

## HAMMERSTEIN'S OLYMPIA.

In the short space of ten months, beginning with February 1895, the large and magnificent amusement palace situated at Forty-fourth street and Broadway, New York, was opened to the public on November 25th.

The building has a frontage of 203 feet on Broadway, 156 feet on Forty-fifth Street, and a little less on Forty-fourth Street. The greatest height of the building is 96 feet at the centre of the Broadway side. The architecture follows the lines of the French Renaissance period.

"Olympia" comprises three spacious auditoriums, as shown by the plans, under one roof, known as Olympia Music Hall, Olympia Concert Hall, and Olympia Theatre, where three distinct entertainments are given nightly, one admission-fee admitting to all.

In addition to the above auditoriums there will be a roof-garden with complete stage appointments and a level floor-space almost equal to the surface dimensions of the entire building and capable of seating several thousand persons.

Below the street-level there are cafés, billiard-rooms, bowling-alleys, and Turkish baths.

The edifice is fire-proof and strictly complies with the laws of the Building and Fire Departments.

No wood or inflammable material has been used in the structural portion, excepting in some parts over concreted floors. It is provided with ample means of escape in case of fire or panic, and has numerous exits on every floor front and back of the curtain-line. Automatic sprinklers are distributed over all the auditoriums, stages, fly-galleries, and dressing-rooms, and at any point the building can be deluged should the temperature reach an abnormal degree.

The building is heated and ventilated by the rotary-fan



process, which forces hot and cold air through ducts, and permits an even temperature at all times, no matter what the climatic conditions may be or how densely the auditoriums may be crowded. The same process drives impure air from the various auditoriums through the openings placed above the ceilings.

Olympia is lighted by electricity supplied by four large dynamos operated from vaults underneath the sidewalk.

The music hall is on the Forty-fifth Street side, occupying a frontage on Broadway of about 75 feet; the concert hall is in the centre, and the theatre is on the Forty-fourth Street end. The main entrance to the three auditoriums, as shown by the plan, is through two massive carved doorways on the street-level in the centre of the Broadway front, leading to the marble foyer. In the centre of the foyer there are two immense passenger-elevators, which run to the upper floors and the roof-garden. To the right and left are marble staircases leading to the balconies and box-tiers of the music hall and theatre.

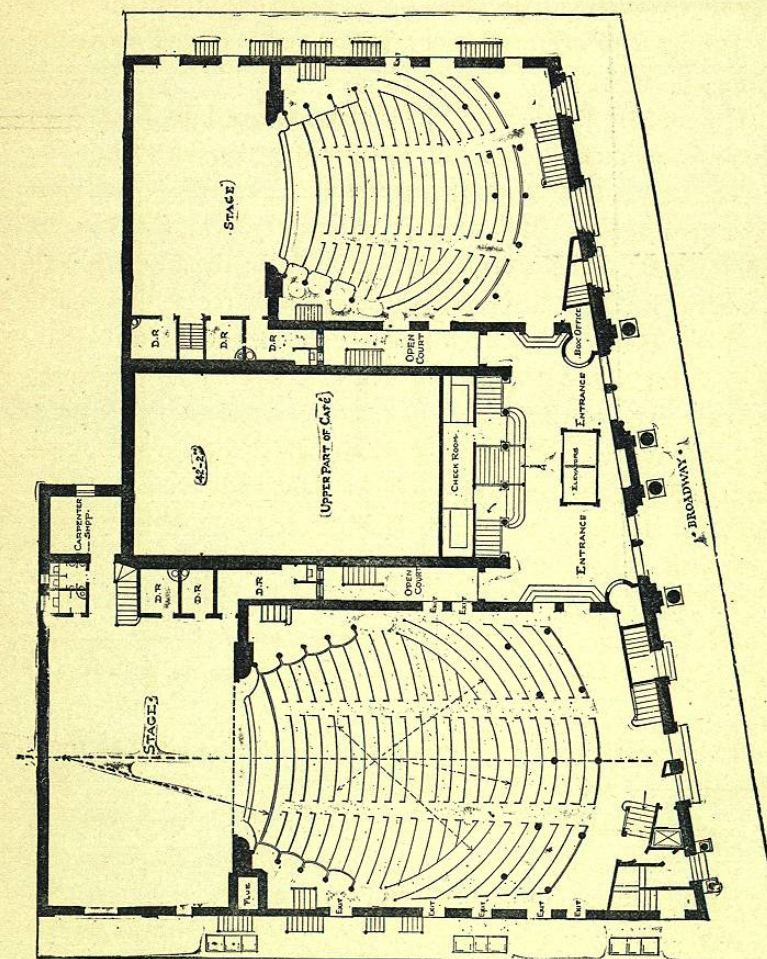
The dimensions of the music hall are: auditorium,  $70 \times 100$  feet; stage,  $43 \times 70$  feet; proscenium opening,  $36 \times 36$  feet; height to rigging-loft, 80 feet; height to fly-gallery, 30 feet.

