

GRAND CRICKET MATCH AT GRANTHAM.

By far the most important match that has taken place at Grantham this season was commenced on the cricket ground at Spittlegate, on Wednesday, between an eleven of the county of Northumberland, and an eleven of this town and district. Alike by "the faculty" and the public at large much interest was attached to the contest, and it had been eagerly looked forward to for some weeks. The opening day was as auspicious as the players could possibly have been favoured with, for, although beautifully fine, the sun was not so hot and strong by many degrees as it had been on the two earlier days of the week, and a gentle and most refreshing breeze prevailed. The wicket was pronounced by almost every batsman to be in "splendid condition"; some, indeed, were sanguine enough to say that there was not a better in England; and one or two, "going the whole hog," declared that it surpassed any other wicket in the United Kingdom. Be that as it may, we are ourselves able to bear testimony to its being in an extremely satisfactory state. During this hot weather it appears to have been regularly watered and rolled. It was conspicuously green, and, as compared with the whitish brown of the remainder of the field, it looked like an oasis in a dreary desert. The band of the Royal South Lincoln Militia was in attendance, and, at intervals, played selections of popular music, in a style manifesting considerable improvement upon its recent public performances. Mr. Edwards, of the Mail Hotel, had a large marquee on the ground, and supplied some capital refreshments. He also provided an excellent dinner, at two o'clock, both for the players and the visitors.

The Northumberland eleven won the toss, and elected to send their opponents to the wickets. Accordingly, at 20 minutes to 1, Anthony, the professional, and Mr. G. Bell, were entrusted with the weapons of defence on behalf of the Grantham side. The bowling began at "the pace that kills," A. Guild being at one end, and Mr. N. Grace at the other. Anthony succumbed to the second ball from Guild—a regular shooter all the way from the pitch, and thus there was a weighty wicket down for what those skilled in the noble game designate, in rather inelegant phraseology, a "duck egg." The Rev. Mr. Sykes took the retiring batsman's place, and from the last ball of the first over he gave a splendid chance to a substitute, who stood at the mid-wicket on. Happily for Grantham, the ball was not caught, for, despite the unrelaxing severity of the bowling, the two men made a good stand together, showing some capital style, and scoring the runs with very tolerable celerity. At length, when the score stood at 22, Mr. Grace took Mr. Bell's middle stump by a "shooter," very similar to that which proved fatal to Anthony. Mr. Bell went out with 9 runs to his name, and the willow was then assumed by Mr. Leavers. No sooner had he joined Mr. Sykes than they were parted, Mr. Sykes hitting a ball from Guild high into the air, which was caught by Mr. Neesham, the wicket keeper. Mr. Sykes' score amounted to 9—composed of a hit for 3, a couple of drives 2 each, and 2 singles. Three wickets down for 22 runs. Mr. Norris was next sent in, and after 1 had been obtained for a bye, he was declared out, leg before wicket. Four wickets down for 23. Mr. Leavers, being joined by Mr. W. H. Hind, then began his innings with a chop for 2. But the Grantham folks seemed in ill-luck, and Mr. Hind, after remaining only about two minutes, fell a prey to a "straight un" from Guild, which mercilessly took his off wicket for a cipher. score 25; five wickets down. Time, 1.30. Mr. C. G. Brett was next armed with the bat, and put himself into the vacant place. Disasters, they say, never come singly, so the new comer, after getting one run, was caught and bowled by Guild. Six wickets disposed of for a total of 27—rather a black look out for Grantham. Mr. Leavers, who kept his end up well, scoring one now and then, was now faced by Mr. Sills, who immediately evoked a cheer by a splendid drive for 3, which he supplemented, on the first opportunity, by a good square leg hit for 2. Next ball, he got a rather ugly knock on the knee, but he was too plucky to break his innings, and he seemed inclined, notwithstanding the knock, to play the ball to a merry tune. Two or three more runs having been got, the first change was made in the bowling, Gibson being put on, with left-handed slow, at Mr. Grace's end. At 1.50 Mr. Sills was caught, after obtaining 3, from Mr. Gibson, by Mr. Levick, substitute, mid-wicket-on. Seven wickets down for 41 runs. Mr. C. P. Matthews was next to assume the defence of the stumps; but hardly had he got to his place when his companion, Mr. Leavers, was bowled by Mr. Gibson, and he retired after a carefully

