

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

WRIGHT & ROUND, Liverpool, England.

H. ROUND. *Four easy Trios for two Cornets and Euphonium.* "Nae Luck," *Scotch Air varié for Cornet Solo, with Pianoforte Accompaniment.* 2s. "The Plough Boy," *old English Air varié for Cornet, with Piano Accompaniment.* 2s. "Jenny Jones," *Welsh Air varié for Cornet, with Piano Accompaniment.* 2s. We hope that our cornet soloists, Arbuckle, Levy, Liberati, Shuebruck, Bent, and all the others, may find something which suits their taste and individual talent among these selections. Summer is soon coming, and new cornet solos will be in demand.

BRENTANO'S LITERARY EMPORIUM, New York.

DR. JOSE GODOY. "Be at the window, darling." *Song.* 40 cts. Very plain and simple. As the song is unpretentious, it will find favor in the eyes of many who like little dainties without difficulties.

DR. JOSE GODOY. "Pachita Habanera." 60 cts. Written in the usual style of this kind of music; can be sung by one voice or as duet, and has English and Spanish words.

CHICAGO MUSIC CO., Chicago, Ill.

EDGAR H. SHERWOOD. "Naiad of the Rapids." *Galop for Piano.* 75 cts. A composition with dash and fire, which will give a great deal of pleasure to pianists who are fond of brilliant style.

J. E. ROHRBAUGH. "Sylvan Dell." *Valse.* 35 cts. Too insignificant to deserve more than a mere notice of its existence.

HARRY DAVIS. "The Colored Regimental Guards." *Character Song.* 40 cts. One of those songs the success of which depends more on the words and the accompanying gestures than on the music. Artistic work would be entirely out of place in a minstrel show.

LESLIE WATSON, Syracuse, Ill.

LESLIE WATSON, "Christmas March," *for piano.* 35 cts. The composer shows in this march to advantage. It is a very good musical work, although the melodic invention is of limited character.

MORSE & EMERSON'S STRING FACTORY.

EVERY department appertaining to the manufacture of musical instruments is of interest to the mechanic and inventor, and to those who are interested in the fine machinery and nice labor-saving contrivances with which of all countries in the world our own is especially fruitful at this time; and this is particularly the case in the manufacture of strings for musical instruments of all classes—not only those which are intended to vibrate on being struck, but also those which give out sound by friction. In the difficulties to be overcome and the nice manipulation required by the workman, as well as the many elements which have to be considered by the successful manufacturer, we are inclined to think that, although in respect to the magnitude of the business this manufacture occupies a subordinate place, yet, in view of the skill required, it must be accorded a place (mechanically speaking) in the front rank.

In the factory of Messrs. Morse & Emerson (a young but fast-growing firm in this line of business), at 328 and 330 Seventh avenue, in this city, we find mechanical appliances for the making of all kinds of strings for musical instruments, which must be well worth a visit from every one connected with the musical manufacture who really takes an interest in the mechanical part of his business, and does not simply look at a musical instrument as a piece of merchandise to be bought and sold.

Here may be found machines at work on the manufacture of strings for pianofortes by which all the difficulties which have heretofore puzzled piano makers are completely overcome, the tension of the string while being wound and the tension of the covering wire being so nicely adjusted by the machine and the skill of the workman, that what is technically called "backthrow," or twisting of the string when finished, and false intonations arising from unequal tension in winding, are entirely obviated, the string, when it comes finished from the machine, hanging almost as straight as a plumb line; and of the thousands of piano strings which the firm has turned out, we believe they have yet to hear of one that has proved unsatisfactory. Such mechanical results can only be obtained by men who have made a study of their business, and have not only theorized on it, but have worked at the difficulties to be overcome with their hands as well as their brains; and an intimate acquaintance with the head of this firm not only proves his knowledge of the string manufacture itself, but of the scientific facts in other branches which have a bearing on this. There are many things to be considered in the manufacture of a perfect string for a musical instrument which would hardly be thought of by one unfamiliar with the business; for instance, a covered gut string should be made in the climate in which it is intended to be used, because a change in the atmosphere causes a change in the string, an expansion or contraction occurring which loosens the covering wire, and thereby ruins the tone. To this circumstance is owing the fact that so many strings manufactured in Europe prove unsatisfactory in this country, as well as to the use of cheap material, which the desperate effort made to overcome our tariff renders necessary on the part of the foreign manufacturer.

We are informed that the success of Messrs. Morse & Emerson in the making of perfect strings, besides the excellence of their machinery, is due to the excellent quality of the raw materials for the business which may now be procured in this country.

The gut can be obtained of a more homogeneous quality, and the raw silk manufactured here now is better for string making purposes than any imported; the wire (body as well as covering) is also of better quality than the imported, a result which has only been brought to pass within a few years and in which it is hinted that the senior partner in the firm of which we are writing has also had a hand.

Not the least feature in the working of these string making machines is the rapidity with which the work is executed; here are machines for making covered piano strings from which 20 sets of perfect strings are turned off every working day, each one of which will be precisely like the other, not only when measured with the callipers, but by the more delicate test of tone when in musical use. Such results seem marvelous when we consider that only a few years have elapsed since string covering was done by a workman

who used an ordinary wooden foot lathe in which nice adjustment of tension was almost impossible, and by which only a few strings could be turned off in a day even by a clever workman.

