

Football Notes.

By "THE GOALIE."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE

PROMOTION ALMOST CERTAIN.

LUTON'S SCORING FEAT AGAINST SWANSEA.

LAST SEASON'S FIASCO AVENGED.

Luton accomplished one of their best performances of the season on Saturday, when they defeated Swansea by no fewer than five goals to nil. Although they have not done so well of late, the Swans are one of the best teams in the Second Division of the Southern League, as was shown by their splendid run in the Cup, and until recently they have been dangerous rivals to Luton for promotion. Last season, it will be remembered, they were the only team to get four points out of Luton, actually winning in Bedfordshire by 4-0. This time, however, Luton have had an ample revenge by beating the Welshmen twice and scoring in all six goals without reply. The victory, together with the defeat of Brentford at Newport on Saturday, has made promotion almost a certainty. If Luton get only four points from their remaining four matches, Brentford and Stoke can only equal the Blues' total by winning all their remaining games, a very unlikely contingency. Stoke, who won at Mardy by 2-1, are now on the same mark as Brentford, and Croydon Common improved their excellent record by defeating Pontytridd by 2-1. Aberdare gained a surprising victory over Ton Pentre by 5-0, and Llanelly similarly defeated Caerphilly. Aber-tillery went down at Mid-Rhondda by 3-1.

The proposed excursion from Swansea for Saturday's game did not materialise, but the match attracted the excellent gate of eight thousand. The ground was in splendid condition, and was just the reverse to the quagmire on which the match at Swansea was fought out. Swansea were expected to give the Luton men a hard tussle, and it must not be imagined from the big score that they did not. As a matter of fact Luton's superiority would have been more fairly represented by one or two goals, but the home players had one of those electrifying flashes of brilliance which have won so many games this season, and three goals in quick succession changed a close game into a rout. The Swansea team are a weightier lot than Luton, and on Saturday were best served by their backs, Allman and Bulcock, both of whom kicked with excellent judgment. Except for Bassett, in the centre, the halves were only moderate, while the forwards all did fairly well until it came to shooting. The wingers, Durrant and Hoar, were Luton's outstanding forwards, but everyone played well in a hard, fast game. The teams were:—

Luton: Mitchell; Elvey and Robinson; F. Hawkes Frith and R. Hawkes; Durrant, Wilcman, Simms, Rollinson and Hoar.

Swansea: Storey; Allman and Bulcock; Duffy, Bassett, and Cudberley; Messer, Brown, Weir, Ball and Swarbrick.

Luton have to thank their lucky stars that they had not an uphill fight from the first two or three minutes, for Weir had a glorious opening through a misunderstanding between Elvey and Robinson. Both backs missed the ball, and Weir had a clear run through, but luckily for Luton he shot over the bar. Luton then attacked vigorously, and a sudden shot by Wileman was excellently saved by Storey, who also repressed one or two less dangerous attempts. At last, however, after about twenty minutes' play, Luton took the lead. A nice forward pass by Simms put Hoar in possession. The winger raced away and sent in a beautiful centre clear of the backs. Storey rushed out, but Simms got to the ball just before him, and headed past him into the net. It was an ideal goal, and Hoar and Simms were loudly cheered. An unpleasant incident that occurred soon afterwards almost negatived this success. It appeared that while Mitchell was clearing from a corner he was fouled by one of the opposing forwards. The whistle went for a free-kick, but Mitchell rushed for the delinquent and kicked him. The referee at once ordered the goalkeeper off the field, which would probably have meant defeat for Luton, but the Swansea captain appealed to the official to allow him to remain, and fortunately he did so, contenting himself with warning the Luton man. Just before the interval Hoar was badly fouled in the penalty area, but to the disappointment of the crowd Elvey shot high over the bar.

On resuming Luton went away in fine style, and Simms seemed certain to score in the first minute or so. He had beaten both backs, but Storey came out and prevented him from shooting. At the other end Weir had an equally good opening, but after running close in he shot the ball against the bar, and although the forwards swarmed round Elvey, after beating three or four men, cleared. Swansea were relieved to see a fine dribble by Wileman and a cross-shot from Hoar come to nought, but then their troubles began. Hoar began it by suddenly swinging the ball right across the field to Durrant. The winger neatly passed to Wileman, who, with a grand first-time shot, had the ball in the net. Luton were now playing irresistibly. A shot from Robinson was tipped over the bar by Storey with the greatest difficulty. From the corner the ball came to Fred Hawkes, who headed in to the goal-mouth. Simms could only just touch it and send it on to Robinson, who cleverly headed into the net. Although possessing such a comfortable lead, Luton continued to attack strongly, and a well-placed corner by Durrant enabled Simms to score the fourth goal with a first-time shot, Storey being unsighted. Swansea kept Luton back for a few minutes after this, but before the close Wileman received a forward pass from Simms, and running through scored the fifth and last goal. Result:—

LUTON 5, SWANSEA 0.