played innings for 7. Eight wickets down for 41 runs. The "drooping willow" was picked up by Mr. G. H. Nicholls, and he and Mr. Matthews were still in company when the dinner bell rang at 2.5, at which time the score stood at 52. Play was resumed at 3.10, and the telegraph soon showed 60 up, and when the score stood at 61 Mr. N. Grace was again put on at Gibson's end, and his first ball took Mr. Nicholls' off stump. Mr. Nicholls had scored 11, composed of two threes and five singles. Mr. Clift took the retiring batsman's position, and began merited a brilliant drive for three, which was speedily followed by another of the same sort, and two or three singles. He seemed to be well in, but alas, the Fates were unpropitious, and when he had scored eight his off wicket was taken by Guild, Mr. Matthews thus carrying out his bat for 10 runs, and the innings closing, at 3.35, for 72 runs.

It should be stated here that the good folks from the north, owing to unforeseen circumstances, were three months short, and Mr. Adcock, Mr. E. Levick, & Mr. Wandsborough, of the Grantham club, played in their behalf.

The Northumberland first innings were begun at four o'clock, Mr. C. E. Riddle and Mr. W. Grace being sent to the wickets, to the bowling of Mr. G. Bell and Anthony. Though extremely little improvement could have been made either in the bowling or the fielding, the two batsmen knocked the ball about as if they intended to shatter it into fragments till, when the total stood at 16, Mr. Riddle was called out, leg before wicket, his score being 6. Guild (professional) succeeded him, and a decided stand was then made at the wickets, each player making some splendid cuts and drives for two's and three's. By and bye Mr. Clift was put on to bowl at Mr. Bell's end, the score at this time being 40. When it had been run up to 46, Mr. Grace was cleverly caught at point by Anthony, for which the Grantham professional was well rewarded by cheers from the whole field. Mr. Grace's score was 22, formed of one four, two threes, a couple of two's and singles. Lieut. Stratton next handled the willow, and after scoring 6 he was beautifully caught by Mr. Matthews, at short slip. Three wickets down for 56 runs; time 4.45. Gibson now joined Guild, and when a couple more runs had been obtained, Mr. Nicholls supplanted Anthony as bowler. The two professionals batted in admirable form, and the telegraph soon showed 70, but hardly had those figures been hoisted when Guild was caught and bowled by Mr. Clift, having scored 31—including four threes, and five two's. Mr. G. W. Elliot now confronted the bowling, and opened with a drive for 6, which was much applauded, and soon after this, when the score was 84, Mr. Bell resumed bowling in place of Mr. Clift. After some good playing, Mr. Elliot was caught by Mr. Nicholls from Mr. Bell; five wickets down for 89 runs. Mr. N. Grace now joined Gibson, but his middle stump was speedily taken, without his scoring any, by a power-called cricketing parlance a "tee"—from Mr. Nicholls. This was the first man bowled during the innings. The next man to place himself before the wickets was Mr. Neesham, and he and Gibson—who, by the way, did not score very rapidly, though he kept the balls off his wicket—threatened to make such a stand that it was considered by the outside advisable to have a change in the bowling, and Mr. Brett took Mr. Bell's end, the score now being 107. In slow from the new bowler, being the first ball of his second over. The Northumberland gentlemen were now obliged to resort to their substitutes, Mr. Wandsborough being the first to take hold of the bat. He was stumped by Mr. Matthews, very remorselessly, for a cipher. Eight wickets down for 113 runs; time 5.45. Mr. Adcock now out in attempting a very unsafe run. Nine wickets for 119, Mr. Neesham's score being 14. The last man to go steadily, till, exactly as the clocks were striking six, Mr. Levick succumbed to a swift ball from Mr. Nicholls. The Northumberland first innings then closing for 133 runs.

The Grantham players commenced their second innings at 6.15, Mr. Matthews and Anthony opening the bowling of Guild and Mr. N. Grace. In running for his second or third ball Anthony had a narrow escape of batsman's favour, on which the hopes of the Grantham team were rendered more cheerful, but, "pity 'tis, 'tis true," his off stump was knocked clean down by the next ball from Mr. Grace. Mr. Matthews was joined by the Rev. Mr. Sykes, but the rev. gentleman came only to have his middle stump taken by a "difficult one" from Mr. Grace. Two wickets down for 2 runs. Mr. Leavers next assumed the willow; and soon afterwards Lieut. Stratton missed a good chance from Mr. Matthews. Another ball or two were sent, and then, at 6.30, the stumps were drawn for the night.

