

# ONE POINT OF EIGHT.

## TWO MORE DEFEATS.

(BY CRUSADEE.)

**LUTON TOWN** have made a depressing start, and there is no blinking the fact that there will have to be new players obtained if the lost ground is to be recovered. Misfortunes have befallen the club in injuries to Graham, Kerr, and Danskin. Butcher received a nasty blow on the thigh last night, and Walker was hurt at Coventry on Saturday.

While the teams have not fulfilled expectations their mishaps have had an important bearing on the constitution of the elevens, and made the work of the directors extremely difficult, so that support is more urgently needed than ever. Against Swansea Luton were beaten by a better side on the day's play; at Northampton last night Luton had enough of the game in the first half to have deserved victory. The club will do better and should recover the lost ground when the players have settled down.

### DEFEAT AT HOME.

SWANSEA TOWN ... 2 goals  
LUTON TOWN ..... 1 goal

**LUTON.**—Gibbon; Till, Tirrell; Foster, Jennings, Millar; Hoar, Butcher, Kerr, Hoten, Bonsall.

**SWANSEA.**—Brooks; Morley, Milne; Bellamy, Collins, Booth; Hole, Deacon, Smith, Thompson, Spottiswoode.

Referee: Mr. E. Pinckston, Birmingham.

"Practice without guidance will not do very much, especially if we happen to be of the huge class of the uninspired," is a maxim from a book of instruction in the art of writing. It is equally appropriate for professions in other walks of life, and, not least by any means, those of football. The principal virtue of Luton Town's defence has been its balance, and, generally speaking, there has had to be a lot of overweight before it has crumpled up. That is to say, the forward line has been rendered so innocuous that the defence has had to bear the brunt of the fray. On Saturday, however, the forwards fell short of the standard we would like to see. How far it did!—the defence for once in a way was found wanting. Speedy, clever, well-connected, the Swansea forwards fully bore out the expectations that were made in our reports last week.

Even so, we

### MIGHT HAVE SURVIVED

had our forwards been equally good. In an exchange of compliments before the game a Swansea gentleman said, "I wish we had your defence." The Luton reply was, "I wish we had your forwards." After the game the Swansea man was probably content with what they had. Certainly our forward line did not compare favourably with theirs. Quite as fast, the important difference lay in the fact that the visitors had the better understanding. While most of Luton's dangerous movements were the result of single-handed raids, Swansea's were the reward



Collins  
(Swansea captain).

of intimate knowledge of each other's play. It took them a few seconds longer to arrive, but their progress was always more certain because more participated in the enactment. Frequently every one of their forwards had an active part in the conveyance of the ball, and Gibbon was never sure from whom came the final shot. That has always been the seal of quality in football, and always will be. Their defence, both the backs and half-back lines, catered thereto, and so emphasised the advantage of common effort for a common object. Luton staved off heavier defeat mainly by the one phase in which they could claim equality with their opponents—hard work.

There is

### NO DISGRACE

in being defeated by a better team, and Swansea, while they admitted having a good slice of luck, in the later stages particularly, were the better side. The Luton supporters can hardly find fault with the directors. As already stated, the team was as near to the popular wish as it could be, because no selection would meet with unanimous approval—always someone would prefer another change. There were calls for Bookman and Roe, and if on the ground of experience, the value of those men would be indisputable, but Millar and Bonsall did their best. Another voice was calling for Shepherd in goal, but had he been at Coventry he might have called for Gibbon. So with other positions, but the great need, in my opinion, was not for a change here and

there, but for a guiding spirit. The Luton players gave of their very best; they played with all the zeal and energy they possessed, but, if the inspiration were felt, there was no member to consolidate the effort. Jennings did his utmost, but he had his hands full, and the thought that occurred to me when one attack after another failed was that contained in a paragraph in the morning papers, that Rutherford had resigned the managership of Stoke, and I wondered how much his influence would have been worth on the field of play.

We have good men, and the directors need not be ashamed of them.

### WE DO NOT NEED

a lot more material, but to ascertain how best to employ what we have—a someone that will knit the eleven into a whole by reason of presence and precept rather than by individual merit; inculcate coolness and discipline in the actual play. Until that magnetism is felt I fear that hopes of promotion are unlikely to be fulfilled.