Now we see all that changed, and with the advent of these and kindred improvements it may be possible to have pianos with interchangeable parts like a Waltham watch or a Springfield rifle, each one of which will have precisely the same power, quality of tone, and capability for remaining in tune as the 99 or 999 predecessors from the same factory. The progress of this young and enterprising firm since they established themselves in this city has been rapid and the testimonials which they have received from first class manufacturers of pianos and other musical instruments, as well as the large orders which they have for their goods, are evidences that the trade generally is appreciating their good work.

Messrs. Morse & Emerson within a few months passed through a disastrous fire to which we have before alluded in a former issue, and by which the earnings of many months of hard work were swept away, but they are now in better and safer quarters with more room to increase their facilities, which the proportions of the business render imperative in the near future.

CELLULOID PIANO KEYS.

A SHORT time before the close of the year just passed, the President and Vice-President of the Celluloid Piano Key Company, of 216 Centre street, New York, made a thorough tour of the Middle and Western States, and found everywhere among the music trade the most gratifying evidences of the increasing popularity of celluloid piano keys.

The only objection which has ever been made against the use of celluloid for piano keys, by unprejudiced persons, was that it was liable to warp, but that objection only applied to the keys manufactured from celluloid made when alcohol was used as a solvent for the raw material. The company ceased to use alcohol as a solvent several months since, and, as often happens in similar cases, they found a solvent which is better than the original one, and which helps to correct this very difficulty, viz., warping of the keys. We have seen a set of piano keys made from unseasoned wood, which has been exposed to a dry atmosphere for a long time, and gives no signs to the naked eye of deviating from a level. Of course, in introducing a comparatively new article in any branch of manufacture a vast deal of ignorance and prejudice has to be overcome, and all sorts of foolish objections are urged against its use by prejudiced workmen and parties interested against it, but the advantages from its use are so manifest that it is steadily gaining in favor with piano and organ manufacturers as may be judged from the fact that there are now over 230,000 sets of celluloid keys in use and their number is constantly increasing. There is no purpose among the many for which this valuable invention is used, which seems to us more fitting and proper than its adaptation to the manufacture of piano and organ keys; it possesses qualities which render it far better for the purpose than ivory, for as at present manufactured, it never turns yellow or becomes in any way discolored, is less liable to crack, and its extreme flexibility renders its adaptation to any wooden surface easy. It is now in its fourth year of use for this purpose; no well-founded complaint against it has yet been made, and we look forward to the time when its use for piano and organ keys will become almost universal.

OBITUARY.

CONRAD MEYER, senior member of the firm of Conrad Meyer & Sons, and said to have been the oldest manufacturer of pianos in the United States, died on the evening of Jan. 11th, at his residence in this city, in his 88th year. He was born on the 18th of September, 1793, in Marburg, Hesse Cassel, Germany. He served with distinction in the war against Napoleon during 1814 and 1815, and was wounded at the siege of Thionville. In 1821 he was decorated by the Elector William II. with the medal of Remembrance and Honor, instituted for the Hessian military who had passed the Rhine and participated in the wars of 1814-15. The medal was cast of metal from the captured guns. Leaving Marburg, May 14, 1818, to sail for America, he was shipwrecked off Calais; and it was not until August, 1819, that he arrived in Baltimore, Md.

Immediately after his arrival in that city he commenced work as a piano maker. While there he had as a fellow-workman the late James Lick, of San Francisco, Cal. In January or February of 1823, he came to Philadelphia, and established himself in business. In 1832 he invented the full iron plate frame for pianos, which, it is stated, was the commencement, or rather founding, of the present American system of piano-making. It is also claimed for him that he was the first to use glass as an insulator on piano legs, and that he was inventor of the reversed top for pianos.

Mr. Meyer was the oldest member of Hermann Lodge, No. 125, F. and A. M., and was connected with the Franklin Institute and the German and Marburger Societies, and other organizations. He was active in all musical enterprises of moment, and was the intimate friend of Wallace, Vieuxtemps, Dempster, Herz, De Meyer, Thalberg, Cross, and other leading musical celebrities. His wife died in November, 1880. He leaves two sons, who have for a number of years taken active charge of the business of the concern.

COMPLIMENT TO AMERICAN ORGAN BUILDERS.—The new Inman Line steamer City of Rome, now being constructed on the river Clyde in Scotland, and said to be the finest steamer ever built for the transatlantic trade, is to have erected at the end of the magnificent dining saloon, 75 feet long, a grand American organ.

ENGLISH TRADE.—The Christmas holidays in England, opened with a better trade in music and musical instruments than for some time. Home orders were plentiful, and the export trade steady. The government report shows an increasing trade for the whole country.

OBITUARY.—The death is announced at Paris, of M. Emile Pfeiffer, for many years a partner in the house of Messrs. Pleyel, Wolff. The death is also announced of M. Etienne Girod, music publisher, and head of the well known house of Launer, of Paris. Also the death at Turin, of Achile Strada, a member of the music publishing house of Guidici & Strada.

STRINGED INSTRUMENTS.—J. J. Held, of Bence, Germany, received the bronze medal for string instruments, shown at the recent Düsseldorf Exhibition.