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four reservoirs are placed on the roof, each containing from 1,500 to 2,000 gallons of water, and connected with them appliances admitting of the flooding of the house in any emergency. 66-3

The building was commenced in May, 1853, and, considering the vast amount of work, has been completed with laudable dispatch. The cost of the lot is stated at \$60,000, the building at \$275,000, making in all \$335,000.

Such a sum as this ought to have afforded a house capable of holding the numbers which this professes to do, besides the necessary music rooms for an academy where troops of Students could be accommodated with the locality due their practice individually and collectively. Thus it seems that not only were the requirements of the Theater impossible on such a small lot, but the claims of the Academy in connection with it as to practicing rooms, musical library, declamatory halls, and other means of instruction, have been contemptuously ignored.

As we have so condemned the shape of this house, it is due to the reader to explain scientifically what ought to be its form. We do so not for the purpose of provoking discussion, but to state a law. The proper shape for the auditorium of a theater is the segment of a circle with lateral divergences. By this means the greatest opera house, with as many chairs as the academy in question, admits of every person in every tier having at least a full view of a central point in the stage to the depth of forty-five feet from foot-lights—that is to say, the worst seat in the house is equal to this. Such a plan was proposed for an opera house of this capacity in this City thirteen years ago; and all the improvements which have taken place in our theaters as regards sight and comfort have been since borrowed from it—the defects of the new Academy forming an exception.

A few words in conclusion. Neither the Boston Opera House nor the New-York Opera House are what they should be. Philadelphia is about to build an opera house—\$200,000 having been actually subscribed and paid in, and a grand site secured, actually bought, in capacity equal to all exigencies, being 200 or 250 feet, or about twice the area of Academy in Fourteenth-st., and affording ample space for the requirements of the largest popular theater, as well as the necessities of a musical college. Let the Philadelphians profit by the errors of the two other cities, and make their house what it ought to be. If they do not, the art which the institution proposes to subserve may be indefinitely retarded. With such a width and depth lot as they have, it will be inexcusable if they do not use sufficient of the first to give the proper form to the auditorium, and sufficient of the second to give ample depth to the stage; and at the same time build many rooms for the pupils of the academy proper. They will otherwise have a house too small to be sustained at low rates of admission, and they will ignore the means by which music can be compassed without resort to the trouble and uncertainty of going to Europe for artists and paying them an ordinarily good year's salary for opening their mouths for a single evening, and thus bankrupting the opera periodically. As it is, Mr. Hackett will have to, and will, charge three dollars for each box-seat. That sum will be paid while the present operatic excitement lasts. But it must leave a certain exhaustion for future operatic enterprise, and meanwhile will exclude the mass of hearers, unless they choose to go to the amphitheater for fifty cents.

Few persons anticipate any innovation. The idea immaterialized is either the subject of neglect or scorn. They cannot comprehend the spirit—the great abstract—the ideal. Hence the mean, slow, approaches to perfection, even where capital is abundant, and talent and labor sufficient to carry it out. A great plan achieved, and people wonder why it was not done before, though while in progress they would suffer or offer any impediment to its success. The world will regard the intellectual or artistic defeats connected with the Academy of Music in this City and that of Boston as inherent in the nature of operatic difficulties, without examining into the fact that triumph comes from laws and not from accident. They have yet to learn that an abnegation of the necessary economy, scope and grandeur of any such enterprise is no reason for a want of success, when were all the known means employed to secure the end desired, the object would inevitably be compassed.

ture, through which are visible, right, left, and center, the courts of a palace, the façade closing the perspective. The screens and the palace are resplendent in columnar decorations and statuary, and coalesce in ornamentation with the general temper of the auditorium. The composition affords a fine scope for aerial perspective. This is painted by Signor Allegri, who, we may mention, has also painted the scenery of four operas about to be given, some of which is superb, and all of it good stock-scenery. Signor Allegri has also had the construction of the admirable stage-machinery, and all the stage arrangements and economics. 66-2

