M·P·MÖLLER

Pipe Organs

M. P. MÖLLER

PIPE ORGANS

"The grandest, the most daring, the most magnificent of all instruments . . . a whole orchestra in itself . . . nothing save this hundred-voiced choir on earth can fill all the space between kneeling men and a God hidden by the blinding light of the sanctuary."

—HONORE DE BALZAC

M. P. MÖLLER, Inc.

Hagerstown :: Maryland :: U.S.A.

Established 1880

FOREWORD

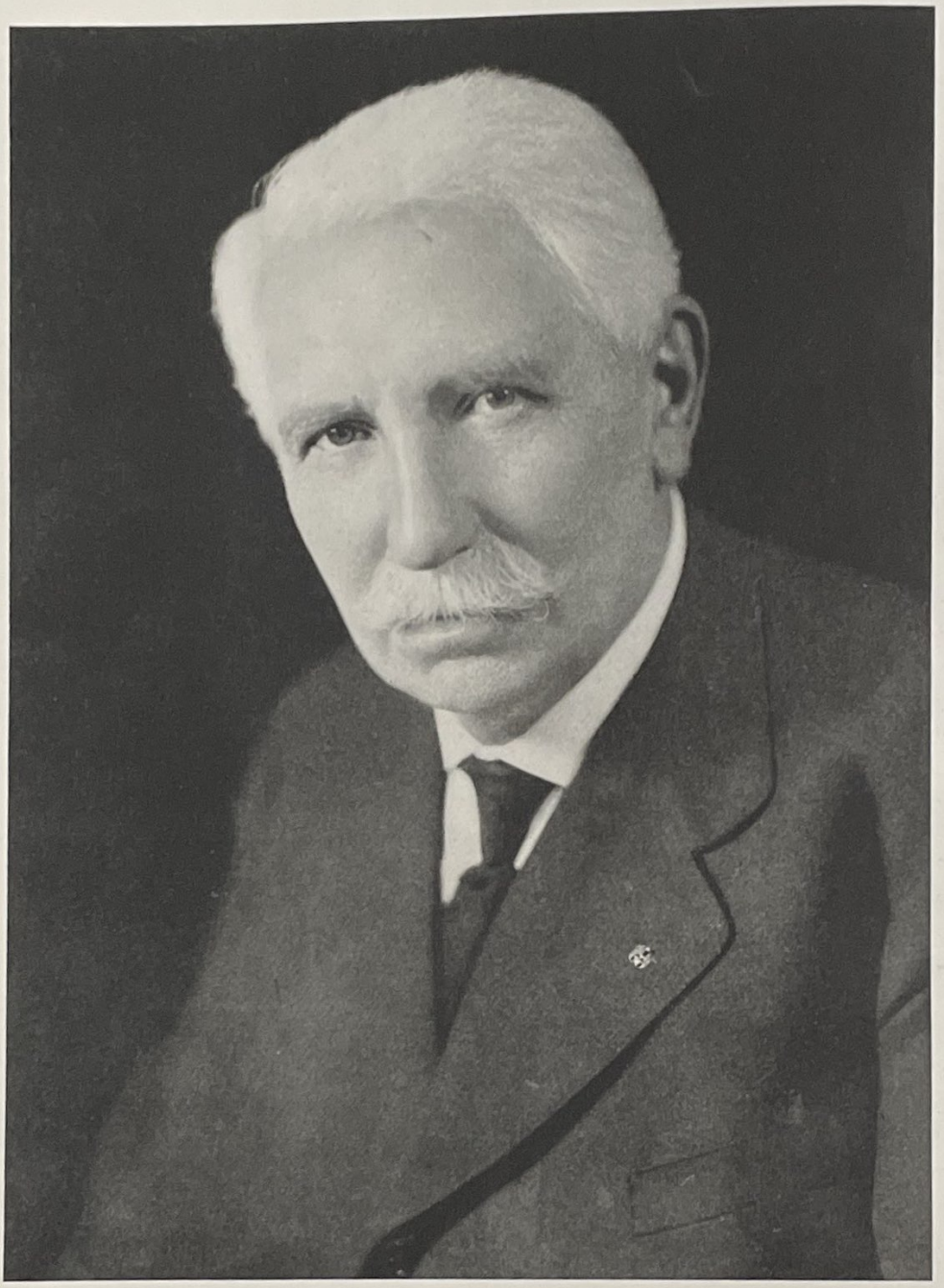
• • •

IN the first place, each Möller Organ is an individual creation and may differ from every other in tonal resources, size and cost. ¶ And, in the second, it is in strict accordance with the Möller policy to build organs from specifications of competent organists, or organ architects—without substitution or excuse. ¶ To assist buyers and architects to determine proper organ chambers and conditions, we place at their disposal our large staff of organ engineers and draftsmen, without charge or obligation. ¶ Therefore, it is obvious that we cannot display sample specifications herein, nor can we discuss "stock" organs.

