

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE

by Lance Johnson

Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

QUIZMASTER
and Organbuilder

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Q. I have connected the piano in the solo chamber into the organ and now need to know on which expression pedal to attach the piano sustain button.

A. As your piano is under the expression of the solo chamber shades, you should mount your sustain button on the solo expression shoe.

Q. I have a second Tibia for my theatre organ which I would like to make into a Stopped Flute. Can you tell me how to proceed?

A. A Tibia is built and voiced quite differently from a Stopped Flute. I would not recommend you try to change one into the other. It would be better to sell your Tibia and buy a large scaled Stopped Diapason from a church organ with high pressure.

Q. Is there any reason not to replace a 2 h.p. Spencer blower rated at 600 cfm at ten inches of wind pres-

sure with two Meidinger 1.1 h.p. high speed blowers, each rated at 400 cfm at 12 inches of wind?

A. I am not sure why you want to have two Meidinger blowers take over the job of your Spencer unless you do not have an adequate volume of air to operate your organ. If you need additional volume (and a little quieter blower system), the Meidingers will do the job.

Q. I have built an offset chest in which the top board is screwed to the ends and the front is the bung which is removable for servicing. The end grain on the ends of the chest runs horizontally, as I thought the wood could expand and contract with the bung to prevent leaking. Now I have even worse leaking because the top and bottom sections have dried and shrunk but the ends have not. The leaks are as large as 1/16 inch. Is there any way to stop the leaks from season to season?

A. To begin with, your chest construction is faulty. You should replace those ends with material which has the grain running vertically so that it can expand with the top and bottom boards. When we build chests, we make certain that the ends are cut from the same board as the

top or bottom so that the moisture content is the same at the time of construction, and the material all expands and contracts the same amount.

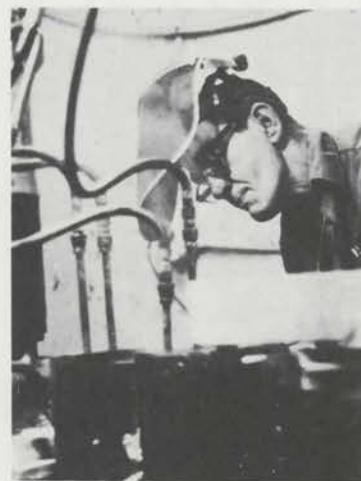
Q. Can you advise me as to what materials are best for building wind chests? I have had old-time organ men tell me that only select sugar pine should be used.

A. There are two very good wood species which are excellent for wind chests: poplar and mahogany. Poplar is medium hard, holds screws very well, is inexpensive. However, it does not take a very attractive finish. It also is very prone to twisting and warping before you have a chance to mill it. Honduras mahogany is very good as it is harder than poplar, holds screws very well, and finishes beautifully. It doesn't tend to warp and twist as much as poplar. However, it is quite expensive. Philippine mahogany is softer, slightly less expensive, and less stable than Honduras mahogany. Sugar pine, if you can afford to buy it, is very stable, finishes quite nicely, but doesn't hold the screws well. Another less desirable species is soft maple, but it tends to chip badly when run through a jointer and tends to warp. It does finish well and holds screws very well. □

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