The architect, Mr. Saeltzer, has not overlooked the importance of artificial ventilation, but it seemed to us that the apertures of escape for the vitiated air of a building to contain so large a crowd were much too small. The provisions against fire are admirable—

fect view of the stage. The third tier has 600 chairs, and of these one-third are cut off from any view of the stage. The fourth tier, or amphitheater, contains 1,850 seats, all benches; out of these, 800—namely, all the lateral seats—are entirely deprived of any view of any portion of the stage, and the spectators therein can see nothing of the auditorium except the dome and the occupants of the benches on the opposite side of the same tier. Of the remaining 1,050 places in this last tier, about one-half have a partial and the other a good view of the stage. Beside these open seats, there are fourteen proscenium boxes, holding 150 persons. 66-1

We have now been treating of sight; of the sound-properties, or acoustic requisitions of the house, indispensable to such a building, there appears, as far as we could form an opinion, every reason to pronounce them a complete success; the test, however, we applied was with the building empty. This question can only be determined with the house full—as it will be, undoubtedly, to-night. It may be added that the present imperfect developments of the science of acoustics are such that with all architects the sonorous success of any of their buildings must be uncertain.

As to the relative size of this house compared with the great theaters of Europe, and in view of the absurd claim set up for it as the largest in the world, we subjoin a tabular statement which we have compiled with great care and labor from the plans of all the theaters of Europe. From this it will be seen that there are at least twelve much larger theaters—some of them covering nearly twice the area contained within the walls of this establishment.

RELATIVE SIZE OF DIFFERENT GREAT THEATERS.

NAME.	Whole area in square feet.	Area of stage and dependencies.	Area of auditorium and dependencies.
N. Y. Academy of Music.....	24,020	9,760	14,260
Académie de Paris.....	51,300	28,800	22,500
La Scala, Milan.....	40,300	17,550	22,750
San Carlos, Naples.....	39,825	15,525	24,300
Covent Garden, London.....	35,475	17,325	18,150
Drury Lane, London.....	33,075	12,450	20,625
Alexander, Petersburg.....	41,600	17,600	24,000
Imperial, Petersburg.....	45,000	21,750	23,250
Opera, Munich.....	49,800	23,300	25,500
Carlo Felice, Genoa.....	43,500	15,950	27,550
Opera, Berlin.....	29,700	12,190	17,600

Bordeaux—Of this we were unable to obtain plans, but it may be generally stated that it is by far the largest theater in Europe.

A paramount object of a great theater, along with the accommodation of the spectators, is the spectacle to be seen, and from the foregoing table it appears that no regard has been had to the relative stage-proportions of our Academy. It is clear that, with one exception, nearly as great an area has been devoted to the above European houses to the stage as to the auditorium. The exception is that of the Paris Académie, in which some 6,000 more square feet is given to the stage than to the auditorium, and accordingly this establishment is unequaled in Europe for its scenic effects. In the New-York Academy, however, the stage covers but little more than one-half of the space given to the auditorium, its depth from curtain to the rear-wall being only 57 feet, rendering impossible some of the grandest effects, as they are produced on the boards in Europe.

The decorative portions of the Academy next claim our attention. They differ from these of any other American Theater in so far as they rely almost entirely on form and not on color for their artistic effect. They are massive and not aerial. In the dispositions of the carvings there is often a want of relief from the deficiency of a leading idea in the designs. The front of the boxes on a level with the parquet is ornamented with balustrades which, together with their background, are white. The front of the second tier is decorated with chandeliers richly gilt and alternated with beautiful statues of infants playing upon different musical instruments. The front of the third tier is somewhat similar in its ornaments; the front of the fourth tier or amphitheater has panels filled with gilt ornaments. No chromatic decoration is used in the ornamentation of this portion of the house. The effect, therefore, is cold and chalky, and there is a want of harmony between the boxes and the dome, the dome being richly and appropriately painted in embellished panels, two of which are filled with figures of Music and Poetry, and the other two with Comedy and Tragedy. This dome, from the pencil of Signor Allegri, may be individuated, its coloring being elegant and harmonious and its whole effect magnificent.

The boxes are supported, throughout the house, by massive pillars; some of the decorations of which columns produce an effect which is found in the grand edifices of Europe, and which has not been known in the theaters of this country. But many of the details of ornament are wanting in purity of design. The general effect of the Caryatides which are attached to the pillars of the boxes is very good, and will strike particularly the untraveled spectator.—Multiplied as they are in this house, they remind one very sensibly of the great part they play in the architectural resources of Europe. These massive supports of the boxes, however, render the unsupported dome offensive to the eye of taste.

The curtain is splendid. It is fifty by fifty-four feet. The subject is two rich screens of Italian archi-