

## Illustrated Interviews.

No. XLII.—MR. W. G. GRACE, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.



From a Photo. by]

MR. W. G. GRACE.

[Hawkins, Brighton.

**T**HROUGHOUT the extent of the British Empire, be it north, south, east, or west, more this season, perhaps, than in any other, has the name of Mr. William Gilbert Grace become a household word. Be it peer or peasant, all unite in doing homage to the hero of a hundred "centuries"—the man who has done more to further the progress of the grand old English game than any other man of this or any other time; and, although he reached the age of forty-seven in July last (a period when a cricketer is generally supposed to become superfluous upon the field), Mr. Grace is yet the man who is considered the most dangerous of any side, not alone by our English teams, but by visitors from the Antipodes. No matter what the ground

may be, hard or soft, when the champion walks to his place at the wickets, who is to say when he will be again sent back to the pavilion?

And this is the position which he has occupied since so long ago as 1866, when, at the age of eighteen, he set the cricket world a-wondering by his innings of 224 not out, for England *versus* Surrey. From then until now he has stood head and shoulders above all other contemporary batsmen; he has seen younger blood infused into the county teams, and go again, yet he is now capable of as much endurance upon the grassy sward as any.

But the place he holds in first-class cricket may, perhaps, be shown best by a brief *resumé* of his performances on the pitch. In 1866 he was at the head of the batting



averages, then being, as already mentioned, but eighteen years of age, a feat which has probably been accomplished by no other player. In 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1876, 1877, 1879, and 1880 he occupied the same position, and then, taking no account of his performances during the intervening seasons, this year we find him only deposed from what may be best described as the premiership amongst wielders of the willow for a single fortnight until the end of June, when he possessed an average of 83.50 for twenty innings, while he had scored 1,000 runs before the season had become a month old. In 1868 his best average was 65 per innings, 57 in 1869, 54 in 1870, 78 in 1871, 57 in 1872, 71 in 1873, 53 in 1874, 62 in 1876, 43 in 1885, and 54 in 1887. To calculate the number of runs he has scored during all these years would be an impossible task, yet it would be well within the mark if we place the number at 70,000, and to-day he is playing as consistent a game as at any period of his career. Well, indeed, may one of the verses of an earlier song be repeated:—

There's a name which will live for ever and aye,

In the true-born cricketer's mind—

A name which is loudly re-echoed to-day,

And borne on the wings of the wind.

Britannia may gladly be proud of her sons,

Since who is more famous than he,

The stalwart compiler of thousands of runs,

“Leviathan” W. G. ?\*

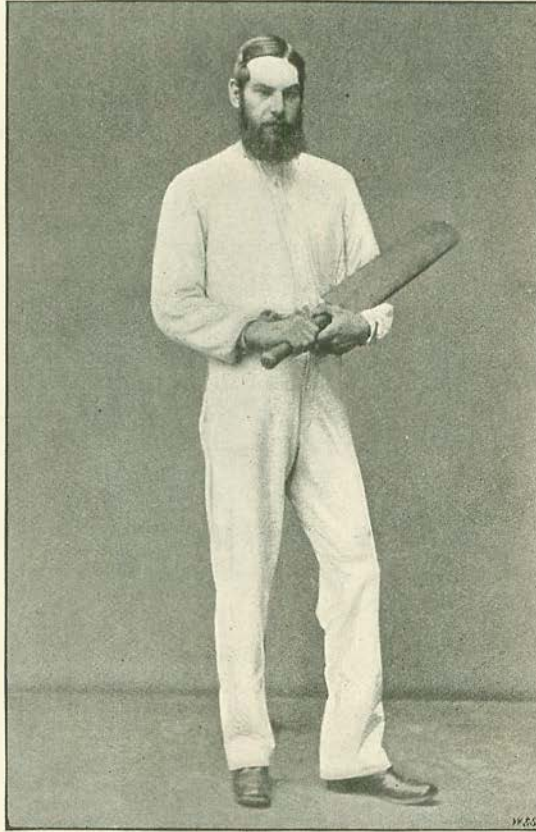
From the figures which have already been quoted, it may be rightly judged that Mr. Grace in reality inaugurated high and rapid

scoring in cricket. In 1859, the highest average was the 30.21 of Mr. V. Walker. But how would these figures strike a critical observer of the play of to-day? And yet, fêted and honoured on all sides, the Gloucestershire captain is as simple and unaffected at the present time as at the period when he was just commencing to be a power in first-class cricket.

