

FOOTBALL NOTES

(By CRUSADER).

Our interest is less in the things that have been than in the things that will be. We cannot too early face the fact that this has been a disastrous season for the Town Football Club, but our attention is directed more to the prospects for next season than to the poor record of the season just gone. As matters turned out, the question of relegation does not obtain, but the fact remains that the Town finished only third from the bottom, and it is a moot point how far a fairly well-to-do club like Merthyr Town would have taken steps to secure their position had there been any such trouble as relegation to be faced. We started badly and finished worse, and the directors may now bend their energies towards repairing the breaches made in a poor wall.

As in many other games this season, the Town did most of the pressing against Reading last Saturday, but the latter did all the scoring, and so took away the points. It is useless to lay the fault to this or that department, for the League chart shows very plainly indeed that neither fore nor aft was the team capable of challenging the majority of the opposition. Only four clubs have scored a less number of goals, and only three have had more scored against. Reading are seventh from the top of the League, although they have only scored exactly the same number of goals as Luton, but there is a disparity of 33 goals in the "against" record. Their display on Saturday showed that their defence was more solid than Luton's, but none could deny that their forwards were more alert in front of goal, and took their chances. Bailey's two goals, one in the early and one in the late stages, proved that we need forwards who are able to take a chance that offers quickly. This was why the Town lost.

I shall deal more exhaustively with the record in the "Saturday Telegraph." Meanwhile the directors have dispensed with the services of several players who have been very disappointing. Whether from lack of ability or from misfortune, they have not given what was expected from them, and we have now to fill the vacancies. Everyone may not agree that the directors have done wisely in retaining the players named as having been offered terms for next season. These are: Elvey, Dunn; Roe, Rutherford, Parker, How, Hill, Simms, Higginbotham, Hookman. There we have a full team with the exception of the goalkeeper. Those who differ from the directors do not appreciate what is at the back of their minds. There will be no delay in obtaining new men for certain positions, and the best that can be obtained will be secured, but with a hundred clubs advertising and searching for first-class talent, and high wages and high transfers on players, this is a very difficult matter. Already the directors are in touch with one or two men whom it is not advisable to name, and there can be no doubt that next season will show an improvement on this.

The players signed at the moment of writing are Roe, Parker, Hill, and How—all young players that any club might wish to obtain, and, in fact, players that might have gone elsewhere had the Town failed to obtain their signatures.

At the moment, the position of Elvey is a mystery. He has not signed for any club yet, nor can he, or any of the others named above, sign for any club without permission from the Town. If Elvey goes we shall all be very sorry, for he is very popular as well as a great player, and I hope some arrangement may be made quickly—before he goes to South Africa on Saturday—to tell us that he has signed up once more. I think the others will come within a few days.