

balance at the present time of something like £50. Last year's first twenty were the recipients of very handsome caps, which were presented by lady supporters of the Club. During each season the members meet twice a week in their own hall for social recreation and practice. Three fifteens are played each Saturday throughout the season, and two others could be kept going if necessary. The following are the office bearers of the Club at the present time:—President, Mr James Allen, B.A.; Vice-presidents, Messrs L. Dymock, M. Fagan, J. M. Jamieson, A. A. D. MacLaughlin, E. J. Roberts, and R. G. Stone; Captain, James McCleary; Deputy-captain, A. Downs; Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, D. Paterson; Committee of Management, Messrs W. J. MacLaughlin, W. Skitch, G. Weitzel, and O. Briggs; Delegates to O.R.F.U., Messrs W. J. MacLaughlin, Stone, and McCleary. Messrs Paterson and W. J. MacLaughlin have been the leading lights in managing and financing the Club since its infancy, and deserve great credit for the way the Club has been conducted.

The photo was taken by the Exchange Court Studio, Prince-street, Dunedin.

THE HINDOO STRANGLERS.

THE subject of the 'Thugs of India,' forms a moral and political phenomenon, which is, perhaps, the most extraordinary that has ever existed in the world—a phenomenon more striking than anything that romancers have feigned touching the Old Man of the Mountain or the Secret Tribunals of Germany; a phenomenon of which strange and appalling glimpses have been occasionally obtained, but of which the nature and extent have never, and probably never

office of strangler, until he has been on many expeditions, and acquired the requisite courage and insensibility by slow degrees. They are first employed as scouts; then as assassins; then as abductees or holders of land, and lastly, as Bhartotes or stranglers. When a man feels that he has sufficient courage and insensibility for the purpose, he solicits the oldest and most renowned Thug of the gang to make him his chela or disciple. The Thug agrees to become his gooroo, or spiritual preceptor, and when the gang falls in with a man of respectability, but not much strength, fitted for the purpose, he tells the gooroo that he is prepared with his permission, to try his hands upon him.

While the traveller is asleep with the gang at their quarters the gooroo takes his disciple into a neighbouring field, followed by three or four old members of the gang. On reaching the spot chosen they all face to the direction the gang intends to move, and the gooroo says in (Ramassee) 'Oh, Kalee, Kunkalee, Bhudkalee. Oh, Kalee, Mabakalee, Calcutta, Walee. If it seemeth to thee fit that the traveller now at our lodging should die by the hand of this thy slave, vouchsafe us the Thibahoo.' If they vet the auspice on the right, within a certain time (half an hour), it signifies her sanction; but if they have no sign or the phillao (or sign on the left), some other Thug must put the traveller to death, and the candidate for honours wait for another time.

The Thugs travel along the roads under various assumed characters, in parties varying from ten or twelve to several hundreds. They appear as traders, as pilgrims, as sepoys seeking or returning from service, and sometimes one of their number figures as a Rajah, with all the necessary equipments of tents, carriages, etc., and the rest act the part of his obsequious followers. If the gang is numerous they are divided into several parties, who follow each other at some distance, or, taking different routes, rendezvous at an ap-

The Thugs are forbidden by their rules to kill a woman of any description, and either men or women of the following classes: Fakirs, bards, musicians by profession, dancing men and women, washerwomen, sweepers, oil vendors, blacksmiths and carpenters, when found together, maimed or leprous persons, men with cows, and Ganges water carriers while they have the Ganges water actually with them; but if their pots are empty they are not exempted. These exceptions are not, however, made out of compassion, but from a feeling which is one of the strange tenets of this strange system of religion.

The Thugs date all their misfortunes from their murder of a native lady, whom they call Kalee Beebee, or black lady, who was proceeding to Hyderabad with a sheet of cloth of gold, for the tomb of a brother of Saalabut Khan. Since then the northern Thugs have murdered women as well as men; but those south of Nerbudda adhered to the primitive usage in this respect. The extent to which the natural feelings of humanity had been extinguished in these miscreants is perfectly astonishing. A party of them accompanied Newal Singh, a Jemadar in the Nizam's service, and his family more than 200 miles—were on most intimate terms with them for about twenty days—and received essential favours from them.

