

Music

Symphony Society.—Fourth Concert.

SINCE their third concert this season, the Symphony Society have made a marked advance; but there is still plenty of room for improvement. The wind, both brass and wood, is still the weakest section of the orchestra, and if Dr. Damrosch can only bring it up to the level now reached by his strings, he will be able to compete on more even terms with the rival Society. There is no reason in the world why New York should not support two orchestras devoted to the production of symphonic and concerted music, but it must be confessed that the small share of favor bestowed on those at present existing is due rather to the faults of the Societies than to the apathy of the musical public. A programme chosen with much discretion was offered at the fourth concert of the Symphony Society last Saturday, and on the whole it was more than creditably delivered. Beethoven's Symphony in D was played throughout with feeling and sympathy, and the *largo* in especial was noteworthy for its perfect rendering. The 'Parsifal' number (Good Friday Spell) was not altogether pleasing; but this may be due to the fact that a section thus rudely torn from a great and harmonious whole, and given as a concert-piece, is bound to be partially unintelligible and wholly unsatisfactory. It is curious that the late composer's leading principle should be so constantly set aside by conductors. The personal interest and timely compliment attaching to the Funeral March from the 'Götterdämmerung' made it one of the most striking pieces of the evening, and the audience received this tribute to Wagner's memory with reverent attention. The 'Lamento e Trionfo' from Liszt's Symphonic Poem of 'Tasso' was well reserved for the close. It is a masterly piece of musical construction, and one which will well bear repetition. Mme. Madeline Schiller who was the soloist, played Chopin's Concerto in F-minor. Though handicapped by a poor accompaniment, she played this graceful and delicate composition with the grace and delicacy it called for, and at the same time displayed a command of technique which never degenerated into trick or display. This is a negative quality which, in these days, almost amounts to a positive virtue. It hardly seems too much to say that Mme.

Schiller is the most musicianly pianist now with us. Her range is not very extended, but within its limits, everything she does is marked by the touch of a true musician and sympathetic artist. As before hinted, her orchestral support was not at all what it should have been. For no apparent reason, the number of strings was considerably reduced, and the volume of sound thus deprived of richness and fulness of tone. Little dependence can ever be placed on the horns, but the fact must be commented on that one of the most striking passages was altogether ruined in this instance by the collapse of the French horn. It may be noted too that throughout the evening the wind was markedly out of tune with the strings.

Yet, despite the above strictures, the Symphony Society are to be congratulated on having rendered an interesting programme in a more than creditable fashion. Should they improve at their present rate of progress, the next concert will be a noteworthy one.