A SHORT PREFACE

• • •

FEW of us realize the romance and idealism that lie behind the business of building organs. We are apt to consider only the product and to neglect the man whose personality dominates that product, and who is, after all, the genius behind its perfection. ¶Too often we think only in terms of wood and steel—we figure in terms of money—and we fail utterly to recognize the human element which supplies the soul of the product. ¶If any product has been given a soul by its creator and builder it is the Möller Organ. If any man has truly put his heart into his work it is Mathias Peter Möller. ¶This booklet is largely devoted to an exposition of the work of Mr. Möller and his associates for more than half a century — during which time six thousand two hundred Möller Organs have been built and installed in churches of every denomination, in schools, in institutions of music, lodges, auditoriums, public buildings, hotels, funeral homes and residences throughout the country.



A. P. Møller

· THE FOUNDER ·

His History, Ideals, Half Century of Achievements

MATHIAS PETER MÖLLER, founder and president, was born on the Estate Dalegaaren, on the windswept island of Bornholm, Denmark, September 29, 1855, the son of Niels Jörgen Möller.

Thrown upon his own resources at the age of fourteen, he apprenticed himself to learn the mechanical trade at Allinge, where for three years he labored from six o'clock in the morning until eight or nine o'clock at night. He derived no recompense from this apprenticeship other than his knowledge and experience as a craftsman.

America beckoned, and in the spring of 1872 he came here and located in Warren, Pennsylvania, where he worked for a few months with Greenlund Brothers, manufacturers of furniture.

From there he accepted a position with the Derrick-Felgemaker Company, who had recently moved from Buffalo to Erie, where they erected the largest pipe organ factory in the country at that time.

It was while Mr. Möller worked as an assembler of pipe organs that he conceived the idea of an improved type of wind chest.

To construct and test out this new invention he returned to Warren in January, 1875, and there built his first organ with the new wind chest. This organ was placed in the Swedish Lutheran Church at Warren, and was later destroyed by fire.

Subsequently Mr. Möller went to Philadelphia and there constructed an organ for exhibition at the Centennial Exposition in 1876 which was a center of interest.

After building several organs in Philadelphia, in the year 1877 Mr. Möller moved his business to Greencastle, Pennsylvania, and continued building organs there until 1880, when upon the solicitation of prominent citizens of Hagerstown—among them United States Senator McComas, Governor Hamilton, etc.—he established his first factory in Hagerstown in the year 1881. This original structure, which had been enlarged six times, was destroyed by fire in 1895.

A new location was selected in Hagerstown and on that site was erected a building which constitutes part of the present plant. As the business grew, new units were added until ten additions were made to the original. This group of structures now comprises the largest factory in the world for the exclusive building of pipe organs.

Mr. Möller takes a very active interest in the civic, religious and business affairs of Hagerstown; he is President of the M. P. Möller Motor Car Company, and the Home Builders' Building and Loan Association; a member of the Board of Directors of The Potomac-Edison Company of Maryland, and of Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pa.; a Trustee of Tressler Orphans' Home, Loysville, Pa., and also Director of other industries and institutions.

CADET CHAPEL, U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, N.Y.

In 1925, Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, conferred upon Mr. Möller the honorary degree of Doctor of Music, and in 1928 a distinctive honor was conferred upon him by Christian X, King of Denmark: Knight or Ridder of the Ancient Order of Dannebrog.

The spirit and genius of the founder is reflected in his workmen—his idealism is theirs; his love of perfection becomes their love; and his ability for infinite attention to detail they have also acquired.

In the charming Cumberland Valley organs are built better than any organs have ever been built, and at a great deal less cost. In the grandeur of the Blue Hills of Maryland this created product acquires a glory even as Balzac has said: ". . . . to the thunder of the organ, a veil is woven for God, and the brightness of his attributes shines through it."

Father and Son

In a pamphlet which Mr. Möller issued years ago he stated: "When my son, M. P. Möller, Jr., is twenty-one years of age, I shall have been making church organs for fifty years, and it is my fond hope that he may continue the business for fifty more years, making one hundred years for father and son."