Once Newal Singh, not knowing them to be Thugs, procured their release when they were imprisoned on a charge of setting a house on fire in which they had lodged; and on another occasion his two daughters of 11 and 13 years of age saved them from detection by sitting upon some plundered silk whilst they were searched by the police. He and all his family were put to death. A system so diabolical, which embraced the whole of India, could not be suppressed by a few inroads upon it. The gradual dispersion of the gangs, which was vigorously entered upon by the Government, had the usual effect of a persecution, which,



BACK Row.—Dawes. Esquilant. Robertson. R. McLaren. J. McLaren. Baker. MacLaughlin. Cunningham.
MIDDLE Row.—Jas. Allan. Haig. Briggs. Downes. McCleary. Johnston. Restieaux.
FRONT Row.—Hoss. Crawford. Noel.

ALHAMBRA (DUNEDIN) FOOTBALL CLUB.

Exchange Court Studio, Dunedin.

will, be fully understood. It appears, then, from the most overwhelming evidence, that there existed in India a vast fraternity of murderers, consisting of many thousands of persons; that this fraternity has existed for many ages, and through many political revolutions, that it has spread its ramifications over the whole of that vast country, from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas; that it has flourished alike under Hindu, Mohammedan, and British rulers; that it has destroyed multitudes of victims; and yet that its constitution—we may say its very being—has been quite unknown to the most active and vigilant functionaries, and very imperfectly understood, even by the native Governments.

It was, indeed, notorious that gangs of thieves sometimes strangled travellers. It was notorious that the members of these gangs were usually expert at the operation of strangling; but that these gangs were merely small detached portions of a vast organised community, the members of which recognised each other as brethren in the remotest parts of India; that these murders were all committed according to certain ancient and solemn forms, and were regarded by those who committed them, not as crimes, but as solemn rites, which it would have been sinful to omit, remained long unsuspected. These extraordinary people are known by the name of Thugs, and their profession is called Thuggee. They are divided into Burkas, or persons fully instructed in the art, and Kuboolas, or novices. They consider a Burka as capable of forming a gang of Thugs out of the rude material around him in any part of India, and a Thug who has arrived at this stage of proficiency in the art ought not to be therefore left at large. A Kuboola, or novice, they think, could do nothing if left to himself, and he might, therefore, be left at large without much danger to society, if he had no leader to join.

These are by no means nominal distinctions. No Thug is allowed to take his degree as a Burka, or to assume the

pointed place in advance. Their victims are almost always travellers.

The most expert members of the gang are employed to collect information and insinuate themselves into the confidence of travellers whom they find at the resting-places or overtake on the road. They usually propose to them to join the company for mutual safety, and if the traveller suspects one party he soon falls in with another, who pretends to enter into his feelings of distrust. A person is sent before to select a proper place for the murder and scouts are employed to prevent intrusion. The travellers are generally induced to sit down under the pretence of resting themselves, and they are strangled at once on a given signal. The bodies are then buried, after having been unslung to expedite dissolution and to prevent their swelling and causing cracks in the ground.

Two Thugs are employed in the murder of each individual, one of whom holds his legs or hands while the other applies the noose. If a traveller have a dog, it is also killed, lest the faithful animal should cause the discovery of the body of its murdered master. Thugs designate their murders in a peculiar manner by the number of persons killed. Thus they speak of the Sutrooh, or sixty-soul affair. The Chaleerooh, or forty-soul affair, is also famous. Sometimes, but very rarely, the Thugs are obliged to depart from their rule of putting their victims to death by strangling. This was the case in a remarkable affair, in which they obtained a booty of £20,000. In Bengal, which is much intersected by rivers, the plan is modified to suit the circumstances of the country. The practice there is to inveigle travellers on board pretended passage boats, which are manned entirely by Thugs, and then to strangle them and throw their bodies into the river. Several of these boats follow each other at short intervals, so that if the traveller escapes one snare he may fall into another.

does not go to the length of entire eradication. The scattered Thugs formed numerous separate gangs, and although the number of raw recruits whom they enlisted contributed in the end to their downfall, yet its immediate effect was greatly to increase the number of victims.

LOVE IN ABSENCE.

The lamp is lit, the fire glows red,
The storm roars over the roof;
I am weary of weaving the drowshead
Of thought into warp and woof.

The music lies in the yellow light,
I finger the ivory keys;
But the charm—the charm is fled to-night
Of melody wont to please.

I turn the pages of sweet Scott's song,
But it is not sung by me;
These airs to a gentler voice belong;
Each page has a memory.

Books hold me not; at last I rise,
For the lines but fade from view;
I am haunted—by splendour of shining eyes,
And my heart, sweetheart! is with you.

GEORGE EYRE-TODD.

The New High Arm Davis Vertical Feed proved the World's Champion at the Paris Exhibition, 1889.—Advr.