Swansea were the better side for over an hour. Not until after they had scored did Luton look like making good the lost ground. Then they had a good deal of luck, for they kept their goal intact often without knowing quite how. But our forwards failed to take advantage of the chances that appeared to be gilt-edged, and so the end came with Swansea one ahead.

In the early stages Luton were just as prominent as the visitors in the matter of attack, but the forwards did not show the same method and intelligence, and they did not shoot with much promptitude and precision. Nevertheless, as I saw the incident, I think Swansea were a bit fortunate over their first goal. Till, who had started well enough to justify his reputation, deprived Thompson of the ball, but the forward went down, and Till apparently thought his opponent was hurt, for he did not attempt to secure the ball, and Smith promptly went off with it, leaving the Town back yards behind. Although the latter hurried back

### HE WAS TOO LATE,

for after a little manœuvring by Smith and DEACON the latter was left to beat Gibbon with a shot that the keeper's action, so far as we could see from the Press-box, appeared to cover, but the ball went in near the post. In my opinion this goal was offside. Had Smith himself registered it would have been all right, but the pass to Deacon was a forward pass, and the latter was in an offside position. Luton's great efforts to recover the lost ground were unavailing, but Hoten had atrocious luck with a glorious drive. Brooks leaped at the ball, but the pace was too great and it flashed past him to crash against the bar, drop into the goal-mouth and be scrambled away. Just before the interval Hole made a fine run, and dropped the ball into the middle. Smith had a chance, but gave to DEACON, who was better situated, and the latter beat Gibbon with a fine shot, and the interval came with the score:—

SWANSEA TOWN ... 2 goals  
LUTON TOWN ..... nil.

Swansea quickly showed that they were chiefly bent on "keeps," and it was some time before play opened out properly. Then the ball travelled from end to end with great rapidity, the tactics, however, being much the same as before, Luton's work being individual and Swansea's concerted. So well did the "Swans" cover their goal that it appeared odds against Luton scoring at all. KERR, however, obliged with a characteristic goal. Bonsall got the better of Bellamy in a little tussle near the middle-line close to touch, and sent inside. Kerr got possession, and tore off at great speed, beating Collins, Milne, Booth and Morley en route and finally shooting low, and true past Brooks as the keeper ran out. It was a magnifi-

cent goal, but Swansea saw to it that Kerr did not repeat the feat.

In the last quarter of an hour they were frequently packing their goal, which escaped luckily on several occasions, notably from Hoten and Bonsall, but there was too much hesitation on the part of the home forwards. On the other hand, Hole once centred for Thompson to send past Gibbon, but

### FOR "HANDS,"

which he tried to use, or for "offside," as was penalised.

It was a fast and clean game, although there were several hard knocks that caused stoppages, and the 9,000 spectators enjoyed all except one spell in the first half when the "one-back" game threatened to ruin it, for after Swansea's backs had started it, Tirrell copied it with equal success. They both dropped it, and the only unsatisfactory feature from the Luton point of view was the result.

Of the visitors Morley, Collins and Booth were the pick of a fine defence, and forward the honours were shared.

Luton were interested in Till's first appearance, and with a little more experience of the English game I think he will make good. He kicks and tackles with judgment, and the only need is for a quicker riddance of the ball. Tirrell was not up to his usual standard, and that I attribute largely to the fact that he has not yet arrived at the understanding he had with Roe.

### THE UNSTEADINESS

appeared to have some reflex on the reliability of Gibbon, for while he served finely on many occasions, he did not seem as capable as usual. Jennings was the main strength in the middle line, and he showed that he could feed as well as spoil. Foster played hard and did well generally, and Millar was a tremendous worker, if unpolished. He is successful when least expected, but should help his forwards more. The forwards were disappointing. Butcher did not reach his best by any means, although he helped Hoar more; Kerr was too apt to rely too much on his own effort, about which none could grumble if it were crowned more often with such goals as that with which he has opened his account. Bonsall's chief drawback was lack of experience. Hoten was a great worker, and made many fine efforts, and the same may be said of Hoar, these two most nearly living up to their reputations.