The stage is well stocked with scenery calculated to meet all requirements.

The dressing-rooms are numerous, well lighted, heated, and ventilated, and are a luxury compared with those usually provided in the average playhouse.

Ample provision has been made for seating in the music hall. There are six tiers of boxes and five tiers of mezzanine boxes, making a total of 124, the largest number known of any single place of amusement. The box-tiers and balconies, while not too far removed from the stage, do not overshadow the orchestra, and are so encircled as to allow freedom

of space in the auditorium, which cannot fail to be agreeable to the occupants of boxes, as well as those in the chairs below. The concert hall is 85 feet long, 43 feet wide, and



MAIN-FLOOR PLAN.

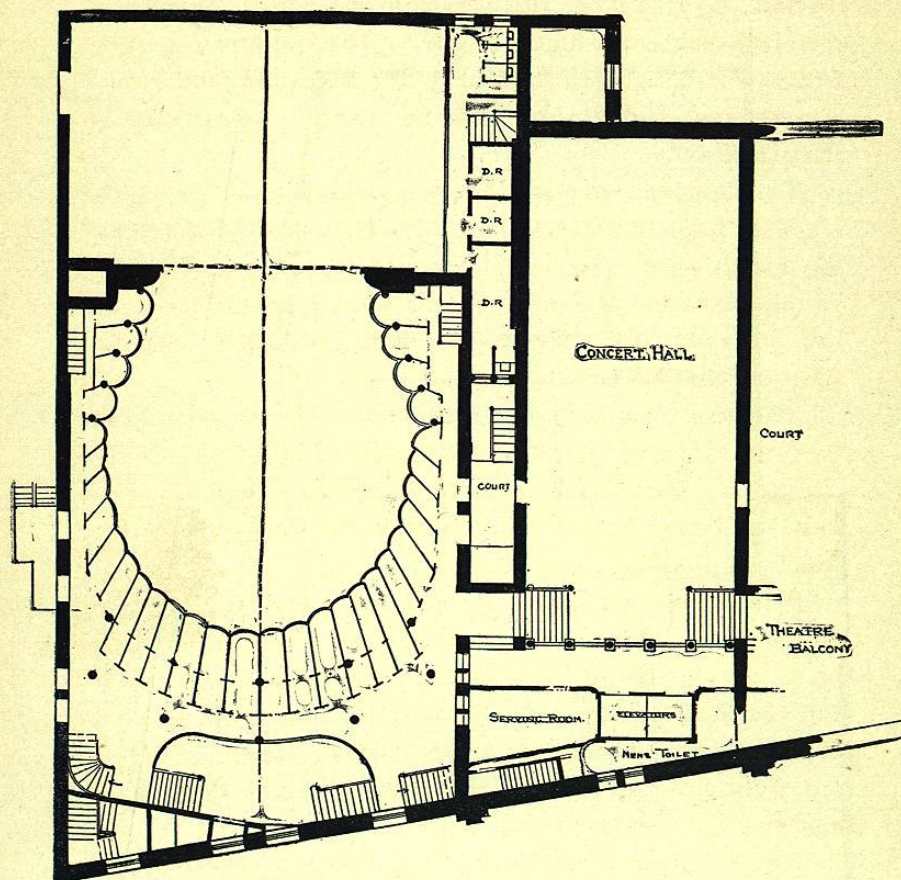
45 feet in height. It is in the centre between the music hall and theatre, separated by courtyards, and is on a level with the first balcony tiers, as shown on plan.

The theatre, situated at the south end, has a seating ca-



capacity less than the music hall, although it contains eighty-four boxes.

