

LUTON TOWN DRAW.

Point Secured at Merthyr.

(By CRUSADER).

FOR the first time this season I missed a Luton Town first eleven match last Saturday. There were several reasons. The kick-off was deferred until 5 p.m., and so a report was useless for the "Saturday Telegraph"; then I had a fairly busy Easter, and thought I would enjoy a Reserves' tussle for a change, and allow a Welsh critic to send along something of the game at Penydarren Park. Of course, there were certain humorous friends who thought my railway time-table was a bit out of date, but Mr. T. G. Hobbs knows better. From the accounts received from Merthyr, and from the stories told by the players, I did not miss much, and the only flaw was that Horace Pakea now becomes the only ever-present of the Town Club and its associates this season, for no player has figured in all games.

NOT INVITING.

Merthyr is not an inviting place unless one were born there, and even then it is doubtful if the attraction is really as pulling as the average native place. The football field in these days is anything but inviting, and those of the Town party who were making first acquaintance with it were surprised that it could be so. Mr. Charles Jeyes, making his first trip there as a director-in-charge, has been in bed with sciatica since his return, and though I do not suppose he would attribute that painful complaint to his visit, he certainly would not return with a view to discovering a remedy. It is no elevating or recuperating spot. Mr. Jeyes says that the poverty-stricken aspect as they journeyed from Cardiff to Merthyr on Saturday was obvious, and the Merthyr sportsmen who have managed to keep the club going during the long period of industrial distress in the Welsh coalfields are getting rather disheartened. That could be well understood. Indeed, if it had not been for the money secured in transfers this season it is difficult to see how the club could have continued so long.

POOR RETURNS.

Had the kick-off been earlier than five o'clock the attendance would have been very much poorer, and yet the receipts on Saturday were up to £94. A month or two of that sort of thing at Luton would put the shutters up altogether. Luton's share would not cover by a long way the expenses of the journey, and that has been the experience of every club, other than Newport County, and perhaps Swindon and Bristol Rovers, that has played there this season. Gillingham had the unhappy experience of having to go twice, and their travelling expenses for the two journeys ran to upwards of £100. The gate when the match was played was worth £29. It will be a hard matter for Merthyr, even if they are disposed to carry on, to obtain re-election if they are in the bottom two.

There was nothing in the play, apparently, to make their prospects in the three remaining games very hopeful, especially as two of the matches are away, and it would seem to depend upon the abilities of Coventry City, Walsall and Torquay to get out of the depths rather than upon the skill of the Merthyr side, though they have not done so badly in their away games.

CHANCES MISSED.

From the account received Luton should have won in the first half on Saturday, though playing against the wind, but they missed opportunities, and so brought away only one point. For the first time this season they figured in a game without a goal. Early on Rennie headed against the bar, and Mays later hit the Luton bar. In the late stages Yardley hit the bar, while the former missed good chances through delay in trying to work the ball round to his left foot when a drive with the right would have done the damage. The play of Banks in the first half, when the Town had the strong wind behind them, was a feature of the game, and in the second it was Dennis who was chiefly responsible for the best attacks made by the Town.

Merthyr had their chances, and for one period in the second half they had much the better of the game, Mays and Livingstone being very prominent, but the Town defenders were on their best behaviour, and the game ended without a goal.

A SERIOUS POSITION.

The loss of the point makes Merthyr's position more serious, for Coventry and Torquay drew, and Bristol Rovers won. Walsall, however, were defeated, and Merthyr will probably take heart from the fact that Walsall have yet to play the Town twice, and much depends upon these two games, which are played on Saturday and Monday. Merthyr are in a rather better position than Walsall, Coventry or Torquay for the moment, and if they can play as sturdily as they did against the Town they may secure enough points to escape. They have several good young players, and all were hard workers. The Town's best were: Graham, Richards, Black, Banks and Dennis, with Woods and Yardley also dangerous forwards.

MERTHYR TOWN 0

LUTON TOWN 0

MERTHYR.—Lewis (B.); Mason, Pedler; Richards, Bishop, Lewis (T.); Jones (E.), Mays, Crewe, Powell, Livingstone.

LUTON.—Abbott; Graham, Richards; Black, Fulton, Millar; Banks, Yardley, Rennie, Woods, Dennis.

Referee.—Mr. E. E. Small, Bristol.