I was fortunate enough to meet him as he stepped off the field at Lord's a few weeks back with the plaudits of the spectators, in recognition of his innings of 125 for the M.C.C. against Kent, yet ringing in the air. But with kindness and good-fellowship beaming from every line of his bronzed and bearded face, the champion grasped my hand with a grip which made me wince again, and acceded to my request for a few minutes' chat on past and present cricket. With the kindly “burr” of the west country

tongue lingering on every sentence, he told me how he was born at Downend, near Bristol, on July 18th, 1848, and, plunging at once into the thread of his story, went on to speak of the first match he recollected watching, at that time a wee lad of six, seated upon his father's knee.

“That was when I saw the All England Eleven play against Twenty-two of West Gloucestershire, at Bristol,” he remarked, “and I remember that two or three of the elder players at that time wore tall hats. That, as I was telling you, was the first match I can remember seeing, but as years went on I believe that I was present at every match I possibly could get at. And all the time my brothers and myself were being



From a Photo. by] MR. W. G. GRACE AT 22. [Midwinter & Co.

\*From the “All England Cricket and Football Journal.”



coached by my uncle, Mr. Pocock, into the rudiments of the game.

"He was a great enthusiast in the game, you know, and taught us the correct style, and when I was old enough I used to play for the West Gloucestershire Club, of which my father was the manager. Unfortunately, however, we had no ground at Downend, and had to play upon the common, about a mile away; but we lads when at home used to pitch our wickets in the orchard. That was where I first got a knowledge of the game.

"The first match I played in? Well, that was when I was nine years old, and I scored 3 not out. I played three more innings that year, I remember, and scored only another single. That wasn't exactly great, was it? Nor were my records exactly as I wished for the next few years. In 1858, I played six innings for 4 runs; 1859, nine innings for 12 runs; 1860, four innings for 82; 1861, ten innings for 46; and 1862, five innings for 53.

"But all this time, you must remember, I was still practising under Uncle Pocock's eye, while beyond cricket we boys also went in for the kite carriages, of which he was the inventor. Of course, this is really outside the game, but I may mention that we used to beat the carriages drawn by horses frequently, while on one occasion he raced and defeated the Duke of York's carriage on the London Road. That was his recreation, you know; but to get back to cricket again. I left school in 1863, and after a very severe illness I was placed under the charge of a tutor by my father. That season I played nineteen innings, and hit up 350 runs, being not out on six occasions, and securing an average of 26,



MR. W. G. GRACE'S FATHER.  
Photo. by Midwinter & Co.



Photo. by [Midwinter & Co.]  
MR. W. G. GRACE'S MOTHER.

"By this time, as you may imagine, I was getting pretty well known as a cricketer in the neighbourhood of Bristol, and had scored 18 and 1 in the match Gentlemen of Gloucester v. Gentlemen of Devon. But it was not until '64 that I accomplished my first great performance. I was only fifteen at that time, mind you, but a big boy for my age, and playing for the Gentlemen of South Wales against the Gentlemen of Sussex made 170 and 56 not out, and took two wickets

in the first innings. This success led to my being requested to play in the following year for the Gentlemen v. the Players both at Lords and the Oval. I did fairly well, but the first century I ever hit up in first-class cricket was made in 1866. England was playing Surrey, at the Oval, and, going in fifth for the former, I did not come out again until I had

made 224, and then was not out.

"Since then I have been playing continually in first-class cricket whenever I have been available and eligible, although at times

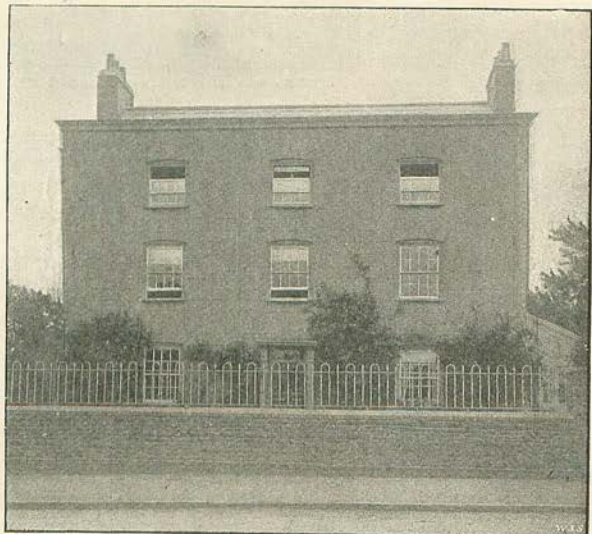


Photo. by [Midwinter & Co.]  
MR. W. G. GRACE'S BIRTHPLACE.





THE CHESTNUTS, DOWNEND—MR. GRACE'S FORMER RESIDENCE.  
From a Photo. by Mr. Voss Bark, Clifton.