The decorative scheme is blue and gold, in the softest



BALCONY-FLOOR PLAN.

tints and most delicate color effects. Carpets, chairs, and hangings are all blue.

Back of the footlights everything is as complete as human ingenuity could make it. The dimensions of the theatre are as follows: auditorium, 60×68 feet; proscenium opening, 32×32 feet; stage, 31×60 feet; height to rigging-loft, 80

feet; height to fly-gallery, 30 feet. The general arrangement of the different balconies is shown by the section.

The stucco work used in the interior decoration of the entire building is one of the beautiful and artistic features of this immense amusement temple. The sculptural groups, figures, and designs which decorate the boxes and prosceniums in the various auditoriums make the interior appear very attractive.

The designs were made after the style in vogue during the reigns of Louis XIV., Louis XV., and Louis XVI., and living models were employed for the life-size groups and figures. In the decorative scheme that has been followed the music hall is Louis XIV., the concert hall Louis XV., and the theatre Louis XVI.

The music hall is highly decorated. The walls and ceilings are rich in panels of beautiful designs. A massive chandelier depends from a rosette surrounded by dancing cupids. A heroic female figure upholds the forty-eight boxes, which are all different in design.

The proscenium panels, as technically described by decorators, are round form at top and bottom, with a slight square break, with motifs in relief ornamenting the base, the middle and top having a bold cartouche with hanging laurel pendants at either side. The carved and undulating Louis XIV. lines are easily recognized in the lyre crossed by two flutes which appear to grow from the top of the cartouche.

The base is decorated with a rich design, a semi bas-relief, consisting of an ornamental pedestal on which rests a vase with dolphin handles. Japanese dragons crouch at each side of the base.

The panel is surmounted with a female head at the top, decidedly "French" in its expression, on whose forehead rests a star, with festoons of flowers hanging at either side. Below this will be found suspended by cupid's chains an



emblem, of which a classic shield, cupid's bow, arrows, etc., form its composition. Its alternate strong and low reliefs and soft lines, with plain grounds well distributed, at once betray to the layman the quality of its execution. The main group over the proscenium arch represents Poetry and Prose being crowned by the goddess Fame. Its dimensions are  $24 \times 10$  feet.

A panel of cupids forms the frieze extending all around the concert hall. In the decorative scheme here cupids, lutes, lyres, etc., all figure prominently. At the corners of the hall are four female figures, twelve feet in height, with arms extended, each supporting a large crystal chandelier.

