

# OAK ALYN C.E.T.S. BRASS BAND.

The parish of Gwersyllt lies about 2½ miles from Wrexham, one of the principal towns of North Wales, and the band was started in August, 1896, principally through the efforts of the Misses Irwin, of Oak Alyn, ladies who were always to the fore in every good work. The band was mainly established for the purpose of keeping together the young men of the Gwersyllt branch of the C.E.T.S. and assisting at anything got up for the benefit of the parishioners.

The number of instruments was 13 and under the tuition of Mr. J. R. Williams, formerly of Blackburn and Rochdale, whose expenses were met by weekly subscriptions, the band made rapid progress, but as time went on, one after another leaving, there were sometimes half the instruments idle, and engagements had to be carried out with nine and sometimes only seven players. Meeting with scarcely any support, no wonder those who had been in from the beginning were nearly disheartened, but with true British pluck, they kept pegging away, till by and by the question of getting more instruments arose, and starting with two trombones in 1891, the increase went on, till now there are 22, and hopes are entertained of being able shortly to raise a new set of 24.

During the great coal strike of 1893, the services of Mr. Williams had to be dispensed with and the duties of bandmaster had to be undertaken by the Secretary, who since the commencement had laboured most assiduously in keeping the band together, ably assisted by the Solo Euphonium, Mr. W. Jones, and several others.

In view of a contest, the first to be held in the neighbourhood, outside of which the band was

practically unknown, the services of Mr. T. Valentine, of Manchester, were secured early in the present year, and under his baton the band have simply worked wonders, as will be seen by the appended list of prizes, especially considering the fact that the past season was their very first on the contest field.

## LIST OF PRIZES WON IN 1895.

(First year of Contesting.)

Place.	Date.	Prize.
Helywell ... ..	Feb. 27th ... ..	Second
Broughton (Wrexham) ... ..	March 4th ... ..	2 Firsts
Welshpool ... ..	June 13th ... ..	2 Firsts
Coedpoeth ... ..	Oct. 7th ... ..	2 Firsts
Caergwrk ... ..	Oct. 28th ... ..	First

## MR. RICHARD PHILLIPS,

### BANDMASTER AND SECRETARY.

A sketch of the band would hardly be complete without mentioning the valuable services rendered by Mr. Richard Phillips. Mr. Phillips was appointed Secretary when the band was first started, and still holds that post to the satisfaction of all the members, and it is chiefly owing to his good counsel that the band enjoys the position it now holds; in fact it a question whether the band would now be in existence but for him. Being of a pleasant and agreeable disposition, Mr. Phillips enjoys the respect of all the members and no doubt is the right man in the right place. Any small differences that may arise are quickly dispersed through his able management, and it will not be his fault if the Oak Alyn Band does not before very long become second to none in the whole of Wales.