

Mitcham Common Conservators.

*Report to the Croydon Town Council of the Members
appointed by the Council.*

In accordance with the wish of the Council, we beg to report as follows :—

CONSTITUTION AND ATTENDANCES.—Your representatives have attended meetings of the Mitcham Common Conservators during the year ending 1st October, 1912, as follows :—

| Name of Member. | General Meetings. | | Committee Meetings. | |
|------------------|-------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | Possible. | Actual. | Possible. | Actual. |
| G. J. Allen ... | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| J. E. Fox ... | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| D. W. Barker ... | 6 | 1 | — | — |
| P. Sylvester | 6 | 5 | — | — |

The Board of Conservators consists, in addition to the Croydon representatives, of four representatives from Mitcham, two from Beddington, two from Wallington, and a representative of the Lords of the Manor appointed under an agreement by the Princes Golf Club Company, Limited.

FINANCE.—The revenue of the Conservators consists of the sum of £100 contributed by the Corporation of Croydon, the sum of £30 contributed by the Parish Council of Wallington, which is charged with the maintenance of the Beddington Corner Recreation Ground; £250 a year paid by the Princes Golf Club for the use of the Princes Golf Course, and other miscellaneous revenue including telephone rents, fines, etc., which last year amounted to £50 16s. 8d. The Mitcham Parish Council for some years contributed £100 a year, but their contributions are now two years in arrear. The permanent charges for

salaries, wages, etc., amounted last year to £153 2s. 10d. The principal expenditure of the Conservators this year and last year has been for legal expenses incurred in connection with the litigation hereinafter referred to.

REGULATION OF THE COMMON.—The Conservators have had under consideration during the past year new Bye-laws in connection with the playing of golf, which were rendered necessary by the decision of the King's Bench Division in two cases taken on appeal from the Croydon County Justices. This decision laid down that all persons were entitled to play games on Mitcham Common subject to the Bye-Laws and Regulations of the Conservators, and that any Regulation that gave a preference to one class of persons must be incorporated in the Bye-Laws that were approved by the Local Government Board. New Bye-Laws have been submitted to the Local Government Board, but have not yet been approved. Early this year a very important action was tried in the Chancery Division to determine the question of the inhabitants of Mitcham to turn out cattle on Mitcham Common. This claim, put forward on behalf of the whole of the inhabitants, rendered all the efforts of the Conservators to control and regulate the Commons in the interests of the public abortive, and it was felt necessary to have the question decided. The result of this litigation was that the Court held that the inhabitants of Mitcham as such had no right to turn out cattle on Mitcham Common, and that the only persons who could have such a right were the Copyholders and Freeholders of the ancient Manors.

GAMES ON THE COMMON.—There are five portions of the Common specially set aside for playing of cricket and football, one further portion set aside for cricket only, and two further portions set aside for football only. On the ground set aside for cricket and football adjoining the Borough Boundary on the north side of the Croydon road, permits to play are granted by the Conservators through the Borough Road Surveyor's Department, and on the portion set aside on the south side, permits are granted by the Clerk to the Conservators, and also through the Borough Road Surveyor's Department.

The number of permits granted are as follows :—

For Cricket :—

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| To Mitcham Clubs | ... | ... | ... | ... | 17 |
| To Croydon Clubs | ... | ... | ... | .. | 143 |

For Football :—

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| To Mitcham Clubs | ... | ... | ... | ... | 28 |
| To Croydon Clubs | ... | ... | ... | ... | 163 |

The Mitcham permits are issued to Clubs for the season. The Croydon permits are issued for single matches. Lacrosse is also played on one of these grounds. There are two Golf Courses laid out by the Princes Golf Club.

MITCHAM FAIR.—The Conservators have for some years past been engaged in negotiations with the Home Secretary, the Showmens' Guild and other parties interested with object of securing the abolition or removal to a more convenient site of Mitcham Fair, but so far without success.

G. J. ALLEN,
J. E. FOX,
D. W. BARKER,
P. SYLVESTER.