

## MELBOURN.

## FLOWER SHOW AND RURAL SPORTS.

The annual Show and Rural Fête came off at Melbourn on Thursday (yesterday) in the grounds of Mr. R. W. Hitch, which have been on previous occasions thrown open for the purpose. The date of the show was much later than usual owing to the late harvest, but the Committee were placed in some difficulty in arranging it better. Before harvest there are numerous other shows and if it was to be after harvest it could not very well have been much earlier than the day fixed. The time of the year was of course a draw-back which affected certain classes of flowers, fruit and vegetables in the Show and also left but a short space of day-light in the evening for the sports, &c. But subject to these drawbacks, the Committee had again made arrangements for enabling the large numbers who usually attend to spend a pleasant half-holiday, a variety of amusement and entertainment having been provided in addition to the rural sports. The extra attractions included the engagement of Professor De Zello, Japanese Juggler, &c., from the Crystal Palace; Colonel and Mdle. De Rizzio, the champion shots from Berlin, and a pyrotechnic display of fireworks by Brock and Co., of the Crystal Palace. The arrangements of this spirited undertaking are usually carried out by a well organized band of workers divided into special committees and this year

The following were the officials:—President, Mr. R. W. Hitch; vice-president, Mr. A. Spencer; treasurer, Dr. Earle; honorary secretaries, Messrs. J. T. Nowell and B. Palmer.

General Committee—Messrs. S. Smith, J. J. Newling, J. E. Hagger, senr., J. E. Hagger, junr., E. T. Hagger, G. Ward, junr., T. Wood, P. Wedd, J. Westley, M. Palmer, G. Palmer, junr., A. Howard, R. Webb, W. Harris, G. Chamberlain, J. S. Campkin, H. Coningsby, J. Disbrey, D. J. Giffen, F. Farrar, J. Negus and H. Taylor.

Sports' Committee—Messrs. J. S. Campkin, J. Disbrey, H. Coningsby, F. Farrar, W. Harris and G. Chamberlain.

Attractions' Committee—Messrs. S. Smith, J. J. Newling, D. J. Giffen, G. Ward, junr., P. Wedd, G. Palmer, junr., and J. E. Hagger, junr.

Arrangement Committee—Messrs. J. Westley, J. E. Hagger, senr., E. T. Hagger, Dr. Earle, R. Webb and M. Palmer.

Ladies' Committee for Refreshments—Miss M. Smith, Miss E. Stockbridge, Miss E. Negus, Miss F. Jarman, Miss A. Fryor, the Misses Elbourn, the Misses Wood, the Misses Ward, Miss Crew, Miss Barron, Miss K. Barron, Miss Wedd, Miss M. E. Stockbridge and the Misses Palmer.

Judges of Show—Mr. Arthur (gardener to P. Meyer, Esq., Orwell), and Mr. Impey (gardener to Mrs. Selwyn, Foxton.)

The weather was beautifully fine and warm and again many hundreds of people entered the pretty grounds during the afternoon. The show, sports and entertainments took place in the meadows in rear of Mr. Hitch's house. In the show of flowers, fruit, and vegetables, the exhibits were very prettily exhibited on a plan designed by Mr. Nowell. The front of the tent was adorned with wreaths of sun flowers, and the interior showed a pretty blending of fruits and flowers, from the midst of which a musical box chimed its round of pretty tunes. The competition in some classes was naturally affected by the lateness of the season, but in others perhaps benefited. There was at any rate a wonderful show of red and white cabbages, of carrots and potatoes, and of marrows and gourds. Among numerous exhibits not for competition, Mr. P. Meyer sent stands of single and double dahlias and some fine spikes of gladiolus; Mr. E. T. Hagger, asters, dahlias, marginals and sinias; Mr. Westley, gardener to J. Mortlock, Esq., Melbourn, single dahlias, vegetables, &c.; Miss Ethel Ward and Miss Ethel Palmer a pretty model garden of wild flowers; Mr. Hitch, a basket of fruit; Dr. Earl, ditto; Mr. J. Fryor, plums, apples, and pears; Mr. Wedd, Meldreth, peaches, and Mr. Taylor, grapes. Mr. James King exhibited a wonderfully fine sample of cabbages, and also baskets of flowers. There was on view an interesting collection of articles from Zululand lent by Mr. W. Harris, of Melbourn. Other tents were devoted to the tea and refreshments, where a staff of ladies catered for some hundreds of visitors, supplying a good tea at sixpence each. As usual an interesting part of the days' proceedings were the sports and other amusements so liberally provided, so that from half-past two until nearly seven o'clock the public had something to amuse them. In the rural sports the most amusing events were the old mounted man combat

