rapidly along. As Dysart intimated, it was seldom that Croesus hurried about anything; he certainly never took the trouble to hurry about his own affairs. When Croesus bestirred himself to anything like unusual animation, it was pretty apt to be in the service of some friend, and upon such occasions he generally became the most interested party. "By Jove," he was wont to say with that slow drawl, "if a fellow can't get any excitement out of his own life, he's got to get it out of some other fellow's, you know!"

Probably his best friend was Frank Dysart, and it was an open secret that Croesus was head-over-heels in love with Dysart's sister. About a year previous to the opening of our story the Dysarts, who were wealthy commoners, had come into possession of Oakley, the adjoining estate to Chellingworth Court, for many generations the chief place of the titled inheritance of the Darcys. Soon after the advent of his new neighbors old Lord Chellingworth died. Captain Cordella Darcy, now Lord Chellingworth, for some unexplained reason exhibited no haste to return to England and take possession of his magnificent heritage. On the contrary, he signified his intention of remaining in Egypt with his regiment, and placed the estates in the hands of agents, leaving it to his brother Jack to straighten up affairs in the late home of his father. The arrangement was eminently satisfactory to his tenants. Cordella had never been popular with his associates, and his selfishness and arrogance toward those beneath him had rendered him anything but a favorite with the dependents on his father's lands. The news that he would not return at least for a while, and the better news that their affairs were to be left in the hands of "Master Jack," was hailed with heartfelt satisfaction by the tenantry. And so, much responsibility, for the time being, settled down upon Jack's happy-go-lucky shoulders. He set about his task, with the intention that he would "finish it up in no time," and hie him back to his beloved London. But of course he met the Dysarts, and, curiously enough, he at once found that his work must be carried out with slowness and carefulness, and, moreover, it would take considerably more time than he had at first supposed,—poor Jack! Everybody knew his secret before a week had passed. He fell in love with Lena Dysart at first sight, yet fondly supposed that he successfully hoodwinked people by his serious dwellings upon the enormity of his task. He and the brother became the warmest friends. Jack studiously cultivated him, and he could be a very pleasant companion when he chose.

Miss Dysart was the beauty of the county, and many were the moths that fluttered in the light of her loveliness. No one wondered that Croesus fluttered too; everybody expected him to. The girl had a beautiful face. It was very proud, with a touch of haughtiness, and yet a world of tenderness could shine through her glorious gray eyes, and the witchery of her manner was irresistible. Poor Croesus learned to love her with all the depth of his honest heart, while the emotions which he inspired in her, if he inspired any, were quite of a different sort. To a woman like Lena Dysart, a man like Darcy, foppish and indolent, with a mind given to petty things, as indicated by his ever-ready flow of small-talk, was amusing as an acquaintance, and annoying as an admirer. At least, so she told herself shortly after making his acquaintance. But the weeks lengthened into months, and Croesus' "business" continued to keep him at Chellingworth Court; that is to say, it was supposed to do so, but it was a noticeable fact that those calling at the Court on matters of business with Mr. Darcy, were generally told that they would probably find him at Oakley. In fact, most of his time was spent there (or in inventing excuses to get there), and Lena Dysart had abundant opportunity to gain at least a vague insight into the true man, to begin to understand what it was that attracted people to him; and the day came when there was revealed