

great trouble, Broadhurst, has been this: my business grew faster than I did.

"When my father established the firm forty years ago, times were different," he went on, after resting. "There were no very large business houses then, and the problem of developing an organization was scarcely reckoned. For many years my father was able to conduct the store without much executive help, and after I finished college he found in me all the assistance he needed. After his death, I went along in the same way, supposing I understood merchandising, but in reality knowing little about one important phase of it. Thus the store got beyond me, but still I kept on running it alone. I was a good merchant in most respects — you know that! If I hadn't been, even the crowding population of New York would not have kept me afloat. But this question of building a business by building the men within it — well, it's a fascinating thing, Broadhurst! If only I were young and well again! But I don't want to see my business go to the wall. It mustn't go there. I don't care about the money part of it; I have private means enough to see me through the rest of my life, and to provide for my family. But I want the business saved — for the sake of the Lombard name. I'll fix it so you can acquire full financial ownership — by degrees.