



THE ESCAPED BALLOON.

“WE ARE SEVEN.”

This poem by Wm. Wordsworth used to be in the school reading books. I do not know that it is now. Our young people should all know it.

I met a little cottage girl—

She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

“Sisters and brothers, little maid,

How many may you be?”
“How many? Seven in all,” she said,
And wondering looked at me.

“And where are they, I pray you tell?”

She answered, “Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

“Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And in the churchyard cottage I
Dwell near them with my mother.”

“You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet you are seven; I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this can be.”

Then did the little maid reply:
“Seven boys and girls are we,

Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree.”

“You run about, my little maid;
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then you are only five.”

“Their graves are green, they may be
seen,”

The little maid replied,
“Twelve steps or more from mother’s door,
And they are side by side.

“My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.

“And often after sunset, sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porridge;
And eat my supper there.

“The first that died was little Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Til God released her from her pain,
And then she went away.

“So in the churchyard she was laid;
And when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played
My brother John and I.

“And when the ground was white with
snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.”

“How many are you, then,” said I,
“If those two are in heaven?”
The little maiden did reply,
“O master, we are seven.”

“But they are dead—those two are dead,
Their spirits are in heaven.”
‘Twas throwing words away; for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, “Nay, we are seven.”

DOLEFUL DOTTY.

BY ELIZABETH B. WALER.

“How do you do, Dotty Dumps?” cried father, coming into the dusk of the sitting-room, and finding a forlorn little figure on a chair. “Do you know where my little girl is, the one who runs to meet me?”

The cross Dotty scorned to answer. He called, “Dotty, Dotty, dear! where are you hiding?”

He opened closets and looked behind curtains and then sat down and pretended to cry. “My dear, lost Dotty! What shall I do without your bright face?”

Dotty laughed in spite of herself. “Silly father!” she said.

“Why, there you are!” cried father, rushing to catch her in his arms before the laugh faded. “I thought this was some strange little crosspatch!”

“I am cross” said Dotty.

“Pray, why?” asked father, surprised.

“Boy Blue broke my doll.”

“That’s too bad,” said father, “but not worth being miserable about. Did baby mean to do it?”

“No,” admitted Dotty. “He wanted to hold Blanche, and I let him, and he dropped her.”

“What did you do?”

“I scolded.”

“And poor baby was frightened and cried, and mother ran to take him from his cross sister, and she sat here and pouted.”

“How did you know?” wondered Dotty.

“I know,” said father.

“I didn’t want my doll broken,” said Dotty.

“Suppose it was Boy Blue, or mother, or father?”

“You couldn’t be broken,” laughed Dotty.

“We might be sick or hurt. Haven’t you much to be glad about?”

Dotty suddenly felt ashamed. “I’ll run kiss baby. I’m glad it isn’t Boy Blue!”

A little girl was once punished for doing wrong, when she said, “O, those commandments do break awfully easy!” And it is true that it is very easy to sin. This is the reason we should ask Jesus every morning to keep us from sinning through the day.