

STATIC by "SPARK."

West Coast Has A New Waterfall

Mr. W. McKeon Makes a "Discovery"—An Explanation of the "Agricultural Revolution"—Captain Gillespie Edwards Entertains an Old Sailor—"The Curse of the Dollar."

DID I hear Mr. Will McKeon at the Miramar Film Studios during the "surprise item" say that a waterfall in the West Coast Sounds area fell a sheer 2000 feet? Presuming the loudspeaker didn't deceive me, I'm inclined to think that fall is a very recent discovery. The Sutherland Falls make a drop totalling near 2000 feet, but the one that does it sheer is not very widely known. New Zealand will beat creation yet!

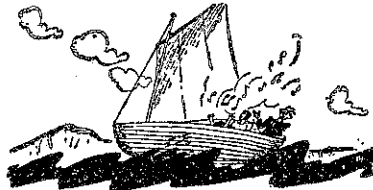
AS might be expected, Dr. E. Marsden's talk entitled "The Agricultural Revolution" was a most interesting contribution. For thousands of years a settled population evenly distributed and with simple industries made for stability and security of existence. With the introduction of machinery and the availability of mechanical power traditional equanimity was rudely disturbed to bring ultimately a higher standard of living, but immediate sorrow to a section of the people. As in manufacture so in agriculture—production has been increased several fold by the application of power and scientific discoveries.

SINCE the war improvement in machinery and power reticulation has been revolutionary. High voltage distribution of electric current and the introduction of automatic machinery in which the human element is a diminishing factor has created a position when new alignments are necessary. Russia, South America, and similar areas may now look forward to the day when their manufactured necessities may be economically supplied by themselves, in addition to aggravating the position of countries dependent upon export of manufactured goods for existence. Further, the improvement in production of primary products noticeable during the last few years is but a tithe of what will happen in the next twenty years, and Dr. Marsden holds that co-operation of all interests, readjustment, and national planning is required at once to enable this country to progress in an orderly manner.

AFTER 400 years of Spanish domination, with 100 years of struggle for liberty, Cuba was given her freedom by the U.S.A., together with a political system permeated with the animosities that characterise American statecraft. With liberal institutions, enterprises expanded rapidly, drawing a spate of foreign capital that is, according to Dr. Guy H. Scholefield, responsible for Cuba's present martyrdom. Prosperity came too easily. The foreigners took the risks, and the Cubans spent freely in pleasure and luxuries the wherewithal that increased the national wealth. To-day 90 per cent. of Cuban enterprises are owned by American capitalists, while the re-

maining 10 per cent. are similarly mortgaged. President, political parties and businesses are all bound to the American dollar, and the Cubans are virtually exiles in their own land. Cuba affords but another example of the invariable result of the lavish inflow of foreign capital into a young country unused to easy prosperity.

JUST as Captain Gillespie Edwards began his talk on "Sea Shanties" my ancient mariner dropped in for a yarn, and when he heard it suggested that shanties may have originated through the European seamen emulating the Chinese junk-men's rhythmical sing-song, it nearly took his breath away. Although for years he has been on a busman's holiday—just travelling about—he was for nearly forty years on a China coaster, but



he began his seafaring when they "upped screw" when sail was set and was in the Atlantic liners when every one of them carried sail. He served in every type of vessel from the barque with two centreboards to the full-rigged four-master. He sailed under a dozen flags and on every trade, can still use his fists, his feet, a knife, and a cutlass, and I didn't feel bold enough even to hint that Captain Edwards might be right.

I DON'T know what the neighbours thought, but when Captain Edwards began to sing my friend wouldn't keep quiet. His voice isn't really melodious, but his bellows are still good and he joined in lustily. As it was just on the eve of his departure for a trip to China again, he sang "Rolling Home" with particular zest, and the cat, which isn't a little bit timid, looked apprehensive. I'm not taking sides, but he told me that "Rolling Home" never was a shanty, and only decadent sailormen, longshoremen, and gramophone companies ever made such a claim. He said that 't was merely a favourite fo'e'stle song, and though he had often helped to warp a ship in and out of dock to the strains of "Rolling Home" he had done similarly when the crew sang "Pull for the Shore," and that didn't make it a shanty. Now, what have real old salts to say about that?

WITHOUT thinking deeply, some farmers have claimed that deer have been beneficial, for they have opened up our indigenous bush. Continental observers have remarked that

our forests are uneconomic jungles and that European woods permit of free access to men and animals, but it should not be forgotten that nature knows best, and in the development of our flora for our particular soil and topography, browsing animals were not included in the natural scheme. Apart from the actual destruction of seedlings and consequent draught, deer and goats harden the forest floor. Rain rushes unimpeded to the river, and where animals abound on the watershed there is now no longer the estimated 10 years' water supply for rivers which are nature's irrigation works.

WE cannot improve on nature, and although "Wirihana" commends the activities of the Forestry Department, he opines that exotics cannot efficiently replace our own bush. Wanton destruction has been virtually criminal, and the time is passed for saying a halt must presently be called. Italy and America have been aroused to feverish action through soil depletion and erosion by destruction of the natural forests on the watersheds, and thousands of men and immense sums are being engaged for rehabilitation. The process will be long, but the long view is a patriotic one, and "Wirihana" exhorted the men who call themselves sportsmen to take a long view too, before their short-sightedness defeats their aims.

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