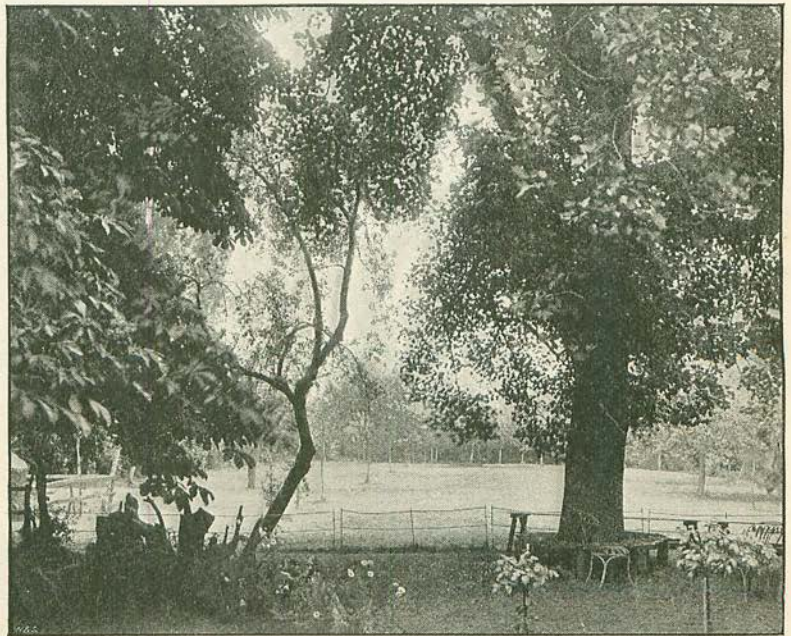
my duties precluded all idea of my donning the flannels. In the field I used to prefer being placed at long leg, but I much prefer point now. Eighteen stone, for that is what I have weighed for a good many years past, is quite enough for me to carry when batting, and I can tell you I don't care for sprinting to the boundary in the attempt to save a four as much as I did in my younger days.

"What was my best year with the bat? Well (with a laugh) I have had so many that I almost forget, but I think you may be safe in saying that I was most successful in 1870. In that season I had 35 innings, scoring 2,739 runs, and having an average of 78 at the close.

With these figures you may perhaps think I had a little luck with the bowlers. But I don't think I had. I know I had to face J. C. Shaw, Alfred Shaw, Souther-ton, Martin McIntyre, and Wooton, and they were all good men.

"Then my best season with the ball, I think, was in 1867. I took 39 wickets at a cost of 6·21 each; in 1874 I secured 129 for 12; 1875, 192 for 12; and again in 1877 the same average, 179 for 12. My

highest innings, I may add, was that scored in 1876 against Twenty-two of Grimsby and District for a United South of England Eleven. When we went on the ground they grumbled because we had brought a weak



CRICKET GROUND AT THE CHESTNUTS, DOWNEND, WHERE THE GRACES PLAYED CRICKET AS BOYS.  
From a Photo. by Mr. Voss Bark, Clifton.





From a Photo. by

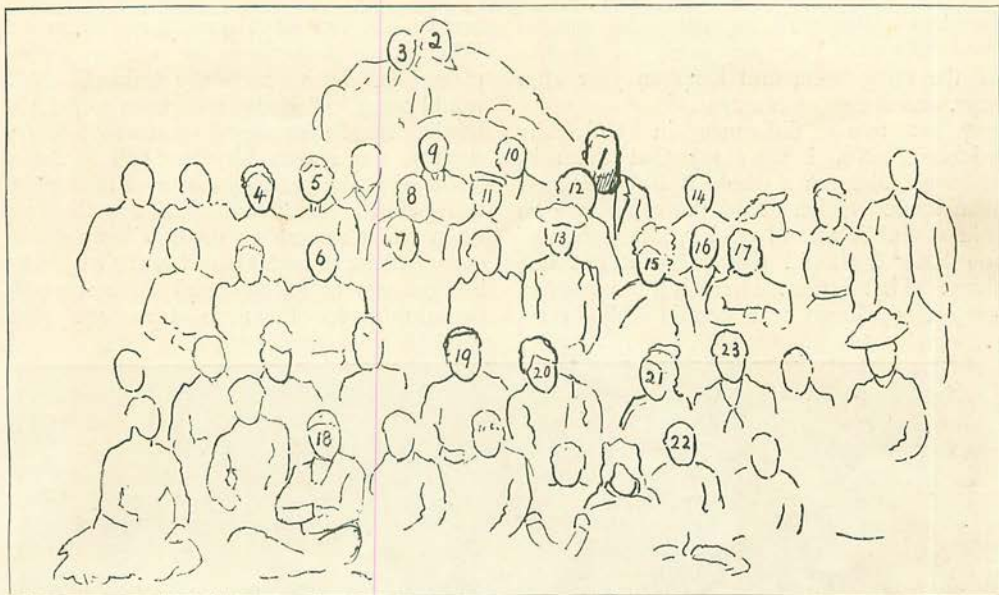
The persons in this group are 45 in number, and from Mrs. Henry, W. G., and F. M. downwards to a very small child, they are all members of the family of celebrated cricketers. The photograph was taken on the occasion of a family picnic, which is an annual affair, and to which they invite no one but members of their own family.

