

Music in the Provinces

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'Sweet Kate.' At Barnstaple, the winners were Edgehill College, Bideford; at Exeter, Crediton High School; in the final the two choirs were placed in this order. The best mark for sight-singing (ninety-nine out of a hundred) was given to Barnstaple Grammar School. Other choirs that did well were St. James, Exeter, Girls' Friendly Society; Budleigh Salterton Women's Institute; Uffculme Ladies' Choir; and Woodbury Village Choir.—A four days' Festival at CLEETHORPES (July 2-5) culminated in an excellent display of choral singing on the Saturday. The leading successes were those of the William Woolley Choral Society (Nottingham), Scunthorpe Male-Voice Choir, and Cleethorpes Ladies' Choir. In the mixed-voice contest, limited to Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, the best choir was Flottergate Choral Society, from Grimsby. Marshchapel swept the board in the village choral classes—male, female, and mixed.

In a number of classes of this year's Festival at LEAMINGTON, the test-pieces were the same as those set recently at other competitions in the district. This method certainly increases the number of entries, but it is questionable whether it is good for the musical health of the competition movement. It often means that one competitor carries off the prize at festival after festival, by the accident of excelling in the particular type of music set. This fault was almost entirely absent, however, in the children's section, and the standard attained in these classes is sufficient justification for the continuance of the Festival. The most beautiful choral singing came from the Malvern Wells Male-Voice Choir, conducted by Mr. J. H. L. Gauntlett. The singing of madrigals still causes the choirs some anxiety, but this branch of the choral art is improving every year, and that many of the choirs were fairly successful in Morley's difficult 'Ho, who comes here,' is greatly to their credit.

G. W.

Choral conductors frequently ask us for advice as to the pronunciation of 'wind.' The following helpful answer, which appeared recently in a weekly paper, may be taken as authoritative, and should preserve us from further inquiries:

'PRONUNCIATION OF "WIND" IN MODERN POETRY.—Can you inform me if the pronunciation of "wind" as "wind" in poetry is now adhered to?—L. J. S., Bristol.

'A.—Modern poets have, for the most part, given up the old poetical pronunciation of "wind" as "wind."

'At a musical festival:

'Dry tone and unsteady intonation told against the singing of the — Temperance Philharmonic.—*Provincial Paper.*

'We can understand the dry tone, but are a little surprised at the unsteady intonation.—*Punch.*'

Music in the provinces

ABERYSTWYTH.—The fifth Festival was held on June 21, 22, and 23. A novelty was a Children's Concert, conducted by Mr. Adrian C. Boulton, this being the first full performance of the Welsh Symphony Orchestra. The programme included the 'Clock' Symphony, Beethoven's Rondino in E flat for wind instruments, Mozart's 'Serenade' for strings, and Quilter's 'Children's Overture.' In the evening the orchestra played Brahms's 'Festival' Overture (the 'Gaudeamus' being sung), Stanford's 'Irish Rhapsody,' Bach's Violin Concerto in A minor (with Mr. Hubert Davies as soloist), Holst's 'Fugal Concerto,' and Beethoven's eighth Symphony. A choir of twenty-three voices sang 'Heraclitus,' Motets by Byrd, and two Elizabethan Madrigals. Sir Henry Wood was the conductor on the second day, when Franck's Symphony was played. The evening programme included a Suite in G (Bach), arranged by Sir Henry Wood, and Brahms's Violin Concerto in D, with Miss Sybil Eaton as soloist. Sir Walford Davies conducted a performance of Verdi's 'Requiem.' Another experiment was

a Hymn Festival with the help of the Welsh Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Walford Davies. At the final concert Sir Edward Elgar conducted his 'Enigma' Variations and Violoncello Concerto, with Mr. Arthur Williams as soloist. Sir Walford Davies conducted the 'New World' Symphony, and the choral works, which included a Bach Chorale and Beethoven's 'Creation's Hymn.' A novelty was a song for baritone and orchestra, 'Admiral Death,' by Dr. J. R. Heath, sung by Mr. W. R. Allen.

BIRMINGHAM AND DISTRICT.—On July 8, Mr. Martin Harvey, jun., assisted by Miss Denne Parker, Miss Myrrha Bantock, and Miss Moureen Taylor, gave a recital, in which the dance as a means of musical expression was the principal feature. Miss Denne Parker sang songs by Prof. Bantock, and Mr. Martin Harvey and his colleagues interpreted them in movement. Mr. Martin Harvey possesses an easy technique, and a special feature of his performance was his excellent facial expression.—The scheme for the City Orchestra's eight Symphony Concerts next season includes the following Symphonies: Elgar No. 2, Brahms No. 1, Schumann No. 4, Bantock's 'Hebridean,' and Bliss's 'Colour.' The soloists so far engaged include Miss Beatrice Harrison and Miss Harriet Cohen.—Mr. Cunningham's weekly organ recitals at the Town Hall continue to draw large attendances. They are given at mid-day, and as the City Police Band, under Mr. Richard Wassell, has begun a series of mid-day concerts in the same building on Tuesdays, the resumption of Miss Marjorie Sotham's Thursday concerts in September will probably find Birmingham supplied with three mid-day concerts weekly.

