

THE "LIONS" AT LUTON.

Worst Game for Years Ends in a Draw.

"Dog-fight," "bull-fight," and "cock-fight" are terms that have been bandied about concerning last Saturday's game on the Town ground. Enough has been said already to indicate to those who were not there, the state of things, and the referee and the players alike have been criticised very fully—I won't say too harshly, because it would be difficult to imagine occurrences more deserving of censure. If every player who did a dirty trick had been sent off, the game would have finished with about six-a-side. The only consolation we have in the matter was that no one was sent off the field, for we have been badly enough hit without that, and the fact that it was admitted by important people present, not connected with the Town Club or the town of Luton in any way, that the "Lions" began the trouble. Some of the things I said in my "Pictorial" report have been challenged, and so the wholly independent view just referred to is of value—much more value than the mere statement conveys.

The apportionment of blame has been the subject of a lot of contention. Some blamed the referee the more, and some the players, and as two or three have addressed me on the matter, I can only say that neither could be excused. The referee is responsible to the authorities, but the players should have some sense of responsibility, too, and without minimising in any way the referee's share, the players make or mar in the first instance. Captain Prince-Cox has been "pushed" by certain writers of late, and while I should be the last to wish to see any man removed from the list, if he is to retain his position he must show a tremendous improvement in his handling of players. Two years ago we had a player sent off the field for pulling the referee's coat. On Saturday, as a photograph indicates, two Millwall players took hold of him, and a third was tapping him on the back. Nor was this the only occasion. If they had attempted anything like that with one or two of our Bedfordshire referees who cannot get into the upper circle, they would have been candidates for a long rest.

The Town had more of the game than the "Lions," and should have won, but when two penalties are missed, they can hardly be said to have deserved to do so. Hoar was badly tripped in the first instance, and Lansdale saved Higginbotham's shot. Higginbotham was tripped in the second case, and Hoar shot wide. The first goal came a minute or two after the restart, MOLYNEUX heading through Clarkson's flag kick. DILLIMORE made a brilliant run and equalised. Then Walker, who was leading the Town forwards, made a great effort, and his shot struck Lansdale's chest. REID dashed in and got the ball through before the keeper could recover. Five minutes from the end DILLIMORE got the equaliser from a scrimmage in the Town goal-mouth, and so we had to be content with sharing the points.

I think everybody was glad when the end came. It was an unhappy wind-up to a series of unhappy experiences. We have had plenty of misfortune lately, and as a result of Saturday's game there will be more men on the shelf. What sort of team we shall have for Bury it is impossible to say at the moment, for Walker and Hoar, who got the worst of the damage on Saturday, are hardly expected to be fit, so far as can be judged at the moment of writing. Walker got two very bad smashes as a result of Pembleton's methods. The first was a split scalp, from which blood flowed freely, and two stitches were put in the wound. Then when he went out again, Pembleton crashed into him and brought him down so heavily that his shoulder was badly hurt. Walker, under the circumstances, could have been excused returning to the game, but he pluckily did so, and his courage was beyond praise. Indeed, had he not returned, it is probable that we should have lost.

The crippling of Hoar neutralised the forward work a great deal, and with Walker's injury necessitating changes in the construction, it was no wonder that the team was all at sixes and sevens. All played their very hardest, without a doubt, and with that we may leave it.

LUTON TOWN 2 Goals

MILLWALL ATHLETIC 2 ..

LUTON TOWN.—Gibbon; Lennon, Tirrell; Roe, Walker, Jennings; Hoar, Higginbotham, Molyneux, Reid, Clarkson.

MILLWALL ATHLETIC.—Lansdale; Tilling, Amos; Voisey, Pembleton, Hankey; Anstias, Keen, Moule, Dillimore, Pither.

Referee: Captain A. J. Prince-Cox, Barnes.