

DISTRICT FLOWER SHOW AT OCCOLD.

The promoters—and, indeed, a large bulk of the supporters—of the above useful and hitherto highly successful society are at the present moment in something like a dilemma. The Society was inaugurated some four years ago by about 60 working men of Occold meeting at the Bottles Inn, who there and then agreed to subscribe one shilling each for the purpose of holding an annual show of their allotment and garden produce. The inhabitants of Rishangles and Redlingfield were smitten with the idea, and by invitation affiliated themselves with Occold. A year or so later Bedingfield also came in, and the four parishes have jogged along harmoniously together ever since, the result being four highly-successful exhibitions, three of which have been held at Occold and one at Bedingfield. It had been decided to again hold a show this year, and the prize schedule had been printed and circulated, and the management and exhibitors having both profited by experience, this year's show bade fair to excel any of its predecessors. All went "merry as a marriage bell" till the place of meeting had to be decided upon, and even this did not at the outset present the least difficulty, for at the first meeting of the Committee it was agreed to hold this year's show at Bedingfield, and, to all appearances, Bedingfield cheerfully accepted the responsibility of entertaining the 1889 show. Bedingfield, however, seems to have very soon repented of its bargain, but upon what grounds is not quite clear, but "they do say" it was from a fear of facing some small pecuniary liabilities, and the labour which the holding of the show there would necessarily have entailed. Whether this was so or not the writer is, of course, unable to say; at any rate, at the next Committee meeting Bedingfield formally and finally declined the honour. Occold, however, never dreaming that little Redlingfield had ambitions, was equal to the occasion, and at once said: "O! very well; if Bedingfield won't have the show this year, we will." But here little Redlingfield stepped in and said: "O! will you though, we'll

see you don't. If the show is not going to Bedingfield this year, we are going to have it." Occold, in effect, replied: "You! I wonder what next." The Occoldians' blood was now fairly up, and they loudly protested against the show being held at what they rather disrespectfully termed an out-of-the-way, insignificant place. A vote was taken, and the Chairman declared that Occold "had it" by a majority of one. Redlingfield declared they would not "put up with that," as the majority of one had been obtained unfairly, seeing that one gentleman had voted who was not then entitled, and as it appeared impossible to come to a satisfactory decision that evening, the meeting was adjourned. At the adjourned meeting, Redlingfield, which has evidently "an old parliamentary hand" in its midst, managed, by having issued a "five-lined whip" in Bedingfield and Rishangles, to muster a force strong enough to carry the day, and so the matter at present stands. Occold, however—which it won't be denied is the mother of the whole concern—is now fairly on its metal, and on Saturday evening a public meeting, to which the other three parishes had been invited—but with the exception of some few from Rishangles did not respond—was held at the Occold Board Schoolroom to protest against the show being held at Redlingfield. Mr. E. Deck, jun., C.C., was voted to the chair, and opened the meeting by simply saying he had come to learn the wishes of the parishioners in the matter. There was a rather large attendance, which included several women, and the question was freely discussed. Some sarcastically asked, "Where is Redlingfield?" Others referred to the fact that whilst Occold contributed 36 exhibitors last year the other three parishes combined only produced 48 exhibitors. Others again mentioned that whilst last year Occold supplied in cash £14 7s., the other three parishes between them only contributed £9 16s., and of this latter amount Redlingfield only subscribed £2 1s. 6d., and sent but 13 exhibits, whilst some of the Occold exhibitors alone sent 20 dishes each. It was also pointed out that out of the

£17 or £18 standing to the credit of the Society at the bank, upwards of £10 was by the strictest economy saved at the first show held at Occold, and it was said none of that belonged to the other parishes. The meeting was absolutely unanimously in protesting against Redlingfield ever even thinking of having the show there, holding strongly that it must result in financial ruin to the Society.—The Chairman and others stated that they had heard lots of people say they would not attend the show if it was held at Redlingfield. In the end the following resolution was proposed, seconded, and unanimously passed:—"We, the subscribers and exhibitors of the Occold and District Flower Show in public meeting assembled, hereby unanimously protest against the decision arrived at by the Committee on Thursday last to hold the forthcoming show at Redlingfield, and we also declare it to be our intention not to exhibit in any shape or form at a show held at Redlingfield." All those present signed the protest, and several signatures to it, both in Occold and Rishangles, have since been obtained. It is intended to forward the protest to the Rev. T. S. Shaw, rector of Bedingfield, who is president for the year of the Society.
