

**MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS****August 1865 The Lancaster Floral Musical and Athletic Festival.**

**U**nder this title, which promised a triple combination of amusements, the townspeople of Lancaster, with many visitors to that pleasant old town, were entertained for two days, the week before last, in Springfield Hall Park, kindly lent for the public enjoyment by Mrs Ripley. The name of that lady, as the founder of the Ripley Hospital or Orphan School, designed to preserve the respected memory of her late husband, will not have been forgotten by our readers, a view of the hospital, with some account of her benevolent designs in its foundation, having appeared in this Journal last November.

The festival of which we now give an illustration, seems to have originated in the success of the Art and Industrial Exhibition organised at Lancaster by the efforts of Mr Sly, of the King's Arms Hotel, about six months ago. Among the other objects contemplated as the result of that exhibition was the establishment of an annual autumnal floral, musical, and athletic fête. The intention of the promoters has so far been carried out by the complete success of the first year's festival. Their request for pecuniary aid was liberally responded to by the noblemen and gentlemen of the neighbourhood, the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Sefton, the Marquis of Hartington, the High Sheriff of the county, with the Mayor and Vicar of Lancaster, becoming patrons of the institution.

The park, which Mrs Ripley placed at the disposal of the committee on this occasion, is situated close to the entrance to the town from the south, and is a fine level piece of ground, with an elevation leading up to Springfield Hall, on the left. On this level was the arena where the contests were to take place, and on the elevation, under the shade of some fine lofty trees, was the enclosure and pavilion for ladies. A little further to the south, under the shade of some fine umbrageous trees, was placed the tent for the flower show, while the refreshment and other tents were placed in different parts of the grounds round about. In a remote part of the ground a shooting-range was provided for such as might wish to try their skill.

The view we have engraved, from a photograph by Mr John Holmes of Lancaster, gives some idea of this agreeable scene.

The whole of the first day was devoted to the flower show and a brass band contest, whilst the proceedings on the second day were of a miscellaneous character, consisting of contests in athletics, gymnastics, vocal music, and part-singing, the flower show also remained open. The object of the latter was to give the gentry and nurserymen of the town and neighbourhood an opportunity of displaying some of the produce of their gardens, but not for competition, and to encourage gardening among the working classes, and children, or inmates of hospitals, asylums, and workhouses, by awarding prizes for the best specimens of flowers, fruit and vegetables.

The musical and athletic portion of the festival was more expressly instituted for the encouragement of vocal and instrumental music, systematic physical education, and athletic exercises amongst the volunteer corps in the counties of Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Cumberland, Northumberland and Westmorland.

The pavilion on the Tuesday was well filled with a fashionable assemblage of ladies and gentlemen, but the entire number of visitors on that day did not exceed 2000. On the Wednesday there was a great improvement in the attendance, between 4000 and 5000 persons being present. The weather each day was fine, and nothing happened to spoil the enjoyment of the visitors.

A vote of thanks to Mrs Ripley and another vote of thanks to the committee, but especially to Mr Sly, were passed by general Acclamation.

**14th October 1865**

On Thursday last, being the anniversary of Mr Ripley's birthday, there was a further admission of children into the Hospital, increasing the number of inmates to one hundred. The sexes are not represented in equal portions, the boys being in a majority, but this has only arisen from the fact of there being fewer applications for admission of girls.

**28th October 1865**

Who is there among us to whom the words "Ripley Institute" is not familiar as Household Words. There are few indeed but possess some memorial of it in some shape or other. Engravings and lithographs of the building have been widely diffused, but nothing we have yet seen equals a photograph of the front of that magnificent building taken from the private bridge in Springfield Park a few days ago by our townsman, Mr John Holmes, junr. of Damside-street. The size of the plate is twelve inches by ten inches. The tints are excellent and in fine keeping. It is a perfect gem. Mr Holmes we are sure will be glad to show a print to any one who wishes to see it.

**4th November 1865**

Yesterday was the first anniversary of the opening of the Hospital, and the event was commemorated by a festival amongst the children.

**The late John Ripley, Esq. - March 1866** - The death was announced at Heath Bank, Wallasey of John Ripley, Esq., brother of the late Thomas Ripley, Esq., of Abercromby square, the founder, through his widow, of the Ripley Hospital, Lancaster. Although no well merited compliment to the deceased was associated with that announcement, it has caused the most profound feeling of sorrow, not only in his own neighbourhood among the numerous recipients of his unostentatious and judicious charities, bestowed irrespective of creed or sect, but among a wide circle of friends, who esteemed it a great privilege to enjoy his genial society, and to whom he was endeared by his many excellent qualities of head and heart. Possessed of strong natural good sense, and with a correct appreciation of that which in principal he deemed right, he judged, spoke and acted accordingly. He was constant in his friendships, ungrudging in his hospitalities, and delighted in rendering all around him happy. He has left a void that will long be felt and sincerely deplored. His remains are to be interred in Wallasey Churchyard this Thursday morning.