MELBOURNE FLOWER SHOW.

The annual exhibition of plants, flowers, vegetables, fruits, etc., connection with the Melbourne Horticultural Society, was held in the Intake and field, situated on borders of the lake at Melbourne, on Wednesday afternoon, and proved one of the greatest successes for many years.

The inclemency of weather for Melbourne Flower Show become almost as proverbial as speech-day weather at Repton in the opposite direction, for whereas it has often been remarked that Repton speech-day has been the only fine day for several weeks, so has also been noticed that Melbourne Flower Show has, frequently, been signal for general atmospherical revolution. The storms on Tuesday seemed to indicate this year would be no exception the accepted rule, but prophets of evil were for once a way proved false ones, and the weather turned out to be as delightful anyone could possibly desire. The heavy rains of the previous evening and the thunder had cleared the air and cooled the atmosphere, whilst the brilliant sun, which shed the genial warmth of a summer afternoon on the charming little town, was tempered by a cool l and deliriously refreshing breeze.

Under all these favourable circumstances it was only to be expected that huge crowd would be gathered together for the occasion, and the turned out, for the attendance, especially during the evening, was probably a record one. Almost the entire population of Melbourne—certainly the younger portion—were to be met there, whilst crowded trains arrived from Derby and elsewhere, and discharged their living freights at the uninteresting and not too convenient little station. Many visitors drove, and more came on cycles, so that the scene on the show ground was particularly animated and interesting one.

Ladies of various ages—and sizes —dressed in various colours—and fashions—sauntered along the beautiful walks or seated themselves on the borders of the lake, attended for most part by swans both rural and urban, and their bright costumes could seen flitting through the trees, to the accompaniment of light conversation and merry laughter, in a manner almost Arcadian. Towards evening, as will easily be understood, the crowd materially increased, and in the Intake the amusements were decidedly alluring to many.

A quadrille band bad been engaged there, and in the cool of the evening those who desired were enabled to indulge in dancing on tbe smooth turf under the trees with pastoral enthusiasm to the strains of a harp, a double bass, a cornet, and a couple of fiddles. In these days of cheap dancing academies and unnecessary

precocity, young cynics of the Saint Peter's Street brigade and the. short-skirted befringed promenaders of the Corn Market may affect indifference to the attractions of the function, but the many visitors to Melbourne on Wednesday either belonged to a different order or put their fashionable scruples on one side, for all appeared to be thoroughly enjoying themselves.

The Melbourne Town Prize Band was attendance all day, and played a number selections of music remarkably well. The band, which has recently been supplied with new instruments, has been rapidly coming to the front amongst local brass bands, and under the capable conductorship of Mr. Angus Holden has a bright future before it. Mr. Holden himself is a talented cornet player, and during the evening played W. Rimmer's polka, "Bastonian," with faultless precision. In conjunction with Mr. F. O. Newbold played S. Cope's duel) "Coquettes," and should also added that Mr. Fred contributed euphonium solo, playing "The village blacksmith" extremely well. It may be interesting to note that the' bands under Mr. Angus Holden won 105 prizes contests during the year 1903. including six challenge cups, the championship of the northern counties, and championship of tbe southern counties.

Another attraction for this year, which may regarded as innovation, was the aquatic sports in the lake. There were six events, including 75 yards open handicap and polo match, and were all greatly appreciated, and produced excellent sport. Temple's Punch and Judy show to seen at frequent intervals, and fire-balloons were sent up several times during the afternoon and evening, whilst there were also the other usual flower show attractions, such roundabouts, swing-boats, shooting galleries, ice-cream and other stalls, so that there was no lack of entertainment to suit all tastes. Refreshments, alcoholic and otherwise, were also to be had, and as on previous occasions beautiful hall gardens were open such visitors cared to view them.

The society has always been flourishing one, and now under the patronage of the Right Hon. Earl Cowper, KG., the Right Hon. Earl Ferrers, Sir Vanncey Harpur Crewe, Bart., Major Dawson (of Melbourne Hall, to whom the society are indebted for most of their advantages), Mr. H. H. Raphael (who, by way, visited the show during the afternoon), Mr. John Gretton, M P., and Mr. H. E. W. CantrelL The Rev. Canon Singleton is president, Mr. John Grice the vice-president, Mr. A. S. Jacques the secretary, and Mr. W. Armson the treasurer, whilst the following gentlemen comprise the committee:—Rev. H. J. Bannister, Ald. Briggs, J.P., Messrs. T. Brown, H. Obetwyn, G. Clarke, A. Clarke, J. Fitchett, W. Garratt. T. Hollingworth, J. F. Jordan, W. G. Lindley, Loake, W. Loake, W. K. Newbold, D.

