

good many times, and the share it had in my mother's death."

"Anne!" he cried; "Anne! Is this fair!" And then, with a man's instinctive avoidance of personal blame, "If I could n't afford it he should n't sit in at the game."

"Yes," she admitted, "if he had been playing the business game." She was silent awhile to let the sense of what she had said sink into him. "How much do you suppose your father would have paid Ken for that surplus right if he'd offered to sell it instead of giving it to the people of the valley?"

"Nothing — now."

"Ah, you mean —" But she did n't know what he meant.

"I mean that you've done for us. You. Oh, nothing that happened in the valley. Here in San Francisco. Giving it all away like that, it gave the Hetch Hetchy people the tip and they've cut the ground from under us."

"And the water stays in Tierra Longa?"

"So far as we're concerned."

"Well, then —" But she left it for him to say.

To all appearances he found it difficult. He said there were a number of considerations beside the fact that he did n't really want the water of Arroyo Verde. There was his father for one; his father was sore. He was sore at Kenneth and he was sore at having his plans interfered with. And there was the question of discipline. What had gone out that Brent had "snooped." It was a thing Rickart never forgave his employees, — knowing more than he told them — and what could he say to them if backed down on the suit against Brent? And there was Kenneth. If he would n't make any plea for himself, he