which was never better contested; the obstacle race, and the attempts to walk along a greasy pole placed in nearly a horizontal position. But beyond the sports the Committee had engaged the entertainers mentioned above, and the feats of Colonel De Rizzio and his little girl certainly were far in advance of anything the Committee has secured on previous occasions both in point of interest and sensation. These feats consisted of shooting at glass balls and other objects under conditions which made them very wonderful pieces of skill and coolness. The distance from the objects aimed at was not of course great, but considering that De Rizzio shoots—over his head, with the gun and his head beneath his legs, and then standing fairly back to the object with the gun over his shoulder and a small mirror to look through, and that in some of these positions he hits a swinging glass ball, and shoots a similar object off his little girl's head two or three times in succession—his feats are skillful and interesting to an exceptional degree, and met with much applause. The companion entertainment of Professor De Zello, Japanese Juggler, though less novel, was also very cleverly carried out, and some of his feats, such as the spinning hat trick, and the throwing, catching and supporting several flaming torches in the air at the same time, were heartily applauded. It remains to be mentioned that the Barrington Band played selections of music in creditable style during the afternoon and evening, and that the whole of a very pleasant and admirably managed afternoon's amusement concluded with a good but rather late display of fireworks. The number of persons admitted was estimated at from 1,500 to 2,000 during the afternoon and evening, about 1,300 having been admitted as early as three o'clock.

A presentation to Mr. Perkins, late stationmaster at the Meldreth and Melbourn Station, and now stationmaster at St. Albans, was made from the band stand at an interval in the sports. Mr. R. H. Flitton, who had taken an active interest in getting up the presentation, called upon the Rev. E. W. Cory, vicar of Meldreth, to make the presentation.

The Rev. E. W. CORY said he had been asked to undertake a very pleasant office—to present a purse of gold to Mr. Perkins, with the good wishes of the subscribers, and he might say of all present, as a slight appreciation of his kind and courteous discharge of duty during the eleven years Mr. Perkins had been Station Master at Meldreth. From an experience of nearly a quarter of a century of Great Northern Railway officials in general, and of Station Masters in particular, he could speak in the highest praise of their courtesy and willingness to oblige all parties. But out of the great number of railway officials he had claimed as his parishioners, and with whom he had been on friendly terms, if asked to award the palm to anyone of them he should give the first place to his friend, Mr. Perkins. He had been promoted to a higher and more lucrative office with right reverend and very reverend persons to deal with, but he was sure that the appreciation of Mr. Perkins' services could not be greater by these great personages than had been their appreciation by the inhabitants of Meldreth and Melbourn, and he might say of Whaddon. In the name of the subscribers and with their good wishes he had now much pleasure in presenting to Mr. Perkins this purse containing £11. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. PERKINS, in responding to this token and expression of esteem, said he did not know how sufficiently to thank them, but he did thank them from the bottom of his heart. It gave to him and Mrs. Perkins the greatest pleasure to be there at their Flower Show, which he hoped might go on and prosper. He could not allow this opportunity to pass without thanking his two old friends, Mr. Flitton and Mr. Coningsby, for what they had done in getting up the testimonial. He should always look back upon his residence here at Meldreth as one of very happy memories. He again thanked them and wished them long life and prosperity. (Cheers.)

The Show Prize List and winners in the Sports will be given next week.