

bound for somewhere in a hurry; excepting of course no forked parsnip, however remarkable in other respects, would be wearing a floppy straw hat in a snowstorm; nor is it likely it would be adorned lengthwise in its rear with a highly decorative design of broad, smooth, polished disks which, even in that poor illumination, gleamed and twinkled and wiggled snakily in and out of alignment, in accord with the movements of their wearer's spinal column.

But the reader and I, better informed than any lamp post could be as to the prior sequence of events, would know at a glance it was no parsnip we beheld, but Mr. Algernon Leary, now suddenly enveloped, through no fault of his own, in one of the most overpowering predicaments conceivable to involve a rising lawyer and a member of at least two good clubs; and had we but been there to watch him, knowing, as we would know, the developments leading up to this present situation, we might have guessed what was the truth: That Mr. Leary was hot bent upon retreating to the only imaginable refuge left to him at this juncture—to wit, the interior of the stranded taxicab which he had abandoned but a short time previously.

#### IV

NEARLY all of us at some time or other in our lives have dreamed awful dreams of being discovered in a public place with nothing at all upon our bodies, and have awakened, burning hot with the shame of an enormous and terrific embarrassment. Being no student of the psychic phenomena of human slumber I do not know whether this is a subconscious harking-