Noble, F. Peat, H. Peat. E. Salsbury. T. H. Smith, H. T. Snape, and G. Walden, to which li«t of officers must added Mr. W. Anscombe, collector; and Messrs. P. A. Smith and W. Slater, auditors. So far the entries for year are concerned they are certainly not quite so numerous as last year, a state of tilings probably owing to the dryness of the season, but not a word could be said against quality of the exhibits.

Although the strawberry season is scarcely its best now, and the lack of rain—an unusual complaint recent summers—has been anything but conducive perfection in production of that delicious fruit, there were some remarkably fine dishes of them shown, Mr. Thomas who was awarded first prize, being responsible for placing some excellent fruit l on the stalls, to the temptation of almost every hot visitor in the precincts of the show. The other fruit was exceedingly good, the gooseberries, currants, etc., showing evidence of the most careful cultivation.

The vegetables were also very fine, and must have given considerable trouble to the judges, for competition in the various classes was very keen indeed. A charming and artistically arranged group of plants, shown by Mr. J. H. Hatton, was deservedly awarded first prize, whilst same exhibitor was also awarded several first prizes for some beautiful roses. A large collection of fine roses was shown by Mr. Walter Bentley, of Belgrave, Leicester, which were not for competition, but in the class in which he competed he was very easily first. Another collection of beautiful plants, consisting mainly of sweet peas, was sent for decorative purposes by Messrs. Harrison end Sons, also of Leicester. Plasmite, Ltd., the giant fertiliser, also had a stand, under the management cf Mr. W. H. Perry, of Melbourne, and their remarkable preparation was to be procured there.

A rather singular departure for the Melbourne society was taken this year in the way of industrial and art competitions. Industrial classes have long been introduced at Etwall, and have been regarded a great attraction. The Melbourne industrial classes may also be set down distinct success. A number of capital drawings and paintings were entered, but Mr. C. Smith's shaded drawing—a cleverly-executed study a lion—was deservedly awarded first prize. The same competitor gained first in table decoration, but in this direction Miss M. J. Earp, who was first amongst the ladies, particularly successful. A map of England, faithfully drawn and correctly lettered by Master A. Loake, was also awarded a first, prize, and amongst the class for children little Miss Gladys Knowles gained a first, prize for a prettily dressed doll.

The judges for the society were Mr. Parker, of Staunton, and Mr. Mavnard, of Ashby-de-la- Zouch, for fruit and Vegetables, and Mr. Clanfield, Melbourne, and Mr. Goodacre, of Elvaston, for flowerss and plants, whilst Mrs. E. Thompson, Mr. J. Wright, and Mr. A. S. Jacques officiated in the art and industrial classes, their decisions in every instance meeting with approval.

The following is a summary of the prizes and winners: P. Jackson, jun., 4 firsts, 8 seconds, 5 thirds, 2 fourths; G. Tivey, 5 firsts, 8 seconds, 6 thirds, 8 fourths; H. T. Snape, 4 firsts,3 seconds. 1 third, 2 fourths; T. Earp, 3 firsts, seconds, 5 thirds, 4 fourths; T. Hollingworth. 14 firsts, 5 seconds, 6 thirds; H. Bates, 4 seconds, 4 thirds, and 1 fourth; G. Clarke. 4 firsts. 3 seconds, 2 thirds, 1 fourth; J. Taylor, 7 firsts. 4 seconds, 2 thirds, 1 fourth; A. Hickling, 3 seconds, 2 third, A. S. Jacques, 4 seconds, 2 thirds, 1 fourth.; W. Bentley, 1 first; J. H. Hatton, 14 firsts, 4 seconds, 1 third; J. F. Jordan, 4 firsts, 1 third; Mrs. W. Adoook, 2 firsts; C. Smith, 3 firsts, 5 thirds, 1 fourth; P. A Smith, 1 first. 3 seconds, 3 thirds, 2 fourths; Miss M. B. Earp, 1 first, Mrs. E. Thompson, 1 second; Miss Lindley, 1 first, 1 second; H Chetwyn, 19 firsts, 12 seconds, 2 thirds, 1 fourth; J. Tivey, 14 firsts, 12 seconds, 4 thirds, 1 fourth: J. Brooks, 5 seconds, 7 thirds, 5 fourths; F. Peat, 4 firsts, 3 seconds, 6 thirds. fourth; H. Peat, 2 firsts, 5 seconds, 1 third; Geo. Dawson, 1 first; J. Jackson, 1 third; T. Jackson, 1 fourth; Dora Adoook, 1 second; Frank Collyer 1 third; Ernest Beardsley, 1 first; Edgar Collyer, 1 second; George Hassall, 1 third; Stanley Ward, 1 fourth; John Ridgeway, fifth ; Harold Hatton, 1 sixth; A. C. Woodall, 1 seventh; A. Loake, 1 first; Gladys Knowles, 1 first ; Fanny Snape, 1 second.

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