BLACKPOOL.—The Blackpool Lyric Choir and the Amateur Symphony Orchestra gave a concert at the Winter Gardens on July 13 under Mr. Percy Dayman. MacDowell's 'Summer Winds' and Walford Davies's 'O England' were among the choral pieces performed, and the Orchestra played Mozart's Symphony in C (No. 36).—The list of vocalists to appear at the North Pier weekend concerts, under the direction of Mr. S. Speelman, includes many members of the B.N.O.C.

EDINBURGH.—At the annual meeting of guarantors of the Reid Orchestra, on June 16, it was decided that the members of the Orchestra should form themselves into a self-governing body on the lines of other symphony orchestras, and that they should give fortnightly concerts in Usher Hall during the winter.

HARLECH.—The chief event of the Festival held on June 26 was the performance of 'The Apostles,' conducted by Sir Edward Elgar. In the afternoon a local orchestra played a fantasy on Welsh airs, by Dr. Heath, who conducted this and the 'Figaro' Overture. The Welsh Symphony Orchestra played the 'Magic Flute' Overture, movements from Beethoven's eighth Symphony, and Elgar's arrangement of the Bach Fugue in C minor. The principal singers during the day were Miss Laura Evans-Williams, Miss Dilys Jones, Mr. Horace Stevens, Mr. T. Pickering, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Bryngwyn. Sir Walford Davies was conductor-in-chief.

HOLYHEAD.—At the Anglesey Musical Festival on July 2 massed choirs and mixed professional and amateur orchestras performed in a high wind during an afternoon concert. Mr. T. Hopkin Evans conducted, and the programme included Dr. Dan Prothero's 'Salm Gobaith' and the 'William Tell' Overture. In the evening it was decided to adjourn to the Hyfrydle Chapel, and Spohr's 'Last Judgment' was the chief work.

LIVERPOOL.—In the course of the British Music Society's Conference, an orchestral concert on June 26 was the largest public event. The first part was a demonstration of one of Messrs. Rushworth & Dreaper's lecture-concerts for children, with Miss E. Allen as lecturer. The second part included Vaughan Williams's 'Old King Cole' ballet, Elgar's 'Wand of Youth,' Herbert Howells's 'Puck's Minuet,' and works by Delius and Holst. Mr. Gordon Stutely conducted. A chamber concert given earlier in the same day consisted of works by the Liverpool Centre Composers.

Group, and included Douglas Miller's Pianoforte Concerto, Frederick Morrison's Pianoforte Trio, Ernest Lodge's Violin Sonata, and groups of songs by Norman Peterkin and Frederick Nicholls.—The closing event of the Conference was a concert given by amateurs on June 28 in the David Lewis Hostel. The Amateur Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Gordon E. Stutely, played 'The Master-singers' Overture, the Prelude to Act 3 of 'Lohengrin,' and the English ballet, 'Old King Cole,' by Vaughan Williams, the last-named in collaboration with the boys of Liverpool College.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT.—The annual meeting of the Hallé Society, presided over for the last time by Mr. Gustav Behrens, brought to light more interesting matters than are usual on such occasions. The increased number of string players had raised the strength of the Orchestra to eighty-six, and the past season had abundantly justified such an increase. The number of engagements secured by the Orchestra outside Manchester had grown to seventy. On October 28, and November 11 and 25, the Hallé band was to play in London at Queen's Hall, after an interval of many years. During the coming season at Manchester ten of the twenty Hallé concerts were to be broadcast, the Executive rightly judging that 'listeners-in' would soon want to hear the band at closer quarters, and so far from diminishing audiences it was highly probable that they would thereby be increased. The concert given by the Orchestra last December to thirty-two hundred school-children and their attendants had been such an outstanding success that arrangements for another were well in hand, the Orchestra again giving its services. Then six orchestral concerts—altogether outside the normal Manchester subscription series—were to be given next winter in Free Trade Hall under the aegis of the Manchester City Council, a proportion of seats being reserved for children. One of the large boxes in Free Trade Hall is to be reserved for blind musicians from the Manchester Blind Home at Old Trafford all through next season. The increased expenditure on the larger number of players and extra rehearsals had resulted in a net loss on the year of £258, reduced to a negligible sum by the amount brought forward from the season 1922-23. Long-service badges were now to be worn by players whose services with the band had exceeded twenty years' duration. No fewer than sixteen of the present band had services ranging from twenty to forty years to their credit. Not only are the artistic sides of this organization well thought out, but the humanitarian aspect is not lost sight of. Richter initiated the Orchestra Pension Fund. To-day it numbers seventy-two paying members, accumulated investments amount to £14,377, and twelve pensioners are drawing annually £300, or roughly 10s. per week each. In addition the Orchestra has a Sick Fund, contributed to and administered by its own members, and the Executive has voted this year £50 to the Fund. Beyond these, is the Hallé Sick and Benevolent Fund, formed by voluntary gifts, and administered by the Executive, intended to meet cases of emergency and distress on the part of players or their dependents; this Fund to-day stands at £463. The only public opportunity afforded to concert-goers for sharing in these schemes is in connection with the annual Pension Fund Concert, when all concerned in the performance give their services, the net proceeds going to swell the Pension Fund; the surplus on the concert in March last was £209. It is announced that Dr. Thomas Keighley will again lecture in advance of the concerts on any new music to be heard; and that the choral concerts will be Berlioz's 'Faust' (given 'according to the directions of the composer'), 'Gerontius,' 'The Messiah,' and Bach's B minor Mass, which is to become an annual performance. On this aspect of the Society's affairs, it may be remarked that the 'St. Matthew' Passion deserves at least as much attention as the Mass, which will be given next March for the fourth consecutive year. The main features of the orchestral scheme for next season are (a) four purely orchestral concerts; (b) the performance of all the Brahms Symphonies, of which Mr. Hamilton Harty has shown himself an uncommonly good interpreter. These come on October 16, December 4, January 29, and March 19. Elgar's A flat, César Franck's D minor, Tchaikovsky's No. 5, Schubert's C major, Dvorák's No. 4 in G, Beethoven's

