

## A CHORUS ORGAN.

### The New Instrument in the Philadelphia Academy of Music.

For years and years there has been a cry, more or less loud and frequent, for a grand organ in a Philadelphia public hall. Other cities have organs in their places of amusement and have found them both useful and ornamental. In the one at Steinway Hall there is more use than ornament. The famous one at the Boston Music Hall once had both and now has neither, for the grand Boston organ is at present only a pile of rubbish stowed away in the dusty Music Hall garrets. The once excellent instrument in Mechanics' Hall, at Worcester, Mass., has fallen into decay. That in the Music Hall at Cincinnati not only adorns the stage, but adds most impressive strength to the choruses of those who gather themselves in hundreds about its graceful exterior.

The last public place in Philadelphia which just now recalled as the possessor of an organ was Concert Hall. The organ was big and bad. It was carried to some church more than twenty years ago, and the hall itself has disappeared more recently. When Horticultural Hall was first erected there was a narrow escape from getting into it another unsuitable organ, the one which had made such thunderous noises at Gilmore's Peace Jubilee, but was utterly wanting both in delicacy and variety. The next earnest effort made here was prior to the Centennial Exhibition, when our people were really in earnest about everything, even music. A public meeting was held and a committee appointed to prepare the way. One enthusiastic newspaper proposed that the organ should be built on George's Hill, and that it should be so large as to join in the choral celebration at Independence Hall on the fourth of July. Whether the committee ever reported, ever disbanded, or is still in session is not known, but, instead of an organ, George's Hill was presently decorated with that classic structure, the tall elevator, which now adorns the beach at Coney Island.

Since Alfred G. Baker, Esq., has been president of the Academy of Music there has been a degree of activity about his management not hitherto noticed. Some of his changes in the appliances and arrangements of this admirable building are likely to prove of decided usefulness. On undertaking a series of matinee concerts, now shortly to commence there, and in securing the erection of an organ he has shown his desire to render this building more than ever in harmony with its name and purpose.

To place an organ in the Academy, the difficulties involved were obvious. The spacious stage, almost the largest in the world, was too precious to be encroached upon. But the builder, Mr. H. L. Roosevelt, has, happily, found a place under the stage for his pipes, and, although the height there was so limited as to require the "elbowing" of some of the larger and longer pipes, the space has been found ample for its purpose. Of course, the instrument is not intended for solo players to display their acquirements. Its single manual, limited pedal resources and meagre list of registers forbid brilliancy, variety or show of any kind.

What Mr. Baker desired to have, and what the builder has aimed to make, was an organ to sustain choruses both in opera and oratorio. This purpose the present instrument will doubtless fill much better than any substitute yet heard in the Academy. The scheme of the organ is as follows:

#### Manual.

Bourdon.....	16 feet
String Diapason.....	8 feet
Open Diapason.....	8 feet
Doppel Flute.....	8 feet
Octave.....	4 feet
Mixtures.....	4 ranks
Tuba mirabilis.....	8 feet

#### Pedal Organ.

Sub-Octave Resonant.....	32 feet
Open Diapason.....	16 feet
Bourdon.....	16 feet
Octave.....	8 feet

#### Couplers.

##### Manual Octave and Manual to Pedal.

The only portions of the organ which can be seen from the auditorium are the manual and pedal. These are inclosed, when not being used, in a plain ash case. This can be removed at will to any part of the building. The connection with the pipes is made by an electric cable and the bellows is supplied by water power.

The Star Course Concert this evening will afford the first public opportunity for hearing the new organ. As played by that masterly performer, David D. Wood, organist and musical director of St. Stephen's Church, its qualities will be heard under particularly favorable conditions.