

had begun, Rickart brought suit, under one excuse or another they fell away from him.

"It's this away," Mr. Baff explained; "we all allow this is a good scheme if you can work it; but we ain't none of us hankerin' to have it turn out that we've been workin' for Old Man Rickart."

"Why, I'd feel much freer, Mr. Baff," Kenneth answered him, honestly enough, "with the rest of you out of it. But, you see, I'm going through with this thing, and I did n't want it said in the end that I'd elbowed any of you out of it."

Baff eyed him with admiration not unmingled with concern. "Ain't bit off more than you can chew, have you?"

Kenneth laughed. "Ain't seen me spitting any of it out, have you?" he answered in the "hom" of the country.

Kenneth had a month in which to prepare his case. "More than I want," he declared to Anne; "the sooner it is settled, the sooner you can begin your campaign for settlers under the Howkawanda Canal," — which was the pleasant name they had agreed to call it. Old Howkawanda, the Warrior of the Gate, stood over the point at which it issued from the river. Kenneth kept up like that with Anne always. All they at Palomitas said it was wonderful the way he kept up; and then that the wonderful thing was that he was not really keeping it up at all. He was, by his own account, keeping himself down.

The way he put it to them was that his plan for saving Tierra Longa was a perfectly gorgeous plan; the more he contemplated it, the more he was overcome by a sense of its gorgeousness. The only trouble was that the people did n't seem willing to try it; but it would have worked; it would work perfectly.