

ARMLEY AND WORTLEY PRIZE BAND.

In the year 1892 and for a few years previous Armley people could boast of having in their midst one of the finest brass bands of the day, viz., the Leeds Forge. About the end of that year, when the band had reached the height of their ambition by scoring at nearly all the contests they visited, playing before Royalty and so forth, a sudden signal was given that the band must be discontinued, and that all the instruments, etc., must be delivered up to headquarters. This was a great surprise to all lovers of music in the locality, for Leeds Forge Band and its successes had almost become a household word. However, from that time to the present no more has been heard of that famous band.

Time passed on to about the month of May, 1894, when a number of gentlemen interested in brass bands met at the Star Inn, Wortley, to see if it was not possible to form another band. In the month following a deputation was appointed to wait upon Mr. Samson Fox, with a view of asking that gentleman to give the instruments, etc., belonging to the late Leeds Forge Band to form a public band to be known as "The Armley and Wortley Brass Band." I may here state that Mr. T. A. Kitchen, the present band secretary, was working very hard, as is his usual habit with anything he takes in hand, to help forward the formation of the band.

After two or three interviews and a good deal

of correspondence it was found impossible to get the instruments from Mr. Fox under satisfactory conditions, and it was decided to go a step further by asking the price of a complete set of new instruments of Messrs. Besson and Co.

Early in May, just twelve months after the first meeting was held, another meeting took place at the Star Inn, Mr. H. Bentley, being elected secretary pro tem in place of Mr. G. Knapton. At that meeting it was decided to solicit subscriptions from the leading gentlemen of the district, and a deputation was appointing consisting of Messrs. Kitchen, Bentley, Roberts, Stead, and Tingle. This party went to work at once and had the pleasure of heading the list with £25 given by the late Robert Ingham, Esq., J.P. Wortley. Soon a good list was made up and a public meeting was called and a proper committee elected. This took place in June, 1895.

On July 5th, 1895, an order was given to Messrs. Besson and Co. for a first class complete set of silver-plated instruments. The subscription list had by this time reached about £150. On August 15th, 1895, an order for cases for instruments was given to the same firm. In September following these instruments were in the hands of the Committee and drum, music stands, and other necessities were then purchased.

Seven gentlemen in the district, namely, Richard Wilson, Esq., Martin Holdsworth, Esq., Peter

Summerton, Esq., Marshall Stables, Esq., B. S. Meek, Esq., J. Boothroyde, Esq., and John Wormald, Esq., were appointed as trustees for the property of the band; Mr. B. S. Meek was also appointed treasurer, John Wormald, Esq., solicitor, and Messrs. Wm. Williams, Brown and Co., bankers. The Towns' School at Armley was then taken as the band room, and Mr. B. D. Jackson appointed as teacher of the Band. This was in November, 1895. Soon every instrument was in use and the members set to work with a will to make for themselves a name.

The first annual general meeting was held in the band room on January 29th, 1896, presided over by Martin Holdsworth, Esq. At this meeting it was shown that the subscriptions, in about six months, had amounted to £220 17s. 5½d., while the expenses had been £371 11s., including £350 paid for the instruments, etc., to Messrs. Besson and Co. At this meeting Richard Wilson, Esq., was made president, an office he still holds, and one which could scarcely be better filled, as he takes a great interest in the welfare and progress of the band. The band continued their rehearsals very diligently into the following summer and have been well rewarded for their pains, for they have won for themselves a good name as well as the following prizes at the various contests:—

LIST OF PRIZES.

1896.

April 4th	...	Kippax	...	1st	...	Selection
April 25th	...	Bradford	...	4th	...	Quartette
May 9th	...	Skelmanthorpe	...	1st	...	March
May 9th	...	Skelmanthorpe	...	3rd	...	Selection
May 23rd	...	Rothwell	...	1st	...	Selection
May 23rd	...	Rothwell	...	1st	...	March

May 23rd	...	Rothwell	...	1st	...	Cornet
July 11th	...	Pateley Bridge	...	2nd	...	March
July 11th	...	Pateley Bridge	...	3rd	...	Selection
Aug. 4th	...	Bilton (Harrogate)	...	1st	...	Selection
Aug. 4th	...	Bilton (Harrogate)	...	1st	...	March

1897.

April 19th	...	Blackpool	...	1st	...	Cornet
April 19th	...	Blackpool	...	3rd	...	Drum
April 19th	...	Blackpool	...	3rd	...	Drum
June 19th	...	Farnley	...	1st	...	Selection
June 19th	...	Farnley	...	2nd	...	March
Aug. 2nd	...	Ilkley	...	1st	...	Valse
Aug. 2nd	...	Ilkley	...	2nd	...	March

They have also had a good number of public engagements at the various parks, etc., and seem to have given general satisfaction whenever they appeared. On May 17th, 1896, the members of the band gave a sacred concert in Wortley Cricket Field for the benefit of the Mickleford Colliery Disaster, and a sum of £60 was thus raised and forwarded to the central relief fund.

Mr. T. A. Kitchen is still acting as band secretary, and though he has had a long spell of labour in connection with different bands his interest does not slacken in the least and the other members know that it will be very difficult to find his equal, and they sincerely hope that he will long continue to hold that office.

Mr. H. Bentley has been presented with a splendid timepiece in commemoration of organising the formation of this band. I may just add that Mr. Herbert Mallinson has been engaged as teacher in the place of Mr. B. D. Jackson, and it is the Committee's intention to secure one of the leading professional teachers of the day to give the members an extra polish up for the coming season.