Today, Mr. Möller, Junior, is not only actively and successfully following in the footsteps of his father, but is, himself, the father of M. P. Möller the Third, so that Mr. Möller's wish may now be amended to read that father, son and grandson will continue to conduct the business over a period of one hundred and fifty years.

A hope not at all impossible of fulfillment.

Mr. Möller's son reared under the tutelage and idealism of his father's genius is carrying on the traditions of the business, and maintaining the sterling quality that has always characterized the Möller Organ.

Factory and Equipment

The M. P. Möller Organ Works consists of an interconnected series of buildings, erected and planned in such a manner that the highest possible efficiency and accuracy are attained.

The various processes of manufacture are departmentalized, which system has led to the design and construction of special equipment and machinery conducive to the best and most economical production.

Möller engineers are ever on the alert to provide such additional equipment as may be made necessary for further increased efficiency.

Quality of product is highest where an increased cost of production does not affect the selling price.

This makes it possible to build the finest organs in the world at such prices that experts marvel and exclaim in wonderment.

This is easy to understand when you realize that here in the charming surroundings of our Maryland Hills and in an atmosphere of happiness and contentment, we have been building organs for over fifty years.

Time has taught us how to build better organs each succeeding year. Time has enabled us to develop and train experts in every phase of organ construction.

If we made only a few organs a year and built them of the same high quality as those we are producing today we should have to charge considerably more for our product.

And with such a tremendous advantage, through the perfect combination of fine quality and low price, we have become the largest builders of pipe organs in the world.

Personnel

The making of a fine violin, or a pianoforte, is a creative piece of fine art. It requires not only the best tools, equipment and material, but the inspiration of genius as well.

This being true in the case of a violin, it is equally true in the building of a pipe organ with its maze and complexity of parts, its pipes of great sounding beauty and variety, its delicate electric action, the voicing, tuning, and adaption and distribution of parts to meet the individual architectural

First Presbyterian Church
Chicago, Ill.

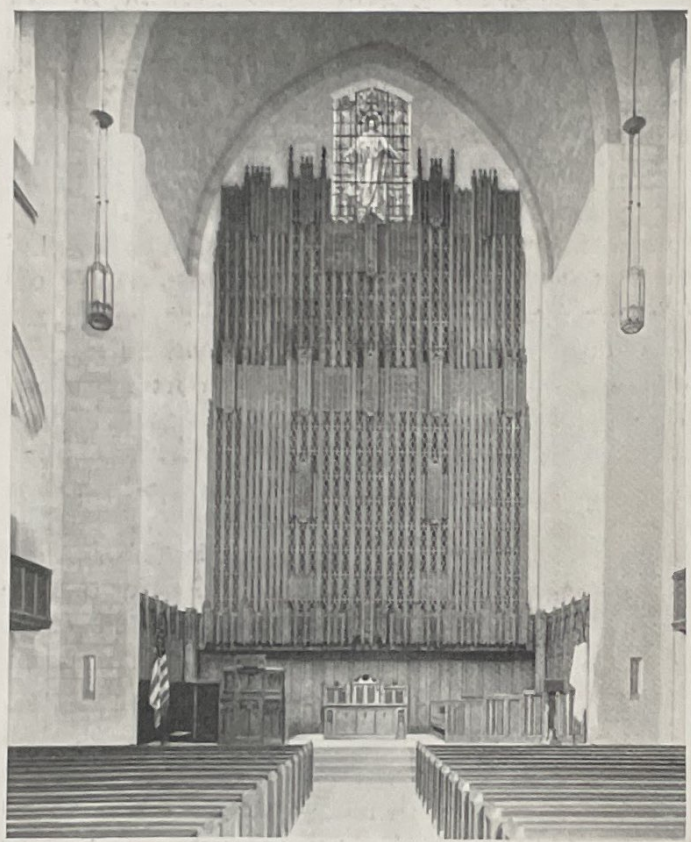
peculiarities of buildings—infinite skill is required in order that true perfection may be attained and continually maintained.

And even here, the finest factory equipment would be of no avail without the loyalty, the skill, and experience of our expert organ builders. You can see, therefore, how important it is that the calibre of our personnel be of the very highest character.

The men who build our organs must not alone possess individual skill and experience, but must be imbued continually with the idealism which is the history of the business itself, if they are to bear adequately the great burden of responsibility which rests upon them.