THE GRACE FAMILY.

[Mr. Foss Bark, Clifton.

1873





SKELETON PLAN OF THE GRACE FAMILY.

1. W. G. Grace. 2. Alfie Grace (nephew). 3. Geo. Grace (nephew). 4. Mrs. E. M. Grace. 5. Mrs. Page (niece). 6. Miss Bessie Grace (daughter). 7. E. M. Grace (brother). 8. Alfie Pocock. 9. W. G. Grace, jun. 10. Gerald Grace (nephew). 11. Mrs. Bernard (sister). 12. Henry Grace (brother). 13. Mrs. W. G. Grace. 14. Dr. Skelton (brother-in-law). 15. Miss Fanny Grace (sister). 16. Alfie Grace (brother). 17. Rev. J. W. Dann (brother-in-law). 18. H. E. Grace (son). 19. Mrs. Skelton (sister). 20. Mrs. Hy. Grace. 21. Mrs. Dann (sister). 22. Chas. B. Grace (son). 23. Mrs. Alfie Grace.

team, but there wasn't much said after I made 400, not out, out of 681, and was at the wickets until nearly four o'clock on the third day. But this performance was never an actual record, you know. A few weeks after I had made the runs I have just mentioned, I made 344 for Gentlemen of M.C.C. against Kent, followed with 179 *v.* Notts, and 318 not out *v.* Yorkshire.

"Beyond these performances, I have three times scored over a hundred in each innings, and, with Mr. B. B. Cooper, made a record of 283 for the first wicket for Gentlemen of the South against Players of the South. This stood as a record until it was beaten by Messrs. H. T. Hewett and L. C. Palaret at Taunton, playing for Somersetshire *v.* Yorkshire. As to what I should call the best of my innings—well, you must judge that for yourself.

"And now to present-day cricket. Well, I think myself that the players who were known when I first came out would fairly hold their own now, while in many cases I fancy they might be better. Of course, we hadn't the pitches then that we have now, and every hit was run out. The consequence of this was that perhaps a batsman would get excited in trying to get a six, with a short run as the last, and the field had a better chance of running him out than they have at the present day.

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"Why, there were no boundaries at the time I am speaking of, and at Lord's and the Oval, if the ball didn't go inside the pavilion we had to run it out. This is what makes me think that it is easier to get a hundred now than it was then. The only remedy that I know for this would be to put a wooden fence right round the playing ground, say some 2ft. high. If a ball should be sent over, it should be a boundary, and count the regulation four; if not, it should be run out.

"Of course, the reason these boundaries were established had nothing to do with saving the batsmen. It was the crowd who had to be considered; for I have seen a fieldsman knock down four or five spectators when going after a ball. We used to go right in, and let everybody take care of himself. As regards the question whether batting and bowling are improving, of course, there are a great many more players now than there were twenty and twenty-five years ago, but I don't think there is much difference.

"The players, I am bound to admit, are stronger in bowling than the amateurs, but I think I can explain that. An amateur does not appear to care for bowling so much as for batting. And then, again, a professional does not go on for so many years. You hear of them, as a general rule, for a few seasons, and then they give up the game and go into



business. But with amateurs the case is very different. They play solely for the love of the thing itself, and keep on year after year, and season after season.

"Not much difference in University cricket? No, I can't say that there is, although taken as a whole it is better now than it used to be. And the same may be said of public school cricket, although with the latter I should like to point out one thing. That is this: There is a tendency to keep a boy down to a certain style in his

certain not too strict conditions, of course. When at the Universities the style of a young player has been practically formed, but it would be as well if the men were to practise bowling more than they do just now. But I suppose the reason why the ball is not so favoured as the bat is by reason of the wickets being much easier now than was the case when I first remember them. Now, almost every college at both Oxford and Cambridge has grounds of its own, and there is ample opportunity for them to turn out good



THE WINNING ELEVEN OF GRACE'S, IN THE MATCH WITH ELEVEN OF ROBINSON'S, AT BRISTOL.  
From a Photo. by Midwinter & Co., Bristol.

play. He must play the 'correct game,' it is said; but suppose a lad has an ugly style, and yet is a hitter who can get runs, why should he not be coached up in that? Instead of that, however, he is taught how to hold his bat by the regulation rule, and the result is that instead of being a fearless slogger he is to a great measure spoilt. These remarks, I may as well say, apply equally to the bowling as to the batting.

