

HEYWOOD OLD PRIZE BAND.

Heywood, or as it is generally termed "Monkey Town," is situated about 10 miles from the city of Manchester, and about 3 miles from Bury and Rochdale, and the same distance from Besses-o'-th'-Barn. It is on the L. and Y. Railway, and the inhabitants number about 25,000, most of whom are engaged in the cotton manufacture.

For a great number of years it has been noted for its brass bands. In the year 1860, at the time of the cotton panic, the old Kershaw Band, as it was then called, played some time in London, and sent their families money, which kept them during the famine. This band afterwards became the band of the Heywood Rifles, and was so until 1891, when the band was dissolved. There being no brass band of note in the town just then, it was agreed by some of the late members of the Heywood Borough Band and some of the Rifle Band that another should be formed, and be called the Heywood Old Band.

The best players from the two bands (both good prize winners) therefore combined together and bought a set of the best instruments they could get from Besson and Co. They appointed

Mr. Rufus Fletcher bandmaster, and their first public performance was in May, 1892. at the New Mill Co's. great dinner, when they had only had the instruments a week. Engagements followed on pretty quickly, and on October 1st, 1892, at the great contest at Old America, they succeeded in taking the first prize of £50, a gold centre medal for best Euphonium, a 21-guinea Cornet, from Messrs. Wignam, and £60 for a week's engagement at the Exhibition. Much surprise was caused at the decision, but the bandsmen were determined to do something, and they had 16 rehearsals in 14 days. Mr. W. Rimmer was the Solo Cornet player for the Old Band at that time.

The band has ever since kept plodding on, and has during its career won some good prizes. Below will be found a detailed list of the past season's winnings. The band is now stationed at the house of Mr. "Jimmy" Mills, the Friendship Inn. "Jimmy" is one of the old school, and should any bandsman at any time ever come across him he will hold out the hand of friendship to him, and say "same yet, owd lad." He has to a great extent been the means of keeping the band together by his friendly ad-

vice, and ever-ready support.

This short history would be incomplete if we did not mention the present bandmaster, Mr. Isaac Wharton (the indefatigable), and the older members of the band, Wilson Wharton (Solo Cornet), David Taylor and Sam Kay (Horns), J. W. Crabtree (Euphonium), T. Dodgson (Trombone), and Geo. Riley (E flat Bass), and that old veteran, Double B player, Bill Greaves, who has now been playing for 30 years, and is as good as ever, and who is always ready with his advice and suggestions for the welfare of the band.

The band is under the command of that noted conductor, W. Rimmer, Esq., of Southport, and has been now for some time, and under his talented training the band hope he will be able to get even more out of them during next season in the way of winning prizes.

LIST OF PRIZES FOR 1898.

Date.	Contest.	Prize.	Value.		
			£	s.	d.
Jan. 28th	Stockport	1st ...	8	0	0
April 9th	Compstall	1st ...	7	0	0
	Also Cornet, value		9	9	0
May 28th	Rawtenstall	1st ...	12	0	0
May 28th	Do.	1st March ...	1	0	0
June 4th	Stockport	5th ...	1	0	0
July 9th	Belle Vue	3rd ...	8	0	0
	Also Tenor Horn, value		13	13	0
July 23rd	New Mills	2nd ...	8	0	0
July 23rd	Do.	1st March ...	1	0	0
July 30th	Southport	5th ...	1	0	0
Aug. 20th	Oldham	3rd ...	4	0	0
Aug. 20th	Do.	3rd March ...	0	10	0
Total			74	12	0