Further than this we frequently augment our very capable staff with experts who excel in their respective types of workmanship.

Under such conditions as these is it any wonder that we produce organs that are acknowledged to be the finest that the country affords?



SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NEWARK, N.J.

Achievement

How do you count success? Can it be reckoned solely on the basis of quantity and quality, or must we go deeper beneath the surface to find the reason?

For instance, the mere fact that there are more Möller Organs in use today than there are of any other make is not of itself a sufficient measure of success.

However, when you consider that orders for Möller Organs have been placed again and again by those who have previously owned them and that great organists, who have played in leading churches throughout the land, declare that they prefer the Möller Organ, you begin to understand a little of the reason for our achievement.

Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church
Tampa, Fla.

When we state that, out of sixteen magnificent organs installed in the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York, thirteen of these are Möller Organs and that the fourteen organs in the new Pythian Temple in New York City and the nine organs which constitute the musical equipment of the new Masonic Temple in Cincinnati, Ohio—bear the name "Möller," you realize the truth of Möller supremacy. We are also the builders of the two large "Artiste" concert and reproducing organs in the new Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City.

While every organ differs according to the peculiarities, performances and conditions surrounding each installation, there is a uniformly high character to every Möller Organ that is immediately recognized by the artist.

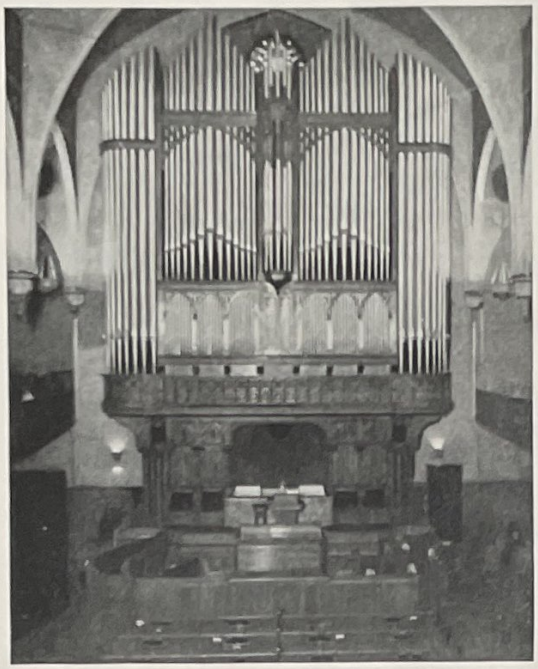
Factory Environment

The men engaged in the construction of organs must be conscious of the nature of the musical demands made upon the instruments, since the building of pipe organs differs from the construction of other manufactured products.

For such men a living environment has to be provided, in which they find opportunities for social and cultural contact. These, Hagerstown affords.

The majority of our employees own their own homes, conveniently located to their work and near good schools and churches. In a community of this character, the cost of living is also comparatively low and there is an absence of the worries which exist in all larger cities. All these conditions tend to establish a feeling of contentment among the workmen and consequently make it more possible for them to devote their best thoughts and efforts to the improvement of their part of the work on each organ built.

Excellence of workmanship in Möller Organs results from this fact, and it demonstrates the wisdom of the management in providing such an environment, as well as accounting for the fact that there are in the employ of this concern men who have



Calvary Baptist Church
Washington, D.C.

been here for a great many years; in fact, in many families for two generations men have aided in the building of Möller Organs.

Materials Used in Construction

Unless proper materials are used, a good organ cannot be produced, regardless of the skill of the workmen who construct it. In every Möller Organ is found the very best of such materials as experience has shown to be the most suitable for the particular purpose.

Probably the most important of these is lumber, because if improper or not fully seasoned wood is used, the defect can never be corrected except by the replacement of parts—an expensive and ofttimes impracticable operation. All lumber used in Möller Organs is selected especially for its kind and quality. We carry at all times at least two million feet of lumber, that is purchased "manufacturing dry," but is given at least one year additional air-seasoning and is then thoroughly kiln-dried before it is used. This precaution eliminates any possibility of later warping or splitting under reasonable conditions.

Leather probably ranks second in importance. We use none but the best grades of sheepskins and lambskins, and our large output requires a quantity that warrants special tannage and treatment beyond that generally given. All valves are made from Scotch or New Zealand lambskins that are split and especially tanned and of such strength that they will not stretch, even under heavy air pressure, nor will they harden from changes in temperature or humidity.

First "Old South" Congregational Church
Worcester, Mass.