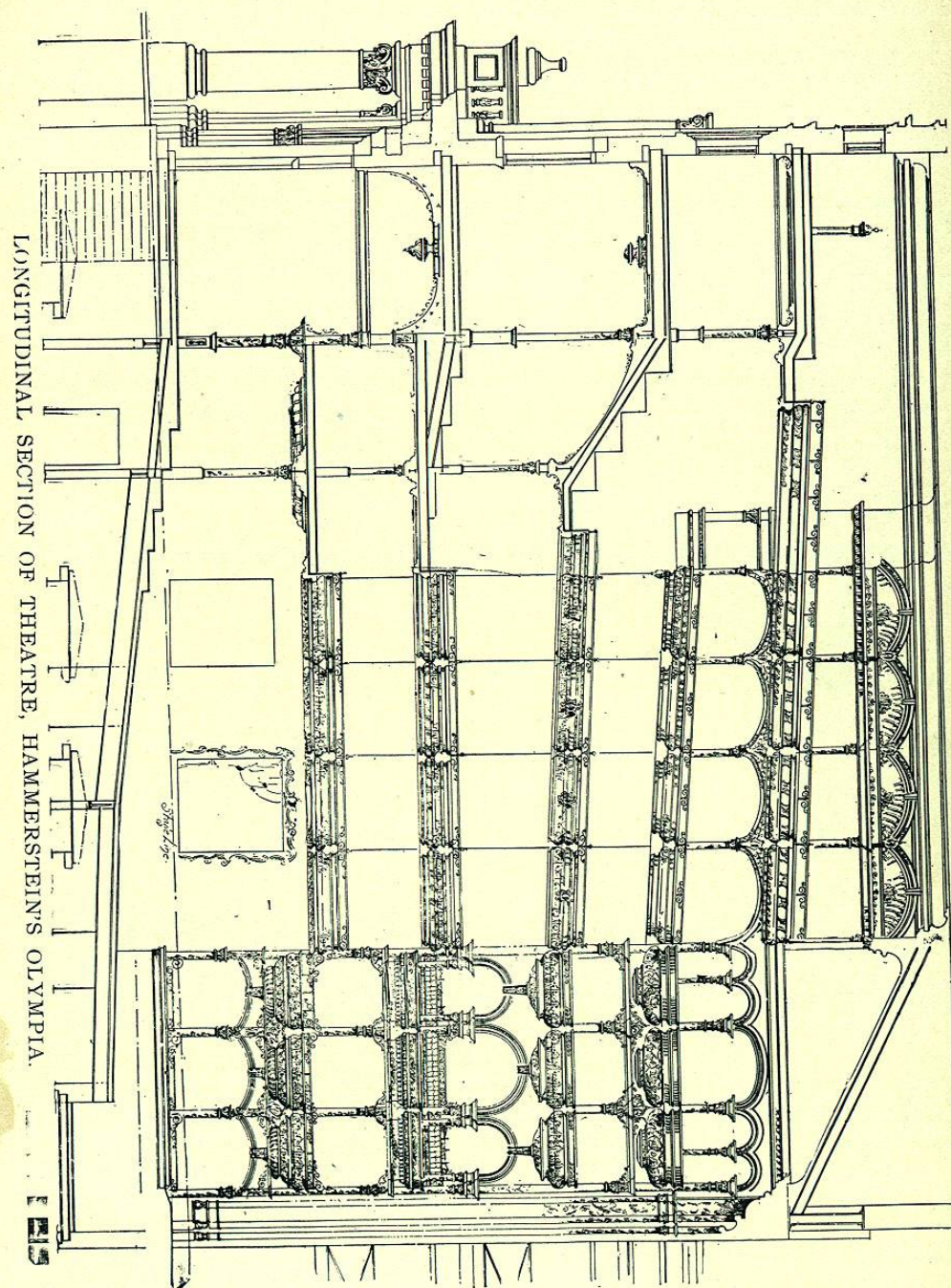
Four large mirrors are set in the sides between the pilasters, and the ceiling is elaborately decorated in floral designs.

The theatre is in white and gold, also elaborately decorated in floral designs and ornamented with statuary and relief figures representing the muse of the drama. The walls of the theatre are covered with ornamental designs in medallions and panels.

The base of the proscenium arch in the theatre, style Louis XVI., is modelled on a convexed surface, inclosed on the one hand by a rich old-gold leaf-moulding and bead, on the other by a flower-band standing out almost free, which run up on each side of the arch to a point in the middle of the top.

Motif composed of classic Louis Seize vase in bas-relief, in which kneels a cupid in perspective; a dove, drapery, and a liberal quantity of flowers finish the whole.

The music hall has a seating capacity of about 1625, in seats arranged as follows: first floor, 576 chairs, 16 boxes; first box-tier, 32 boxes, 160 people; second box-tier, 32 boxes, being similar to the first box-tier; balcony, 210 chairs, 40 boxes, 410 people; gallery, 165 chairs, 12 boxes, 225 people. In addition to the above there is 934 square feet of





standing-room. The steppings of the first-floor plan are arranged somewhat differently from those of any theatre heretofore illustrated, in that those in the centre, or parquette circle, are described from a point on the centre-line, 37 feet 6 inches from the curtain-line, while those right and left of the centre are described by a line extending from the same point 13 feet 8½ inches distant, 11 feet 4 inches back on the centre-line, and 7 feet 4 inches right and left of the centre-line.

The steppings of the parquette and circle are 3 feet 4 inches wide.

The seating capacity of the theatre is about 1000, in seats as follows: first floor, 371 chairs, 6 boxes, 401 people; first and second box-tiers, 22 boxes each, 110 people each; balcony, 106 chairs, 28 boxes, 248 people; gallery, 77 chairs, 8 boxes, 117 people. In addition there is about 900 square feet of standing-room. The steppings of the different tiers are about 2 feet 8 inches wide.

The stairways connecting the first and second balconies in both buildings are easy and about 6 feet 6 inches wide, placed as shown upon the plans, and are not included in the square feet of standing-room mentioned above.

There is no standard in this country by which the Olympia can be measured. No theatrical management ever before offered the public such a diversified scheme of amusement in such a building as this.