

ENGLISH CUP?

LUTON'S DRAW AT GAINSBOROUGH.

As a matter of fact, Luton really won the match on Saturday; and to an impartial observer it seemed to be an error of judgment on the part of the referee when he disallowed the goal shot by Sandy Brown. The referee was so fair all though that one could only regret this mistake.

There are cup-ties and cup-ties, but the match will take some beating for rough play. As I said in this column last week Gainsborough's chief point is their "dashing" tactics, and when they do dash some of the opposing players have to look out. Even the home supporters had to admit that on Saturday the Trinity played one of their roughest games. The backs had their eyes fastened on Sandy, and on one occasion when he was not playing the ball at all, the Luton centre-forward was badly fouled, so much so that it was afraid he would have to leave the field. Other Luton men also came in for their share, until such play on the part of the Trinity leads one to believe, rightly or wrongly, that they meant to lay out some of the Luton men. It was a good thing that the Blues did not proceed to play the same game, or no doubt they would have lost. At times play was so rough that the players looked as if they were getting out of hand.

Jackson, who played back, in place of Hogg, was hurt in the first ten minutes and had to leave the field. The Luton captain, wisely decided to fill the vacancy, and White took up the vacated position. For Luton to have played the one-back game would have been disastrous, because the home forwards were liable to break through at any time and score. White shone with conspicuous ability at back; he kicked with sterling judgment and was in his "chuff," as they say, when he was able now and then to "get a bit of his own back." Luton had to play with ten men, during most of the game; and when Jackson did return it was only to be a passenger on the wing.

Despite this big disadvantage, the visitors had the upperhand of the game right through. They were continually pressing, but they missed a golden opportunity in the first ten minutes, when Giggins badly failed to convert an easy chance. Brown, too, had an opportunity, but it appeared as if the Blues had had, *à propos*, a shaking up that they had lost their nerves.

As a game the match was scarcely worth watching, for there was naturally little football to be witnessed. Only once were the home team dangerous—towards the close—when the home centre-half broke through and sent in a clinking shot. Platt was, however, on his guard, and brought off a fine save. Then the Gainsborough men tried all they could to score, but their bustling tactics earlier in the game were now beginning to tell upon them, and Luton had no difficulty in keeping their scoring sheet blank.

So far as the Strawplaiters' supporters were concerned, one and all were satisfied with a draw. The most sanguine hardly expected to see the Blues win outright, and a draw now seems to have raised our hopes. But, for all that, Luton must not hold Gainsborough too cheaply. The replay on Wednesday will be over before these lines appear in print, but the result is not so certain as many imagine. All one can safely say is that Luton ought to win. There seems, however, to be one difficulty to contend with—Jackson will certainly not be able to play, and it is doubtful, at the time of writing if Hogg will be fit to take the field.

Only 6½ went by the excursion train on Saturday. No little dissatisfaction was expressed at the high fare charged, and those in the know declare that if the price had been more popular quite double the number at least would have gone to Gainsborough.

With both Lincoln and Grimsby at home, there was but a poor gate, and the Luton directors returned with only £39 in their pockets, out of which the railway fares had to be paid. Has any club had such terrible hard luck in the Cup as Luton?