



## *Fete for Poor of Codford & Ashton Giffard*



Wadham Locke, Esq., of Ashton House, with his characteristic liberality, gave a rural *fete* on Wednesday last to the whole of the poor residing in the parishes of Codford St. Peter and Ashton Giffard. At one o'clock, the happy rustics, with their wives and children, to the number of 350, assembled at the George Inn where a sumptuous dinner was provided for them. After having been plenteously regaled, they proceeded, with a band of music, amidst the ringing of bells and salute of cannon to an adjoining field, to pass the afternoon in the enjoyment of rural sports and diversions. Here they were met by their benefactor and his amiable lady, J. Locke, Esq., the Rev. Mr Dampier, the Rev. Mr Webster, and many of the principal families of the neighbourhood. Groups from the surrounding villages were now seen threading the mazy pathway through the fields to join in the festivities, and the number continued to increase till four o'clock, when there could not have been less than 20000 persons present. A tent was erected for the accommodation of the ladies, where the band was stationed, whose performances were of a superior character. The scene at this time was of a very cheering and novel description. Rustic sports of the most diverting kind followed each other with a spirit rarely witnessed, and were admirably contested. Some of them were of a highly ludicrous description. The sprightly dance succeeded, and "right merrily" did the lads and lasses "trip it" on the greensward. The successful competitors were rewarded with handsome prizes from the hands of the donor, who, by his generosity and urbanity on this occasion, he had not only been the means of affording his indigent neighbours one of the happiest days in their existence, but he has done that which will materially tend to ameliorate their moral condition, by making them feel that they are *not* a distinct class of beings – which cannot fail to render them better servants and better men. Their worthy Minister, the Rev. Mr Dampier, who is ever ready to promote the happiness of his parishioners, provided a splendid *dejeunee* for some gentlemen of the village, who arranged the amusements of the day, which were conducted with the greatest order and decorum.

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