Thursday, the second day, was also favourable, though a little too hot and brilliant. Mr. Matthews and Mr. Leavers resumed the batting, to the bowling of Mr. N. Grace and Guild. The bowling, especially that of Mr. Grace, was of a most destructive kind, and none but the most skilled and practised batsmen could cope with it. Mr. Matthews remained at the wickets for an hour and a half and scored 14 runs, and his innings, considering what he had to contend against, must be described as a first-rate one. Mr. Hind contributed 7 to the total, in a style that was greatly admired. Mr. Sills was the "Lodger man," with a score of 24, which he obtained in a brilliant manner, his total embracing four 3's and four 2's. Next in order, in point of scoring, came Mr. Norris, who played a good innings for 18, including a capital drive for 3 and a couple of 2's. Mr. Nicholls, who scored 16, played carefully and with much skill. The most remarkable feature of this innings was the splendid bowling of Mr. N. Grace, to which six out of the ten wickets owed their downfall. The same gentleman also caught Mr. Sills. Another feature was the back-stopping of Lieut. Stratton, which was very effective and excited great admiration. The Grantham second innings closed for the very respectable total of 103, leaving the Northumberland players 43 to get to win.

For the loss of three wickets the Northumbrians scored three more than the required number, and the stumps were drawn a little before five in the evening. Mr. N. Grace played an admirable not out innings for 21, and Lieut. Stratton made a beautiful hit for 4. Guild, the professional, who ran up such an excellent score on the previous day, was cleverly caught and bowled by Mr. Brett for 2 runs. The innings were suspended after a hit for 5 from Mr. Elliot, who had just gone in. Below we give the full score of the match, together with an analysis of the bowling:—

GRANTHAM.			
J. Anthony (professional), b Guild	0	b N. Grace	1
Mr. G. Bell, b N. Grace	9	b N. Grace	5
Rev. Mr. Sykes, c Neesham, b Guild	9	b N. Grace	0
Mr. J. Leavers, b Gibson	7	b N. Grace	0
Mr. L. C. C. R. Norris, l b w, b Guild	0	not out	18
Mr. W. H. Hind, b Guild	0	b J. Gibson	7
Mr. C. G. Brett, c and b Guild	1	b N. Grace	5
Mr. W. Sills, c Levick (substitute) b Gibson	8	b N. Grace	21
Mr. C. P. Matthews, not out	10	c W. Grace, b Guild	14
Mr. G. H. Nicholls, b N. Grace	11	c G. Elliot, b Guild	16
Mr. W. Clift, b Guild	8	b N. Grace	4
Byes 6, leg byes 3	9	b 7, l 1, w 1	9
Total	72	Total	103
NORTHUMBERLAND.			
Mr. C. E. Riddle, l b w, b Anthony	6		
Mr. W. Grace, c Anthony, b Clift	22		
A. Guild, c and b Clift	31	c and b Brett	2
Lieut. Stratton, c Matthews, b Clift	6	b Leavers	8
J. Gibson, b Brett	17	b Brett	8
Mr. G. W. Elliot, c Nicholls, b Bell	16	not out	5
Mr. N. Grace, b Nicholls	0	not out	21
Mr. W. Neesham, run out	14		
Mr. Wandsborough, c Matthews, b Brett	0		
Mr. W. J. Adcock, not out	7		
Mr. B. Levick, b Nicholls	6		
Byes 4, leg byes 4	8	bye 1, no ball 1	2
Total	133	Total	46

ANALYSIS OF THE BOWLING:—				
GRANTHAM—First Innings.				
Balls.	Runs.	Maidens.	Wickets.	
Guild	99	27	11	6
Mr. N. Grace	60	26	4	2
Gibson	36	10	2	2
Second Innings.				
Guild	131	55	16	2
Mr. N. Grace	35	30	6	6
Gibson	100	29	13	2
NORTHUMBERLAND—First Innings.				
Mr. G. Bell	48	37	1	1
Anthony	48	27	2	1
Mr. Clift	32	20	0	3
Mr. Nicholls	52	31	3	2
Mr. Brett	24	11	1	2
Second Innings.				
Mr. Leavers	17	14	0	1
Mr. Nicholls	12	11	1	0
Mr. Brett	27	15	3	2
Mr. Bell	24	4	2	0