The electric materials used in Möller Organs are, for the most part, made specifically for our use. All wires are of double or triple insulation and are paraffined throughout to prevent short circuits. The wiring from the console to the organ is done with special cables that are made of triple insulated wire, paraffin treated, then covered with heavy paper impregnated with beeswax to resist dampness with an outer covering of thick flame-proof asbestos material, approved by the Insurance Underwriters. All wiring throughout the organ is carefully and neatly laced and shellacked.

All magnets used in M. P. Möller Organs are manufactured in our own factory, and are simple in design and positive in action. They are so wound as to require a minimum of current, and the possibility of sparking at all points of contact is entirely eliminated.

In their special design, the possibility of dust and dirt interfering with their proper action (a condition that frequently arises in magnets not designed to prevent this trouble) is reduced to a minimum for the reason that those that we make and use are dirt-proof. Genuine Swedish (or Norwegian) iron is used for magnet cores and all armatures are made of non-magnetic iron, zinc plated to prevent corrosion.

These magnets are of the "outside" type, with armatures integral. Armatures are removable or adjustable without the necessity of opening the chests, or even turning off the wind supply.

Voicing

We realize that the best of materials and workmanship are requisite to a good organ, and that proper scaling and construction of pipes are very important factors; of no less importance is the voicing of the pipes, and the manner in which this latter is done is what distinguishes a "work of art" from the ordinary organ.

Musical instruments—percussion excepted—consist of four groups, or qualities, namely: strings, reeds, flutes and the brasses. The organ not only combines these into one instrument, but, in addition, it supplies the fundamental diapason tones that are not found in the orchestra or band, and that are peculiar only to this instrument.

Our voicing department, at the present time, consists of ten separate voicing rooms, each in charge of a specialist who voices only pipes of a certain quality; the entire voicing department is, however, under the supervision of an expert whose attention is given solely to the success of the general ensemble, or blending of all the pipes.

St. John's Lutheran Church
Hagerstown, Md.

TRINITY METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
NEWBURGH, N.Y.

This system of voicing is adopted by us because, in our experience, we have learned that no pipe-voicer can excel in any but one tone-group of pipes. This method of specialization in voicing is only possible because of the size of our factory, and its effect upon the ultimate tone of a completed organ cannot be overestimated.

The Möller plant is equipped with all the special machinery and skilled labor to make every possible variety of pipes used in the manufacture of organs. In the construction of all pipes, special attention is paid to details ordinarily considered unimportant. For every organ, careful study is given to the matter of scales and material of the different pipes in order that the best results for a particular building or service may be obtained.

Open diapasons—the foundation of every organ—are made of heavy, special metal, insuring power and solidity of tone, and all other registers incorporated within the organ are carefully proportioned in relation to these, to the size of the room, or auditorium, and the specific musical requirements for which they are intended.

To this great care is added the important consideration of the general ensemble of the complete organ, the latter giving the Möller Organ its characteristic and beautiful tone qualities.

String tone pipes are made of metals containing a high percentage of tin. The very "keen" string tone pipes are of pure tin.

All wood pipes are made from carefully selected wood, that has been air-seasoned for years, and are subsequently kiln-dried. Hard wood caps are employed throughout and all pipes are glue-sized on the inside and are covered on the outside with at least two coats of orange shellac.

Möller Action

Every Möller Organ is noted for the simplicity, durability and dependability of its action. A special feature of each organ is the accessibility of valves and all points of regulation.

MEMORIAL ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
ERIE, PA.

Möller actions are electro-pneumatic in principle, developed to a high degree of mechanical perfection. They combine simplicity and consequent reliability with directness and durability and every part is readily and easily accessible.

Much of the success of an electric action depends upon the contacts. All our key contacts are multiple type, operated through the couplers with a rolling motion and are self-cleaning, thus assuring accurate and perfect operation.

The electrical contacts are made of sterling silver tempered to prevent easy bending with the exception of the heavy coupler contact rollers and the base strips of switches, which in standard construction are made of phosphor bronze. No corrosive materials are used—the keyboards are hinged and can readily be raised, making all contacts and console parts easily accessible.

The Console

Next in importance to the tone character of an organ is the console—its design, construction and appointments. By it and through it, the entire organ is made to function.

Herein is contained much of the organ mechanism—a maze of wires as numerous and as complicated as are the nerves of the human body, each one performing a specific duty—a veritable multitude of small and intricate mechanisms, each correlated with the other, delicate in construction, yet built in a manner to withstand the strain of many years' usage.

