

## LITTLE ELSIE AND HER MIRROR.

Come hither, little Edith, and have your merry play,  
And listen for a minute's space to all that I shall say,—

To a story, not of fairy life, with its marvels ever new,  
But a common, simple tale of a little girl like you.

She was the daughter of a King,—a little royal child,  
With heart as gay as summer birds that sing their carols wild;  
With scarce a passing thought to bring its tiny meed of care,  
And scarce a fleeting cloud to spread its gloom o'er aught so fair.

Yet lived she not at home just yet; through many a teaching year,  
There were lessons, hard and easy, to reach her infant ear;  
And days of training and of care had yet awhile to come,  
Before the little royal child was ready for her home.

Still was her heart a happy one, with those who loved her well,  
Who taught her infant tongue to lisp, and infant lips to spell;  
And the words they taught her first to read were letters from the King,  
That she might learn her Father's will in every little thing.

They called her little Elsie here, but I cannot hope to tell  
What name she would be known by in the home where she will dwell:  
They called her little Elsie here,—it was her Christian name,—  
To remind her of her Father's love, and its never-dying claim.

Yet Elsie was not always good; she was just like every child,  
Who is passionate and hasty,—not gentle, loving, mild;  
And Elsie fancied, so she said, that she could not always see  
The difference between herself and what she ought to be.

Sometimes, when she was naughty, she would forget the King,  
Forget His letters and His words, and scorn upon them bring;  
And then her little heart would ache when the naughtiness was past,  
And a half-despairing thought would come of getting home at last.

But the good King her Father sent her not words alone,  
To reprove her with His wrath when the evil deed was done,—

He sent her these, with many a line to warn her of her way,  
That she might come to Him at last in His royal home one day:

But He gave her also for her own a mirror bright and clear,  
Which shewed her in reflection plain just how her deeds appear,—  
That whatsoever she might do, whatever think or say,  
She might have a little glass within which should the truth display.

So, when Elsie heard a word of praise, and her heart beat warm and high,  
And some heedless look of flattery had not escaped her eye,  
The mirror told her just the worth of what she so much prized,  
That the King her Father hated pride, and vanity despised.

When Elsie's cheek with anger flushed, and words of temper came,  
Provoked by some companion's look, or by some failing game,—  
The mirror that she glanced at reminded of the King,  
Who counted every angry look a most discordant thing.

When Elsie's little tongue refused the word of truth to tell,  
And falteringly she uttered it, although she knew it well,—  
The mirror darkened over, as if her Father's eye  
Had dropped a tear upon the glass to mark His misery.

And ever at the night-time, when Elsie went to rest,  
She looked upon her faithful glass, and every spot confessed;  
And asked her Father's tender love to cleanse each guilty stain,  
And make the mirror He had given a perfect glass again.

Yet Elsie knew that even now, to be a royal child,  
By daily spots less frequently that glass must be defiled;  
And that the marks, if suffered long upon the glass to rest,  
Would tarnish all the brilliancy that made its truthful test.

So every night the little girl drew water from the spring,  
The only one, her Father said, whose stream could cleansing bring;  
And full upon her mirror flowed the rich and precious flood,  
Dyeing the many-tinted spots in one full stream of blood;