"My opinion is that, provided a lad is able to keep his wicket up and to get runs, although his style may not be a pretty one for a spectator to watch, he should be allowed to play his own game, under

teams. I should not say that upon the average there is much difference between either 'Varsity eleven, but you must remember that Fenners is much easier for the batsmen, and correspondingly more difficult for the bowlers, than the parks at Oxford. I should say that is why the Cantabs are not so very strong as a rule in the latter department, for it takes all the heart out of a man to send down over after over, day after day, without getting a wicket. As regards the best bowlers I have met at Cambridge, I might mention R. M. Powys, A. G. Steele, S. M. J. Woods, J. S. Jackson.

"But it is not exactly fair to judge the



capability of a team from their display upon a London ground. For one thing, the batsmen are far from being at home under the altered conditions. The men are nervous, too, especially if it should be their first appearance in London.

"And as regards the admission of additional counties into the championship series: this I do not think is exactly an improvement. With so many teams engaged it will be found impossible to play home and home matches with each county. The consequence of this may be that, perhaps, some strong counties will only meet some of the weaker ones; and then again, matters may get so complicated when the points come to be calculated that there will be a difficulty in really finding out who are the champions.

"Then there is another thing I am afraid of. That is, that cricket will be made too much of a business, like football—with the consequence that none but professionals will be seen playing. That, I hope, will not come in our times; but there is that probability to be faced. Should such a condition of affairs occur—well, betting and all other kindred evils will follow in its wake, and

instead of the game being followed up for love, it will simply be a matter of £ s. d.

"And then there is another thing that militates against the well-being of a team. That is the behaviour of the crowd. If a batsman is unfortunate, there is always a section of the public who starts jeering as soon as he may come in. That takes all the confidence out of a man, and if he should be an amateur, he would not stand it for long. Then, again, if a fieldsman fails to take a difficult chance, or is slow in a return, the crowd set about him again. But I can tell you a man feels quite bad enough when he knows he has missed a chance of sending an opponent back, without having the spectators howling at him. You can't expect anyone to stand too much of this kind of treatment, and if things should reach a climax, the gentlemen always have a remedy in their own hands. All they will have to do will be to give up the county games, form clubs, and decide fixtures amongst themselves.

"How do I think the alteration in the rule of follow-on will affect the game, you ask. That all depends; and as it has been afforded such a short trial, I prefer not to say too much upon



THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE TEAM AS THE CHAMPION COUNTY, IN 1877—THE LAST GROUP TAKEN IN WHICH FRED. GRACE, WHO IS HOLDING UP THE BALL, APPEARED BEFORE HIS DEATH.

[Mr. Voss Bark, Clifton.]



the subject; but I think it may make the game a little fairer for the fielding side. Say their opponents complete their first innings, and then have to follow on. Well, the chances are all in favour of a big score being knocked up. The bowlers and fieldsmen are fatigued, while the batsmen have had an opportunity of resting themselves. With the margin enlarged to 120 runs, however, it should tend to make the game of a more equal character, for it is not often that an eleven would fall so far in the rear as that figure.

"Then you mention the 'retired hurt' question, that has provoked such a discussion since the pronouncement of the secretary of the M. C. C. Of course, if a batsman is hurt he retires, and then may come out again and finish his innings if an arrangement is made with the opposing captain. As for saying that a player might retire under what practically would mean false pretences for the sake of his average, that cannot be taken into serious consideration for a moment. A man would never do that—that is my experience of the game; and if he should do so by any chance, well, he wouldn't be played again, you may depend upon that.

"Now, that is hardly a fair question to ask."

This in reply to a question of mine respecting which ground in England was the best, in Mr. Grace's opinion.

"All county grounds are good; some are naturally slower than others, but no fault can be found with the manner in which they are kept. But if you want to know which is the easiest ground from a batsman's point of

view, I should certainly pitch upon that at Brighton. There is a very small boundary there, it is fast, and a team ought to be able to score a hundred a day there in advance of the figures they might obtain upon some other grounds.

"But I think that on the whole Australian wickets are better, as a rule, than ours. They have all the climatic advantages necessary to make a pitch something like what we were getting in May and June of this year. At

Melbourne, Adelaide, and Sydney the grounds are as good as ours, as level as a billiard table, and much easier to score upon owing to their being so fast. But it doesn't follow from this that a player who has made a big reputation home here would do well at the Antipodes. For one thing, the climate is liable to upset a visitor, and then the glare of the sun exercises a dazzling effect upon one, which you are a considerable time in getting used to.

