

DOWN AND UP.

DEFEAT AT PLYMOUTH.

Success at Home.

Luton Town's Games.

(By "CRUSADER").

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 4

LUTON TOWN 0

PLYMOUTH. — Craig; Cosgrove, Miller; Logan, Preston, Rowe; Corcoran, Sloan, Batten, Leslie, Black.

LUTON.—Brookes; Johnson, Graham; Walker, Jennings, Mills; Mackey, Cockle, Kerr, Shankly, Dennis.

Referee.—Mr. D. H. Asson, West Bromwich.

LUTON TOWN 2 goals

NORTHAMPTON TOWN Nil

LUTON.—Brookes; Johnson, Graham; Mills, Walker, Millar; Mackey, Shankly, Kerr, Dennis, Brown.

NORTHAMPTON. — Smith; Watson, Brett; Williams, Wood, Needham; Pease, Poyntz, Lockett, Myers, Page.

Referee.—Mr. N. Shaker, Whitwell.

Two more games were played by the Town this week-end, and while there were a point and four goals dropped at Plymouth as compared with last season, these were counter-balanced by a two goals' clear victory over Northampton at Luton on Monday night. The long journey to Plymouth on the day of the match undoubtedly had an adverse effect upon the players, and it was surprising that they showed such a wonderful recovery on Monday night. Northampton had inflicted a crushing defeat on Bristol Rovers on Saturday, scoring five goals without response against an undefeated side, but at Luton the "Cobblers" were thoroughly beaten, and the Town supporters were delighted with the improvement in the attack, which has been the main weakness so far.

At the moment, on the corresponding games last season, the Town are three points down, but if they play as on Monday, they should recover those three before the season is much older.

THE FALL IN THE WEST.

Argyle means the district of the Gaels or Scots, but while there is a fair sprinkling of the sons of Scotia at Plymouth, the team comprises players from the four islands of Britain. If there were in political circles the harmony or team spirit that characterises the play of Plymouth Argyle, the statesmen at Westminster would have a happy task. This feature of the Argyle's play was so much better than that of Luton that they deserved their victory, although the score flatters them.

The Town players were at a grave disadvantage in that they had to take the field in making this, their longest journey for a League match, on the morning of the match. In motor 'bus, train and taxi-cab they were travelling from eight o'clock to three o'clock with the exception of a wait for the train at Paddington, and when they took the field it was obvious at once that they were stiff and slow in their movements, and could not keep pace with the home side. So BATTEN registered three goals by his opportunism in the first twenty minutes as a result of the

CLEVER AND SPEEDY

work of the Argyle attacking line. The first came from a shot that struck the bar, hit the ground and came out, but the referee unhesitatingly ruled that the ball had crossed the line, and there was no quibble about it. The second was another snap shot from a scramble following a flag kick by Black; the third was a brilliant header from a centre by Corcoran. These goals won the game, and late in the second half BLACK got the fourth after a smart individual effort, at the beginning of which the Town players made a confident appeal for offside. In each case Batten took his shots too promptly to allow of Brookes getting into position, and the fourth was from a player who was so well clear of intervention that he had time to take deliberate aim from an easy position, and the pace and placing of the shots were perfect.

The combination of the Argyle was the deciding factor. All the team placed the ball well, and while their passing movements were speedy and accurate, their individual work was attractive, and on a greasy ground they controlled splendidly the slippery ball, and the Town halves and backs were kept

AT FULL STRETCH.

As often as the home forwards the Town had the attack, but they could not keep it so well, and their play had not the fire and the intelligence of the victors. Most of the Town's work came from individual or flank rushes. There was no movement in which the whole of the forward line took active participation, and against a strong, resolute defence they could give Craig little cause for worry. Two or three times Kerr had shots, and twice he deserved to score, but the ball went a few inches too high each time. Dennis was also a source of danger, but the line failed to make a good impression, although trying all the time.

The middle men were below their best, but all worked very hard, as did the backs, and Brookes saved a number of hard shots that would have beaten a less efficient custodian.

For the Argyle, Cosgrove was the better back, Miller having a long way to go before he is a Moses Russell. Logan was a very fine half-back, and in a clever forward line the smartness of the wingers was due largely to the craft of the inside men, and Batten was an opportunist if not a stylist.

"COBBLERS" WELL WHACKED.

So incensed were many supporters of the Town over the changes made in the team for the match on Monday night, that they vowed not to attend. To my knowledge, several were absent for that reason. They missed a rare struggle, if not a lot of scientific football, and at the end of the game the directors had the better of the argument, because they were in the happy position of pointing to an addition of two much-needed points to the total, and a gain of a point as compared with the corresponding match last season. It is well to remember, however, that the match was at Luton, and before I can agree that the decision was wise so far as the middle line was concerned, I shall want to see what happens on our visits to Swindon and Reading. It is in the away games that the real test operates. It is in the away games that Jennings, whose removal was the main point at issue, has an enhanced value, from my point of view.

From the attacking aspect, I think the directors adopted a wise course. It was a move I expected earlier, and Dennis proved, beyond doubt, that Notts Forest know a good thing when they picked him up as an inside forward, although they did a strange thing when they never gave him a proper chance in that position. It was the virility and thoroughness of Dennis that made the Town forwards better than in any previous game. He was a forager, a purveyor of passes, and revealed a willingness to shoot that acted as a tonic to his colleagues.

The forward line, for once in a way, won a lot of applause, and earned it. From the start they had the "Cobblers" defence harassed and nervy most of the time, and apt to breaches of rule and to miskicking. For three fourths of the game the Town were the aggressors, and Smith had many times the work of Brookes. It only required a little more accuracy in shooting to bring the goal average right side up. DENNIS got the first goal by heading through from a flag kick taken by Brown, this being six minutes after the change of ends. There was a tremendous lot of pressure by the Town after this, and several good chances were missed, but after 33 minutes of the half had gone, SHANKLY got a goal that may well be styled "Corinthian." There had been a short attack on the Luton goal, and the ball was just inside the Town half when Shankly got hold. He had a long open course, and covered the ground with a quickness for which he had scarcely been credited. Brett came to meet him, but the youngster dodged him as neatly as could be desired, and then went on. As Watson approached, Shankly coolly tapped the ball into the net right away from Smith, and a great volume of applause greeted a wonderful goal. More chances were missed before the end, but the Town retired with a splendid win to their credit.

They deserved it. The "Cobblers" were well beaten in all phases of the game, and one or two of their players descended to

unworthy tricks. At least one penalty kick should have been awarded against them.

The ball control of the Town players may not have been all it should have been, but it was better than usual, and this, allied to abundant store of energy, made all the difference. At the end the "Cobblers' " half-backs were quite played out, but the Town players appeared to be as fresh as when they opened the game.

Brookes had little to do, and Johnson and Graham covered each other very well. In the middle line Walker was preferred to Jennings at centre-half, Mills brought from left to right, and Millar given the left flank. The line worked hard, with Mills the "star turn"; Millar did good work against Pease, who seldom got across a centre; and Walker was useful, paying close and successful attention to the dangerous Lockett.

Of the forwards, Dennis took the eye most, as indicated above. Kerr played a dashing game, and Shankly was increasingly good. Brown put up a really good game, especially in the first half, and Mackey was more useful than on Saturday. Graham and Johnson played gallantly at back, and Brookes was never in danger.

For the "Cobblers" Smith was a good goalkeeper, Watson the better of two hard-working backs; Wood the best half, and Page and Lockett the dangerous men forward. Cook was missed from the inside right position.