

THE LEAGUE—DIV. III.

ANOTHER POINT DROPPED.

Luton Town's Escape from Defeat.

(By "CRUSADER.")

LUTON TOWN	1 goal
BRIGHTON	1 ..

LUTON.—Gibbon; Lennon, Tirrell; Roe, Walker, Jennings; Hoar, Cottingham, Higginbotham, Reid, Mosley.

BRIGHTON.—Hayes; Jenkins, Feebery; Neil, Coomber, Little; Groves, Moore, A. Jones, McAllister, J. Jones.

Referee.—F. H. Cearn, London.

Efforts by regular followers of the Town to recall a worse experience than that of Saturday afternoon were quite a pastime in the evening. Old players joined in, and many were the tales told, but the opinion was fairly unanimous that the game of an hour or two before was the very worst for many years.

No it was, and while agreeing that the wind was more troublesome on the field than in the stand, the professors of the game seldom gave an idea that they had been coached in a school of science. There was scarcely any attempt at combined work except during a little period of pressure by the Albion in the first half, and they fell away. The ground pass seemed to be an unheard of thing, for the ball was in the air almost all the time it was in play, and the visitors reaped full advantage from this fact by reason of their superior stature. It was pitiful to see the Town's smaller men trying to cope with the big men against them,—albeit they never lacked pluck. Had our men known how to utilise their advantage in the second half, they would have won, but on the whole we were fortunate to draw.

Brighton's goal came 13 minutes from the start, and from the limited view I got I was inclined to think Gibbon might have stopped it, although the ball appeared to hold momentarily in a pocket of wind just before it fell under the bar. The circumstances were that Walker headed the ball just before Lennon, intending to volley, got to it. The result was that **MOORE** got to the ball and shot—

A PAYING SPECULATION.

It was a good investment, for Gibbon was unsighted as the ball came over Lennon's shoulder, and in spite of a big effort, he failed to reach it.

Many more dangerous shots were on the target, but Gibbon was in form, and made some neat saves. Although Brighton undoubtedly had the better of the first half, the Town had much more of it after the interval, but we missed Thompson's leadership, and there was no edge on the attack. Higginbotham went to inside-right, Reid to the centre, and Cottingham to inside left. Although that made for improvement on the right wing, it did not greatly increase the effectiveness of the forwards in front of goal. It resulted in more attacks. Time after time the ball was worked in front of goal, and some of the Albion players appeared to be inclined to think that the game was won, and to indulge in a lot of "chipping," and they were very crest-fallen when the equaliser came, long after hope had vanished. Only two minutes remained for play according to the actual time, but a minute or two was added for stoppages. The goal originated on the right wing, when Hoar lofted the ball right into the goal mouth. Jenkins tried to head away, but the ball fell behind him, and Walker dashed up and headed against the bar; the ball fell on to the foot of REID, who promptly netted. The Albion players appealed for something, but it was only an attempt to jockey a rather weak referee, and it did not succeed. In the next minute Higginbotham got well into the goal area, but he could not retain control, and his shot went wide.

For the Town there was not much fault to find with the defence. Gibbon, Lennon and Tirrell were

SAFE FOR THE MOST PART.

and any occasional weakness, was due, I fancy, to the lack of understanding of the backs and halves, which we can quite understand in view of the chopping and changing that has taken place—some of it necessary, of course. Roe is at home on either flank, and the Albion left winger did not get much rope, but Jennings has only one place where his best is educed, and that is the middle. His usefulness is impaired when he is put on the wing, far more than Walker's when the latter is moved. On Saturday he was playing under difficulties, for he had three stitches in his lower lip. On his form against Brentford Walker could not be moved, but he did not maintain that level on Saturday. Many supporters thought that the line as a whole should have been retained as it was against Brentford, on the grounds that it is not good policy to disturb a winning team, and there is something to be said for that view, but I would point out that when Walker added his influence to the forward line in the closing stages, we got the equalising goal.

It wanted something of that promptitude for half an hour and then we should have won, for with the exception of Higginbotham all the forwards were on the light side, and they were well-nigh powerless against a stalwart defence. Higginbotham showed some skill as a pivot, and had Reid succeeded in the attempt to convert the west centre in the opening stages, after a great solo effort by Higginbotham, a very different result might have been achieved. On other occasions Cottingham was at fault. When Higginbotham went to his customary position, with Reid in the centre and Cottingham operating on the left, we got better work from Hoar, and it was pretty obvious that this was the flank upon which we must rely for any measure of success. In the second half Hoar was the best of

A RAGGED FORWARD LINE

—pack would be a better word. With Thompson available I think some of the

right-wing work would have been estimated in goals. Reid shows that he is going to fulfil the hopes that he will make a fine player. He is a trier through and through, shows neat control, and is a good shot. Cottingham disappointed. He has football in him, but as I said when he turned out against Torquay, he wants further experience in the English style of play before he makes a capable Luton forward. He is much too deliberate at present. Mosley, too, needs like instruction. He does not play with confidence, and his sole idea appears to be to get rid of the ball as soon as he receives it.

The absence of big men from the forward line was a serious handicap, and the directors will have to take steps to strengthen this department.

For the Albion Hayes did well on one or two occasions, but Jenkins, a fine capture of this season, and Feebury were a great pair of backs. Coomber was the master of the middle line, and his colleagues did well, too. Young Jones led the van with some degree of skill, but the danger came mainly from the right winger, Groves, who was well fed by Moore.