

## THE FACE IN THE TAXI

nections—perhaps with an eye to country house visits and a bit of shooting or fishing by and by. First of all, though, after a short spell of London, I was due at Cragfoot, to see Sir Paget, tell him about my last trip, and console him for the loss of Waldo's society.

Not that anything tragic had happened to Waldo. On the contrary, he was going to be married. I had heard of the engagement a month before I sailed from Buenos Aires, and the news had sent my thoughts back to an autumn stay at Cragfoot two years before, with Sir Paget and old Miss Fleming (we were great friends, she and I); the two boys, Waldo and Arsenio, just down from Oxford; respectable Mrs. Knyvett—oh, most indubitably respectable Mrs. Knyvett;—myself, older than the boys, younger than the seniors, and so with an agreeable alternation of atmosphere offered to me—and Lucinda! True that Nina Frost was a good deal there too, coming over from that atrocious big villa along the coast—Briarmount they called it—still, she was not of the house party; there was always a last talk, or frolic, after Nina had gone home, and after Mrs. Knyvett had gone to bed. Miss Fleming, "Aunt Bertha," liked talks and frolics; and Sir Paget was popularly believed not to go to bed at all; he used to say that he had got out of the habit in Russia. So it was a merry time—a merry, thoughtless——!

Why, no, not the least thoughtless. I had nearly