

Uncle Walt

*Sleuths of
Fiction*

I'M WEARY now of Sherlock Holmes, and all the imitative crew; I'm tired of triumphs built upon a collar button, as a clew. The sleuth is always tall and thin, with nervous hands and hawk-like face; he scours the slums or moves around in marble halls, with equal grace; he always takes some kind of dope or plays the flute or violin, and when he's billed for active work he glues false whiskers on his chin. He always has a Watson near, a tiresome chump, who sits and broods, the while the selling-plater sleuth reels off a string of platitudes. Detective yarns are all so stale! The plot is evermore the same; we always have the murdered man, with knives or bullets in his frame; the pantry window is unlocked; the safe's been opened with a file; suspicion shifts until it rests on every man within a mile; the local peelers blunder round, and ball things up in frightful shape, and then the Great Detective comes, with lens and rule and meas'ring tape; he crawls around upon the floor, examines all the water mains, and tastes the ashes in the stove, and sticks his nose into the drains, and then he says the problem's solved; forthwith he spends two weeks or more in showing Watson and the world how easy 'tis to be a bore!