

REHEARSAL SPOILT

ALBION AND TOTTENHAM BEFOGGED.

GAME ABANDONED.

So seriously was the playing strength of the Albion depleted by injury and illness that the management had difficulty in putting two elevens in the field on Saturday. Since the match at Bury on the previous Monday Pailor and Waterhouse, who were then included, had been taken ill, making five members of the usual first team who were not available. In consequence the side which took the field against Tottenham Hotspur at The Hawthorns was from from representative. Buck figuring in yet another position as centre-half, while Deacey took the place of Pailor among the forwards. As Tottenham were practically at full strength, for the substitution of Rance for Lightfoot at centre-half could hardly be regarded as any weakening of the side, the chances of the Albion getting both points looked distinctly thin. But the atmosphere, as it happened, was of quite an opposite consistency, and five minutes after the interval the game had to be abandoned. This could not be regarded as any hardship upon the teams, for the condition of the ground was such that real football was quite out of the question.

FLITTINGS IN THE FOG.

There had been a considerable fall of snow during the morning, and this combined with the heavy state of the turf, made it difficult for the players to get about. From what one was able to see, they had chiefly to rely upon a kick and a rush for making progress. Upon the top of this came the fact that a heavy mist enshrouded the ground, and from one side of the field it was almost impossible to see the other, while it was only at rare intervals that the occupants of the Press box could catch a glimpse of the goals. For them the game consisted of those operations which were conducted on the Albion left wing. What took place at the other extreme could only be surmised, for it was wrapped in gloom, and only the distant-sounding cheers of the spectators at that side gave any indication of the proceedings there. Jephcott and Middlemiss, the rival wingers operating in that vicinity, might have gone off the field in the first half, and the occupants of the stand would have been no wiser.

A FARCICAL CONTEST.

Under such circumstances it was only a question of how long the farce of conducting a League match could be maintained with any semblance of seriousness and when five minutes after the interval the referee decided that play had become impossible, he could not be accused of having arrived at a hasty decision. With equal justification he might have taken the step a great deal earlier. Criticism of the play or players, founded on the casual glimpses which one caught of about half the players, is quite out of the question. The exchanges visible from the Press box were neither particularly skilful nor interesting. A movement would be developed, and just as it began to take definite shape play would veer out of vision, so that there was no knowing what happened in the interval before the men and ball came in sight again. The official version was that no goals were scored, which was just as well, as it prevented either side feeling aggrieved at the stoppage. The match will have to be replayed on Cup-tie terms, so that Tottenham will get half the gate when they come again to fulfil the fixture. This abortive attempt to play leaves the question of superiority quite an open one, and it remains to be settled when the clubs meet next Saturday in the first round of the F.A. Cup competition. One can only hope that will be decided under more favourable conditions. Teams:—

Albion.—Moorwood; Cook, Pennington; Baddeley, Buck, McNeal; Jephcott, Wright, Deacey, Bowser, Shearman.

Tottenham.—Lunn; Collins, Brittan; D. Steel, Rance, Darnell; McTavish, Winter, Newman, R. Steel, Middlemiss.

Referee: Mr. H. T. Yates (Bolton).