Within the console, these mechanisms must be in perfect co-ordination and capable of easy, positive and accurate control by a single individual—the organist.

Key measurements (manual and pedal) are in accord with such standards as have been adopted by those official organizations of organists by whom these matters have been given serious thought. The white keys of the manuals are topped with genuine ivory, and the blacks with solid ebony. Pedal keys are of white maple and ebony.

The mechanical parts are largely constructed of brass, aluminum or bronze. Small parts made from other metals are plated to protect them from rust.

To meet the various requirements of organists with respect to design and location of stop controls, we provide any of the three types, namely: ivory head knobs, drawing at 45 degrees angle; stop-keys at the same angle; or, stop-keys over the manuals—all at the same cost.

Upon special order we also furnish circular type consoles. All other console requirements are met by us in a manner consistent with good workmanship and convenience in playing and registration.

Wind Chests

The Möller improved wind chest is the result of years of experience with practically every type of chest and of constant study of the subject combined with many tests. Aside from the use of the very best lumber and leather, we employ none but the most skilled mechanics in this department.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
OF INCARNATION
NEW YORK, N.Y.

Ample and direct wind conductors are used to assure proper articulation of the pipes; the response of valves is instantaneous, both in opening and closing; and the chest must be of a type that permits variations in dimensions adaptable to the different locations and organ chambers in which they are to be placed.

An unwavering wind supply is imperatively necessary in all organs and that is a point in all Möller Organs that has been given our most careful attention. To this end, as a special safeguard, we use divided chests in our larger organs.

It is a fact, no longer successfully disputed, that the best tonal results can be obtained only by using different wind pressures for the different registers and for that reason our chests are constructed to permit the ready use of two or more wind pressures on a single department. Provision is made for expansion in all our chests.

Our valves are so designed and placed that they may easily be removed without removing the pipes, although removal or replacement will not be necessary except on account of damage from water or some other unusual cause.

Straight, Unit and Duplex Organs

Much has been said and written by organists of repute upon this subject and many

have condemned the unit type of organ, favoring only the older straight type, in which each stop has separate pipes.

Likewise, other equally reputed organists have favored the unit organ. Still others have adopted a middle ground in the so-called duplex organ, in which the occasional use of a register at two pitches or on different manuals is made.

We have built the three types and have exhaustively considered the points of all the arguments, verifying this study with extensive musical tests, and have arrived at the sensible conclusion that we shall be guided in all cases by the fact that every Möller Organ is designed for a specific purpose, and that naturally our recommendations must differ according to the individual results desired and space available.

If sufficient funds and ample space are available, nothing could be better than the conventional straight organ, but this happy condition rarely exists, and the very limited tonal variety of the small, or even the medium sized "straight" organ, has brought into existence the other types referred to.

Architecture and Finish

In the exterior design of the organ perfect congruity with its surroundings is of the very highest importance. To this end, we co-operate in detail with the architect. For this purpose special drawings are prepared for each organ, and submitted to the purchaser for approval. No stock designs of fronts are used. All cabinet work is made from the best lumber by skilled interior woodworkers in the building, or after a sample approved by the purchaser.

Installation

The responsibility of the organ builder must, obviously, extend beyond the factory and the ideals of the builder must be understood and shared by the men who make the installations. The men who erect Möller Organs are especially trained for this important part of the work, having been educated at the source—the factory—in mechanical work, tuning and regulating. In addition, they have an excellent working knowledge of practical acoustics.

All Möller Organs are assembled and tested in the factory, but there invariably exist acoustical conditions in the building which must be met at the time the organ is installed.

Therefore, the responsibility of our finishers does not end, as is usual, with merely assembling and tuning the organ. On the contrary, in addition to this, they must also tone-regulate all pipes to their proper power in the particular building before tuning them.

As unimportant as this may appear to the layman, it is nevertheless most essential. The reputation of the builder and the complete satisfaction of the buyer are in the hands of the finishers—*and because no sale of a Möller Organ is regarded as complete until the purchaser is satisfied*—we entrust this important work only to men with ideals, skill and thorough training.

Conclusion

We solicit correspondence on all matters concerning organs and extend a cordial invitation to all persons interested in the subject to visit our extensive plant in Hagerstown, Maryland. Here every part of a Möller Organ under construction may be seen and examined and the large Möller "Artiste" Reproducing Organ in our Recital Hall may be heard.

M. P. Möller, Inc.