

The Daily Telegraph.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY AUGUST 13, 1924

FORD-EDISON CAMPING TRIP.

FROM OUR OWN
CORRESPONDENT.
NEW YORK, MONDAY.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Edison, of electrical fame, Mr. and Mrs. Ford, the motor-car magnates, and Mr. Firestone, one of the biggest tyre manufacturers in the world, are now preparing to start together on their annual camping trip. Two years ago they were accompanied by the late President Harding, and also by Mr. John Burroughs, the naturalist, but both these notables have passed away. There is a fiction that this annual picnic, with motor-cars for transport, lasting usually a week or ten days, is strictly private, but custom ordains that reporters shall follow at a respectable distance, and that Press photographers shall go with them. These camping parties are very popular among the rich and all those who own vehicles of some kind. In certain instances a trailer brings along a tent and supplies, but it is an unwritten law that each member of the party does his share of work and housekeeping. President Harding proved an adept at pitching a tent, Mr. Edison was good at wood-chopping and taking long naps in the afternoon, and Mr. Firestone was cook, while Mr. Burroughs, on account of his extreme age, was the official camp-fire storyteller. All sleep on spring camp beds, and all admittedly benefit greatly by contact with the great out-of-doors.

President Coolidge said he would have joined the Ford-Edison camping party this summer, but, with the elections pending, he must work and stew in Washington, where the heat is worse than in New York. Mr. John Davis cannot take part because he is as busy as Mr. Coolidge. To-night the entire country will hear Mr. Davis's acceptance speech by radio delivered at Clerksburg, West Virginia, and on Wednesday President Coolidge follows him with his campaign keynotes. For the first time radio is being employed here generally in the Presidential election, and the effect of this agency in educating public opinion will be studied with great interest. Whether the candidates will be saved much fatigue is questioned, because in any case all must work to the limit until polling day.

THE FUN OF THE FAIR.

The fun began at the very outset at yesterday's inauguration of the centuries-old Mitcham Fair in the setting-up of rival claims to the lordship of the manor of Biggin and Tamworth, the claimants being Mr. George Farewell Jones, chairman of the Mitcham Urban District Council, and Sir Harry Mallaby-Deeley. Since Elizabethan days the annual gathering has had the village green as its locale, but now, for the first time, it has taken up its new home on a portion of the Common.

In the course of a speech at the opening ceremony, Mr. Jones recalled the protracted controversy which resulted in an Act of Parliament transferring the control of the fair from the Mitcham Common Conservators to the Urban District Council, and said that, as chairman of the council, he had hoped to have the honour of performing the opening ceremony this year. "But," he added, "the showmen insisted on Sir Harry Mallaby-Deeley doing this." Mr. Jones went on to say that as lord of the manor of Biggin and Tamworth as well as chairman of the council, he was naturally deeply interested in local affairs, and he trusted that, though there had been differences between the Council and the showmen the Fair was now entering on a new lease of life.

"I am interested to learn that Mr. Jones is lord of the manor," remarked Sir Harry Mallaby-Deeley, in his opening ceremony speech. "Up till now I had always thought I was - at least, I paid for it, and so, I believe, did Mr. Jones." This little incident created much amusement among the company assembled on the platform, including Sir Cato and Lady Worsfold, members of the Urban District Council, and leading members of the Showmen's Guild, among them Mr. W. Savage (general secretary) and Dr. S. Winstead (chaplain).

The appreciation of the showmen of the services that Sir Harry Mallaby-Deeley has ren-

"Rodeo" shows, in the restricted areas of which is given as much of a Rodeo performance as one could reasonably expect to see. Here and there the observer detects what he must assume to be influences of the recent Advertising Convention, notably on the front of a circus the impresario of which modestly proclaims himself as "the showman that sails under that beautiful banner, Truth." On all hands, indeed, one encounters assertion of genuineness and an indignant repudiation of the fraudulent and spurious. The numerous keepers of "coker-nut," "cocoanut," or "coconut" saloons or pavilions, as they are variously styled, all display laudatory descriptions of their cocoanuts, though one gentleman contents himself with saying, "We keep only one quality" - a claim which lends itself to unkind interpretations by adjacent competitors.

PROPOSED BIRD SANCTUARY.

An effort is being made by the residents of the Addington and Selsdon districts of Surrey, lying to the south of Croydon, to raise the sum of £1,000 for the purchase of forty acres of Selsdon Wood as a bird sanctuary. Such sanctuaries are none too many, and there is nothing on the south side of the metropolis like the Selborne Society's sanctuary in the Brent Valley. Wickes Fen, almost the last remnant of the primeval fenland of East Anglia, is well known to nature lovers as one of the few places where the feathered denizens of our islands live and breed undisturbed by the bird-catcher, owing to the action of the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty. So are Burwell Fen, Blakeney Point, and Scott Head, on the shores of Norfolk, the Ruskin Reserve at Abingdon, in Berkshire, and, of course, the distant Farne Islands, off the coast of Northumberland. It will be recalled, also, that within the last two years or so, a wooded portion of Hyde Park was, with the King's approval, set aside as a bird sanctuary.

Selsdon Wood lies in a beautiful and sequestered valley between Sanderstead and Addington, marked by some splendid oak trees and dense thickets of chalk-down shrubs and undergrowth. It is well-known locally as a resort of the nightingale, and among other birds which have been seen there are the magpie, jay, jackdaw, whitethroat, wren, great tit, blue tit, nuthatch, gallbird, pied woodpecker, flycatcher, landrail, redwing, blackcap, crossbill, linnets, golden plover, yellow wagtail, greenfinch, goldfinch, and bullfinch. Animals are well represented by the fox, badger, stoat, weasel, mole, hare, hedgehog, and squirrel, among others. The plant life includes the autumn crocus, as well as all the species typical of the chalk scrub.

"The area is peculiarly suitable as a nature reserve," said Mr. Laurence Chubb, secretary of the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society, to a representative of The Daily Telegraph yesterday. "It adjoins thirteen acres of Court Wood, to be protected under a scheme of the Surrey Gardens Village Trust, which is developing the land to the north-east of Selsdon Wood for small holdings. The present owner has proved most sympathetic, and if the land can be bought for permanent maintenance as a bird sanctuary he has agreed to accept the low price of £30 per acre. The sum of £1,200 will suffice to acquire it."

"Nothing has hitherto been done in the way of preserving a tract of the North Downs, where the flora and fauna peculiar to the chalk hills can be protected. It is therefore eminently desirable that the opportunity of securing Selsdon Wood should not be lost. It is in a secluded position, over half a mile distant from the Sanderstead to Addington road, and as the adjoining land will not be closely developed for building, the society is confident that the wild life of the wood will remain undisturbed."

"If the public response to the appeal is adequate, it is intended to invite the National Trust to become the guardians of the sanctuary, and, in that event, the members of the Croydon Natural History Society have expressed their readiness to act as watchers. The sum required to acquire one of the most important tracts of sylvan scenery remaining near London is not large, and the purchase committee appeal for contributions."

EXCITING RESCUES AT SOUTHEND