Nos. 5 and 8, along with Harty's 'Irish,' complete the symphonic aspect of the season. Strauss's 'Zarathustra' and d'Indy's 'Istar' are the two most notable works outside the Symphonies, so far as the season's work has been disclosed. Among visiting soloists are Cortôt, Casals, Joan Manen, Suggia, Moiseiwitsch, Jelly d'Aranyi, and Murdoch, and three leaders of the Orchestra in Catterall, Twelvetrees, and Mortimer also figure as soloists. It was Mr. Gustav Behrens, the retiring chairman, who, along with the late E. J. Broadfield, shouldered the burden on Hallé's death in 1895. They were determined that Hallé's high ideals should be maintained, and that the Hallé Orchestra should not just pass over to an impresario. Some measure of their accomplishment under Cowen, Richter, Balling, Beecham, and Harty, may be gained from the earlier part of these notes. Mr. Behrens, in retiring from the chairmanship (in which he succeeded to Mr. Broadfield), continues his services on the Executive, and is followed by another of Manchester's leading merchants, Mr. E. W. Gromme.—The Catterall Quartet early next year makes its first Continental trip, visiting, amongst other cities, Cracow, Warsaw, Lodz, and Berlin. At one of the London Hallé Orchestra's concerts, Catterall is to play the Brahms Violin Concerto.—The Tuesday Mid-day Concerts have at last won through to a definite and assured position, consolidated artistically and financially. Naturally there is much satisfaction to be derived from such a harvest, wrung from a field so rough, untilled, and unpromising. The only drawback to its increasing usefulness is the absence of any fixed concert-hall—its peregrinations last winter causing confusion. This difficulty awaits solution.

OXFORD.—On June 15, at the choral singing on the staircase at Christ Church, the polyphonic period was represented by Weelkes's 'Gloria in excelsis,' Gibbons's 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' Byrd's 'Agnus Dei,' and Henry VIIIth's 'O Lord, the Maker of all things,' and the line was continued with the two Wesleys ('Exultate Deo' and 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace') and Stanford ('O living will'). In two hymns ('O Strength and Stay' and 'Round me falls the night') chorales of the Reformation period were used with harmonies and descants, these being taken from the sets which Drs. Harris and Ley are editing.—On June 22 the Elizabethan Singers sang in the Playhouse, additions to their repertoire being 'Lure, falconers' (Benet), 'Oh, can ye sew cushions' (Bantock), 'When Allen-a-dale' (Pearsall), Byrd's 'Lullaby' and 'Cradle Song,' and Dr. Walker's cycle of five songs from 'England's Helicon.'—Ifley Choral Society, having received a number of singers from the city, appeared for the first time on June 25 as the Oxford Harmonic Society, and sang Holst's 'I vow to thee, my country,' Parry's 'Pied Piper of Hamelin,' Bantock's 'Oh, can ye sew cushions,' and Besly's arrangement of 'Shenandoah.' The orchestral works included Haydn's Symphony in C, Mozart's 'Eine kleine nacht-musik,' and Grainger's 'Mock Morris.'

IRELAND

After a suspension of four years, the Limerick Choral Festival held a most successful meeting on June 29, when an appropriate sermon was preached by the Lord Bishop of Cashel. The choirs were conducted by the veteran organist of Limerick Cathedral, Mr. Frank Muspratt, who is now in his fortieth year of office.

On July 8, an Irish branch of the Gervase Elwes Fund for Musicians was formed to help cases of sickness or poverty, to assist individuals to equip themselves for a musical career, and in general to co-operate in any movement that will further the cause of music.

Dr. Annie W. Patterson has been appointed Lecturer in Irish Music in University College, Cork, an appointment that has given great satisfaction.

The first public performance of the Irish Army Band (No. 1), conducted by Col. Fritz Brase, at Phoenix Park, Dublin, on July 13, was much appreciated by an enormous concourse of people.