

calculations, compared to the bright air of cities which Elwood diffused about him? As the second week closed with no sign from him or Rickart, reaction took the form of resentment. At the meeting at which the final measures were to be taken in behalf of the Land and Water Holders' Agreement, practically nobody was found to have signed it. The few faithful did so with the understanding that, unless a certain quota of property holders eventually added their names, the signatures were revocable.

"'T ain't," Lem Scudder explained, "that we're any-ways holdin' out on you. But it don't seem any use if it ain't unanermus."

"Of course, it would have to be practically unanimous."

"I'd kinda hate to have you get sore on us —"

"I'm not sore, Lem; I understand."

"Naturally, if it was any way unanermus . . ."

"Oh, the others will come to it in time; they'll see that it's the only thing for them."

Brent took that way with them partly because he believed it, partly to cover a certain shame he had to be the witness of their strange, self-defeating grudges. Of the two exhibitions he thought their attitude rather less tolerable than Rickart's self-defending cunning. He was close to the turn of mind which compels our allegiance to successful villainy largely because it is successful.

That week he began work on his water appropriation. So far he had not been entirely abandoned. Baff sent a team; two of the river ranchers came up with scrapers; the Scudders promised him a turn before the fall ploughing. This was something in a measure understood, a familiar medium. But when, the third day after work