"In America they also have fairly good grounds; that was how I found it when I was

across there, and I dare say they have improved matters considerably since then. But the cricket is only about as good as that of the weakest of our counties, although the clubs are so enthusiastic over the game, that negotiations have been opened for the visit of a couple of our teams some time during the present season. But there is really no comparison between English and Colonial cricket. Why, here, at home, we ought to beat Australia every time, although when you take a team out there, there is a certainty that it would not be a really representative one. The matters I have already mentioned would



From a Photo. by

PREPARING FOR ACTION.

[Hawkins, Brighton.]





From a Photo. by] READY TO RECEIVE THE BALL. [Hawkins, Brighton.

militate against its success, while the hospitality is too much for good play.

"There is, however, one feature of the Australian cricket which I may perhaps mention. They have had a really wonderful succession of first-class bowlers in a short time. The batting, when the number of players is considered in proportion, is not nearly so good; but as they have so very few professionals, the amateurs are forced to handle the leather themselves. In the big matches and club fixtures, the latter more especially, I have found that the trundling is better there than in England.

"But I have met some capital bowlers in the past. I should class them in two sections, the slows including A. Shaw, Peate, Souther-ton, Mr. A. G. Steel, Watson, Mr. Buchanan; and the fasts—Freeman, Tarrant, Jackson, Hill, Willsher, Morley, J. C. Shaw, Mr. Tonge, and Mr. Appleby.

"I think myself that the bowling was quite as difficult when I came out in first-class cricket as at the present time; but amongst the most successful of the present time with the leather, I should put Peel,

Briggs, and Mr. C. L. Townsend as the slows, and Mr. S. Woods, Mr. Kortright, Mold, Richardson, and Lockwood as the fasts.

"The consideration of the various degrees of excellence amongst the bowlers takes you, as a matter of course, to the consideration of throwing. I must admit that some of the very fast bowlers (I need mention no names) are looked upon with suspicion; but I really do not think they are any worse now than they were in years gone by. There was always a certain percentage of suspicion, and so, I suppose, it will have to go on. There is one thing certain, and that is, you will never get an umpire to no-ball a suspicious bowler who is allowed to take part in present cricket.

"The only remedy I can suggest would be for a dozen umpires and a similar number of captains of the best county teams to meet together. The names of all the bowlers who were suspected of throwing should be placed upon a slip of paper. Then they should be marked, as by ballot, whether they were considered to throw or not, the decision of a two-thirds majority to be final, and if a man were convicted of throwing

he should not be allowed to bowl again. That is the only way in which the evil could be coped with, in my opinion, and when a man knew that he might be debarred from further play—well, it would make him much more careful.

"Then another thing that is often asked me is, whether I think football improves a man for cricket. No, I do not. A man cannot do well at cricket unless he has followed the game up all his life, while I could mention Rugby forwards who really run away from fast bowlers. A cricketer, however, should take plenty of exercise to keep himself fit during the winter. But people have much over-rated the methods I pursue. You read of all kinds of means, but you may take it from me that they are, in the majority of instances, untrue.

"Last winter I was certainly out once or twice a week with the Clifton Foot Beagles, but I commenced practising much later this year than usual. But it doesn't follow that even if a man is in training he will do equally well at all times. A spell of bad luck may unsettle him, or a



biting east wind may take all the suppleness out of his joints. A man who plays cricket, and cricket alone, though, is not likely to make a shining light. Exercise is what you require. If you can't run you can ride, and if you can't ride you can walk.

"This reminds me that I was never defeated over hurdles at 200yds., while my favourite distance on the flat was a quarter of a mile. But I have been credited with covering 100yds. in 10 4-5sec., and clearing 5ft. in the high jump, while I remember one instance in which there was an amusing dispute with my brother, E. M. You must know that he could beat me in a 100yds. sprint, but we both entered for the event and got on the mark. I kept one eye upon the starter and, poaching a couple of yards at the pistol shot, won by a foot. E. M. wouldn't speak to me after this for a time, but the coolness soon wore off with the dear old fellow. But I never possessed any style in my running. When I came out at sixteen I was unmercifully chaffed at the way I threw my legs and arms about, but I persevered, and at last, two years later, won the 300yds. strangers' race at Clifton College sports."

