

DENVER ENTHUSIASTIC IN OPENING CITY ORGAN

TWO NIGHTS OF DEDICATION

Enormous Wurlitzer Instrument
Played by the New Municipal
Organist, Clarence Reynolds
—Thousands Hear Him.

The late Robert Hope-Jones' heart would have been made glad had he been able to witness at Denver March 21 and 22 the enthusiasm of a whole city over one of the immense and wonderful instruments which he left as a monument to his mechanical genius. The monster Wurlitzer organ built for the city Auditorium was opened with two concerts at which Clarence Reynolds, the new municipal organist of Denver, presided at the keyboard.

Mr. Reynolds arrived in Denver a short time before the completion of the installation of the organ. He has made extensive plans not only for the popularization of the instrument, but for musical advance in the western city in many other ways, and the welcome he has received indicates that he will enjoy strong co-operation from every quarter.

With little ceremony, the organ was dedicated March 21 before a crowd that filled most of the seats in the big arena. After a few words of prayer by "Jim" Goodheart, city chaplain, attendants pulled the strings that loosed the veiling and it fell to the floor revealing an imposing view of the Wurlitzer Hope-Jones unit organ. A bright light was turned on the towering instrument for the evident purpose of making it more striking. Then, amid general applause, Mr. Reynolds took his seat at the console and the first notes from the pipes gave the strains of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Following this came Boellmann's "Gothic Suite."

In the enthusiasm over the organ the singing of Evan Williams was not overlooked. He sang "Deeper and Still Deeper" and "Wait Her, Angels."

Organist Reynolds was delightful in his closing group, which included "There, Little Girl, Don't Cry" and "Tim Rooney's at the Fightin'." The final number on the program was a military fantasy, played by Mr. Reynolds. In this piece are bugle calls, fife and drums, marching soldiers and thunder and lightning. The echo organ is utilized to fine advantage in this in picturing the soldier boys at sea and their thoughts of home.

Margaret Woodrow Wilson, soprano, daughter of the President, and Mr. Reynolds vied for the plaudits of more than 12,000 persons who crowded the Auditorium at the second dedicatory concert March 22. Mr. Reynolds opened the concert with "The Star-Spangled Banner." Then he offered Handel's famous Largo, followed by Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever." It was in his third number that the organist had his first opportunity to "show off" the mammoth instrument over which he presides. This number was the "Faust Paraphrase," consisting of the Kermess scene, the famous waltz, Mephisto's song to the "Calf of Gold" and the "Soldiers' Chorus." Mendelssohn's "Spring Song" came next. Other numbers given in this group were Liszt's "Spinning Song" and Chopin's "Polonaise Militaire." A paraphrase of "Il Trovatore" was played as one of the encores and was heartily received.

Mr. Reynolds again closed the concert with a military fantasy which gave him an opportunity to show Denver all the "tricks" of the big musical machine.

The whole instrument with the exception of the 32-foot pedal diaphones, the large marimbaphone, the piano

THE DIAPASON

and one xylophone is inclosed in six specially built chambers, so that every stop is capable of expression at the will of the performer. The large 32-foot diaphone CCCC pipe is 40 inches square at the large end and weighs 1,250 pounds.

Above the ceiling of the auditorium is placed the echo organ in a specially prepared chamber and the tone is carried into the auditorium by means of a reflector in connection with a grill in the ceiling. For the first time in the history of organ building the unique scheme has been used in this echo organ of placing four sets of vox humana pipes—one 16-foot, two 8-foot and one 4-foot. The idea is to convey the impression of a chorus singing in the roof.

The instrument contains many percussion effects such as harps, chimes, xylophones, glockenspiels, vibrating bells, sleigh bells, drums, etc.

The wind pressures employed range from 6 to 30 inches. The use of heavy wind pressures and up-to-date methods of voicing produce quality and volume of tone impossible of production by ordinary means.

Second touch is fitted to the accompaniment, great and orchestral organs, and enables the player to bring out any particular part or solo without raising his hands from the keys. The second touch is also fitted to the pedal organ for use in connection



CLARENCE REYNOLDS.

with the drums, etc. For sforzando effects this device is most useful.

Pizzicato touch is fitted to three keyboards and pedals. Such effects as a violinist plucking the strings of his violin are possible by means of this addition.

By depressing a tablet, which is placed under each keyboard, a suitable bass is automatically provided for whatever stops are drawn on the manuals, and by a further depression of this tablet the mechanism is what is termed "locked," and as the stops or combinations are altered the bass stops or combination automatically change to suit.

Playable from and attached to the organ console by means of an electric cable is a piano player by means of which the organist can play the concert grand from the console with as much expression as if he were seated at the piano itself. This is accomplished by means of the different key touches in conjunction with special expression devices.

An automatic player is fitted to the instrument by means of which it can be played from a paper music roll. The registration and the operation of the swell shades for expression are all automatic. There are two tracker bars, with 140 notes each, one of which takes care of the stop registration, expression, etc.

The console is a wonderful piece of workmanship. It is semi-circular, thus affording to the organist greater facility for the manipulation of all the parts. There are 229 stop keys and 65 pistons. Two electric motors aggregating 38 horse power are required to drive the blowers.