered to the pipes at a steady pressure. Each department of the organ has its own wind supply, independent of all of the rest, and each is on a different pressure, varying from six and one-half to three and one-quarter inches, there being five in all, adding much to the variety and quality of tone. The power to work the bellows is supplied by three Spencer water engines, of the largest size, made by the L. E. Rhodes Co., of Hartford, Conn. The action of this instrument is on the builder's system of tubular pneumatic throughout and has adjustable combinations, Grand Crescendo and Diminuendo Pedal, and Full Organ or Sforzando Pedal, together with the Reversing Pedal to operate Great to Pedal Coupling; this reduces the pedal movements to five in number, the combinations being governed by pistons between the key-boards. The touch on all of the key-boards is uniform, the resistance being set at four ounces, and is the same under all circumstances, whether one stop is in use or the full organ with all of the couplings.

The stops and pipes have been chosen with great care, that the full organ might not be lacking in power and grandeur, and that the individual stops should possess both character and sweetness. There are, in this organ, one stop of thirty-two feet pitch, nine of sixteen feet, twenty-eight of eight feet, eight of four feet and three of two feet. There is, also, a Mixture of four ranks, on the Great Organ, and a Dolce Cornet, of three ranks, on the Swell. The Diapasons are of large scale, giving breadth and fullness, without the harshness sometimes found in smaller scales. The wood foundation stops are also from large scales, most appropriate in an instrument of this size.

The voicing has been carefully done, and the attention of those competent to judge is invited to this most important feature. Each stop—whether Diapason, Flute, String or Reed—has its own distinctive quality and quantity

of tone. The string tones are more prompt of speech than is usually the case, and while useful for solo effects blend well with the other stops; the Flutes are of clear and brilliant tone; and the Reeds, of which there are ten stops, are very characteristic. The Vox Humana has received special treatment, being located on a chest by itself, which is inclosed in a separate box provided with shades, opening into the swell-box and moving in conjunction with the swell shades.

The organ is from the manufactory of Emmons Howard, Buffalo, N. Y., and Westfield, Mass.





EMMONS HOWARD

The builder of the great organ in the Temple of Music was born in Brimfield, Hampden Co., Mass., and attended the public schools, finishing his education at the Hitchcock High School. He entered the organ factory of Johnson & Son, at Westfield, Mass., in the spring of 1868, continuing there for several years, and afterwards taking a situation as voicer and tuner with Hilborne L. Roosevelt, of New York. He returned to Westfield to engage in organ building on his own account, since which time he has been called upon to construct many fine instruments in the leading churches of the country, from Maine to South Dakota. In addition to a well established business of its own, this firm has succeeded to that of Johnson & Son, established in 1844.