

THE PENZANCE INDEPENDENT BRASS BAND.

A short history of this band will be interesting to many of our readers. Its success is widely known. That success is the more creditable since it was formed when the conductor, Mr. John Andrews, of Penzance, was in his teens. He has been at its head ever since.

In the year 1887 (Jubilee year) this band, which was till then the Rifle volunteer band, severed its connection with that Company and formed itself into an Independent Band. Since its formation it has won more 1st and 2nd prizes than any other in Cornwall. The first contest the band attended was at Falmouth the August Bank-holiday of 1888, when it met seven other bands. Here the Penzance musicians won the first prize with only eleven members ; Falmouth Volunteer band second (with 23 or 24 members ;) Penryn Volunteer band third ; Helston Volunteer band fourth.

Since this contest they have attended 10 others, having met and defeated some of the best bands in Cornwall, such as Illogan, Camborne, and others.

The band contest worthy of the most note was held at Tehidy park, Camborne, in the 1892 August Bank-holiday when the best bands in the county met for competition. This was the only time that Penzance, Camborne, and Illogan bands met together. Stenalees band also entered. This was looked forward to as a big affair. The contest was very close, and the result was Penzance won first ; Illogan second ; Camborne third ; Stenalees fourth.

The past year or so contests have not been so well attended, evidently bands being afraid of one another. Still we are glad to say that the Penzance Independent band has attended nearly all of them, and has had its labours handsomely rewarded.

One thing the band can claim—they have beaten every band they have played against, some time or other. Though beaten sometimes they have always been victorious over their conquerors some time. The band ought to receive good support from our district. It is ever ready to give its services (gratis) for any charitable object.

The band is not only known locally but in most musical places in our country. No doubt attending band-contests is a good means to bring a band into prominence, and, had it not been for these, the Independents would, perhaps, not enjoy the reputation they have to-day.

The band has also behaved well, and has taken its defeats with the same good grace as victories and in the excellent spirit of Try-again. Some people imagine that the reason the band has won so many prizes is because it has played under the same judge on many occasions. This is not so. As a matter of fact out of the eleven prizes the band has won it has played under eight different umpires.

This shows that there could not have been favouritism.

We have it from good authority that the band will retire from the contest-field for a season or two, and give more time to the supply of music locally. This will, no doubt, induce other bands to enter contests during that time.

The Independents are working men, who only devote their spare time to music, but the manner that music is rendered has taken many visitors to the town by agreeable surprise.

The band is about to start a list of annual subscribers, and in return intend to visit such subscribers periodically and render suitable programmes of music. We trust that native talent and years of study and practice will meet the support they deserve.