

Uncle Walt

Hallowe'en

TONIGHT the boys will take the town,
and doubtless turn it upside down;
they'll sport around with joyous zest,
and knock the landscape galley west; and
when the morning comes I'll see my buggy
in an apple tree; the sidewalk riled upon
the lawn, the hens with all their feathers
gone; I'll hear my trusty milkmaid red down
at the bottom of the well. While Dobbin
stands upon the roof and waves for help a
frantic hoof. Last year the boys wrought
while I slept, and in the morn. I screamed
and wept, when looking at the work they'd
done, I said: "Next year I'll get a gun, and
watch for these michievous souls, and shoot
the darlings full of holes." But granny
heard me, and she said: "While water's
cheap, go soak your head; you once were
young yourself, by George! and people
voted you a scourge; you played so many
fiendish tricks, you filled so many hats with
bricks, that terror came to every one when
you went forth to have some fun. The
village pastor used to say: 'When that
young rascal comes my way, I always beat
a swift retreat—I'd rather have the prickly
heat!'" And so I haven't bought a gun;
and so the boys may have their fun; and if
the morning should disclose the chimney
filled with garden hose, the watchdog
painted green and brown, the henhouse
standing upside down, I'll make no melan-
choly noise, but say: "Boys (durn 'em!)
will be boys!"