

THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

Luton Fail at the Crystal Palace

After a Half-time Lead.

After the gruelling game with Rochdale in the replayed F.A. Cup-tie on Wednesday, it was hardly to be expected that Luton would be able to extend the Southern League leaders on the Crystal Palace pitch on Saturday, and a defeat of 3—1 did not come as a surprise, though it was a bit of a disappointment after Luton's half-time lead. As a matter of fact, it was a terrible handicap to the Blues to play on a pitch which was as heavy as lead, and it was this in the main that accounted for their defeat. In the early part of the game they showed up well, but they were not so prominent in the shooting department as the Glaziers, and it was Naisby to whom fell the lion's share of the honours on the Luton side. The Palace pressure was at times very severe, and though Bob Hawkes, Bushell and Chapman defended well Naisby was kept very busy at it. There is no doubt about it he showed remarkably fine form in goal.

The greater part of the first half went by without any goals, but when they did start there was quite a crop of them. As we have said, the only one registered before the interval was obtained by Luton. The Blues gained a succession of corner kicks, and from the last of these Smith beat the Palace custodian with a hook shot at close quarters. But within a quarter of an hour after the resumption the Palace had completely altered matters, scoring three quick goals.

Very little more was seen of the Luton forwards after this. Brown, on the wing, was always smart, but the attack as a whole did not last, and the defence had to meet considerable pressure during the second half. Prior to their first loss the Blues played an attractive game, although they were not very dangerous in shooting, but during the greater part of the second half the Palace were distinctly superior, although they lost Spottiswoode twenty minutes before time. Garrett showed remarkable speed in the mud, and was the star of the Palace attack, and Bulcock has probably never played a better game at full back.