Upon turning up the records, it may be mentioned *en passant* that in 1869 he had gained the reputation of being one of the fastest quarter-mile runners in England, and in 1870, when giving racing up, had gained over seventy cups and medals. In 1866 Mr. Grace secured eighteen 1sts and two 2nds; 1867, one 1st; 1868, six 1sts; 1869, seventeen 1sts, nine 2nds, and one 3rd; and in 1870, five 1sts, one 2nd, and one 3rd. His best times were: 100yds., upon grass, 10 4-5sec.; 150yds. (with 5yds. start), 15 1/2sec.; 200yds. hurdles, 28sec.; 440yds. flat race, 52 1-5sec.; long jump, 17 1/2ft.; high jump, 5ft.; hop, step, and jump, 41ft.; pole jump, 9ft.; and throwing the cricket ball, 122yds. These figures will give an idea of what he was capable of at his best.

"How should I advise a young beginner to start learning the game? That is a somewhat difficult question, for every player possesses a style more or less distinctive. But the great thing for a youngster to secure is a good coach, who will teach him

the correct way in which to hold his bat and take up his position at the wickets. Perhaps a lad may say that the hard and fast rules may make him feel cramped and stiff at the wicket, but you may depend upon it that he will soon adapt himself to the various conditions. Then, in taking his place against the bowler, the batsman should be particular in seeing that he plays with a perfectly straight bat, while his toes should be just outside an imaginary line drawn from the leg and off stump of each wicket respectively. This will enable him to get well over his work, while he will stand less chance of being bowled off his pads.

"As for the position in which to stand, there is no hard and fast rule, but what I generally favour is the placing of the left leg about 12in. in front and at right angles to my other. The right foot should come inside the crease, and as a general rule should not be moved. Shift your left foot as much as you like when batting, but upon the right depends the stability of your defence. If you are continually shifting it, you will get out very soon.



From a Photo. by]

CUTTING.

[Hawkins, Brighton.



"And now for the bat. No doubt you have observed the peculiarity of many players in respect of the length of the handle. Some have long, others again have them shorter. I myself prefer a handle of the ordinary length, and hold it about half-way up. Then you must keep your eye upon the bowler until the instant when the ball leaves his hand, for you can generally tell by this in which way he intends to break. Then you should make the bat hit the ball, not let the ball hit the bat.

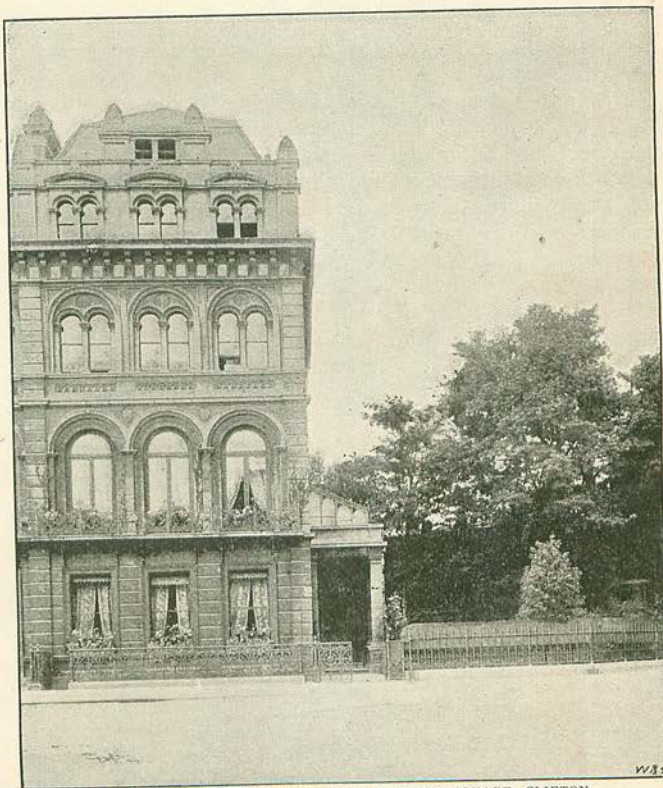
"If you make up your mind to hit, hit hard, half measures are of no use; and when you block, put just a little power into your strokes. You should not be content to stop the ball by simply interposing the bat, but play it in such a manner that runs may be secured. Hit hard, then: that is my advice to a young player; but get well over the ball and never spoon it up. A hit travels much farther when it is kept down than when sent high in the air; while it is but seldom found that a slogger, who skies all his hits, scores many runs.

"With regard to the various styles of play, it is difficult to advise. You see, each player generally has a different method, and a long-reached man will be able to get forward and smother a ball that shorter-reached batsmen can only play by getting farther back. There is consequently much that must be left to individual judgment, but I should most strongly caution a player against betraying a tendency to play across the wicket, or to pull balls. A leg ball that is a leg ball should be hit to leg, but young players are only too apt to attempt to pull almost every ball sent down. The result of this is that they fail to do much in the game owing to their faulty style.

