MILITARY BANDS.

IN a letter which appeared in several papers last November, Colonel Somerville offered to rehearse and perform at Kneller Hall any original compositions or arrangements of classical music for military band that were accepted by two competent judges. Five were accepted, and the judges' first report is printed below as being of interest to musicians and possibly marking an epoch.

REPORT.

We have examined the twenty-six compositions for military bands sent us by Colonel Somerville and beg to report as follows:—

We decided from the outset that there was no reason why the standard of music for military bands should not be as high as that of works for orchestra.

Judging them on this basis, we are on the whole disappointed with the results. Most of the works are worthless, in our opinion, as music, and in many cases ineffectively scored. Indeed, none of the works sent in are of outstanding merit. In some cases the composer has obtained the services of some recognised master of the military band to score his composition for him. In these cases we should like to point out that their masterly instrumentation failed to save works which were inherently weak musically.

We hope that the promoters of this scheme will not be discouraged by the above results. Composers have still to realise that military band music is as well worth their serious attention as any other branch of the art.

A. WILLIAMS (Captain, Director of Music,
Grenadier Guards),

R. VAUGHAN-WILLIAMS.

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