"In cutting, you should never fail to keep the ball down, patting it down, if I may use the expression, although nothing but practice will bring the familiarity necessary for the playing of the game. You should practise frequently and play as carefully at the nets as

in an actual match; while many useful hints may be learnt by watching the best players. A beginner, mind you, should not be a copyist, but there is more to be learnt in half an hour's actual practice than can be taught in a week of theory.

"And now we come to bowling. In this department too much attention cannot be given, although the young beginner should not attempt to bowl fast at first. If he does, possibly he will sacrifice pitch and straightness. Commencing, say, at 18 yards instead of 22, he should gradually work his way back to the longer distance, and by placing a mark, easily seen, upon the pitch at a certain distance from the wicket, he will soon be able to vary his length at will, and



MR. W. G. GRACE'S RESIDENCE IN VICTORIA SQUARE, CLIFTON.  
From a Photo. by Mr. Voss Bark, Clifton.

bowl somewhere near the spot aimed at. Trying to twist the ball should only come after a man has learnt to bowl straight. To accomplish this the ball should be held firmly in the hand, with the fingers grasping it well over the centre and resting over the seams. Then in leaving go, the fingers should relax their grasp, imparting the twist so destructive to the unwary batsman.



"But there is more to be gained by altering your pace and length than by bowling dead upon the wicket time after time. Many batsmen will simply play maiden after maiden if the bowling is straight, but if you give them a few balls on either side of the wicket, it is probable that they will give a chance and be out. Of course, this does not apply to a poor batsman. He cannot play straight bowling for any length of time, and is bound to let the ball beat him eventually.

"Which is the best bowling, fast or slow? Well, that depends upon the ground. Although a fast bowler upon a good wicket is the easiest to score from, my eye is not so sure as it was at one time, and I think I prefer a medium-paced ball myself. Considering the two styles of bowling, however, slow is generally the best upon a soft wicket, and fast upon a hard, difficult pitch.

"Now, in conclusion, we come to the fielding. It is as much by activity in this department that a match is won as with the bat, for, if catches are missed, returns muffed, and runs allowed to be stolen—well, the bowlers will be sadly handicapped. Each man in the field should be intent upon the game, and nothing else. Talking during the over should not be allowed. A fieldsman should invariably run in to a ball, and not wait for it to come to him, while he can never tell what catches he may bring off unless he makes the attempt.

"One curious thing that is sometimes seen is that a poor field may take a catch coming

off the bat at a tremendous pace, while he may miss an easy one. When making a catch off a swift ball, the hands should 'give' a few inches involuntarily, but with a slow ball is apt to jump out of your grip before the fingers can close round it.

"Then there is another point worth attention. Suppose you miss a ball. The best do this at times, but never lose a moment in vain regrets, but sprint off and save the runs. Then in returning the ball, unless you have an excellent reason, never throw to the bowler's end. When returning from the long field send the ball low and straight. The greater the curve, the longer it takes to reach the wicket, and the less chance is there of running the batsman out. By the due observance of these rules, there is no reason, if a young player is possessed of a good eye and head, why he should not prove a successful exponent of our noble game.

"There is one thing, however, in addition to these I have already enumerated, that has been discussed considerably; that is, upon either a wet or drying wicket, if you are successful in the toss, should you put your opponents in or have first knock yourself? The latter, most decidedly, I should say; for in this climate of ours you can never be certain of the weather for two days in succession. In fact, I may safely say that only about once in thirty or forty times does the experiment of putting your opponents in first prove successful."

F. W. W.

Marlborough House,  
Pall Mall S.W.

1<sup>st</sup> June 1895

Dear Sir,

The Prince of Wales has watched with much interest the fine scores which you continue to make in the great matches this year. He now learns that you have beat all former records by

scoring 1000 runs during the first month of the cricket season as well as completing more than 100 centuries in first class matches.

His Royal Highness cannot allow an event of such deep interest to all lovers of our great national

game to pass unnoticed by him, and he has derived much pleasure from your his hearty congratulations upon this magnificent performance

I remain  
Dear Sir  
Yours truly  
Francis Knollys

W. G. Grace Esq

Copied by]

FACSIMILE OF THE LETTER FROM H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, SENT TO MR. GRACE JUNE 1, 1895. [Midwinter.

NOTE.—We are indebted to the courtesy of Mr. G. Falconer King for permission to use the following illustrations: W. G. Grace at 22, his Birthplace, his Parents, the Eleven of Grace's, and the Prince of Wales's Letter.