

**SIR BERTRAM, A
POEM, IN
SIX CANTOS**

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Sir Bertram, a poem, in six cantos by J. Roby

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J. ROBY

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POEM, IN
SIX CANTOS**

SIR BERTRAM,

A Poem,

IN SIX CANTOS,

BY

J. ROBY.

“———These juggling fiends—
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.”

SECOND EDITION.

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1817.

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1817

SIR BERTRAM.



CANTO FIRST.

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SIR BERTRAM.

CANTO FIRST.



I.

“SEE o'er yon ivy-crested tower
The slanting sun-beams softly play;
But far behind dark tempests lower;
Haste ere we lose the closing day.”
Sir Bertram cried—each prancing steed
His rider's heel impatient bore,
And snorting, stemm'd the foaming Clyde,
Whose angry waves with hollow roar
Still louder lash'd the rugged shore.

B

II.

The dangerous torrent scarce was cross'd,
Or scarce was felt the welcome strand;
When o'er the heaving waters toss'd,
A form sometimes half seen, half lost,
Was struggling hard to gain the land.
'Twas now far off the friendly shore—
Each warrior bold began to pray,
But still the rolling billows bore
The sinking sufferer far away!

III.

Each hardy veteran anxious stood—
And gaz'd, yet durst not tempt the flood,
But breath'd a lengthen'd sigh.
Sir Bertram brush'd his sun-burnt cheek,
His quivering lips essay'd to speak,
He shudder'd but he knew not why.
Oft had he seen th' ensanguin'd plain
Strewn thick with bloody corpses slain,

And felt nor fear nor dread ;
Yet now he prayed, and round his heart
Soft pity crept, with chilling smart,
And all his courage fled!

IV.

But lo! he doffs his armour bright,
And headlong to his followers' sight
Plunges amid the wave :
Soon o'er the surges they descry
His sinewy form approaching nigh ;
Can he the struggling victim save ?
See o'er him yon rude billow breaks
As high it rears its foam-crown'd head ;
He sinks—Sir Bertram dauntless seeks
His form deep in the watery bed.

V.

Engulph'd amid the closing waves,
The deepening torrent now he braves,

Nor fears he death's alarms :
The sinking wretch he soon beholds
Within his grasp, and quick enfolds
The stranger in his arms.—
Slow to the surface now they rise,
Loud acclamations greet the skies
From off the distant strand :
High o'er the waves he proudly rides,
And onwards still he safely guides
His burden towards the land,
Half breathless now he gains the shore,
And in one powerful arm he bore
A youth of comely mien :
Of golden hue, his streaming hair
Part hid his pallid cheek so fair,
That on his breast did lean.
One clay-cold hand convulsive grasp'd
The Knight's broad arm, the other clasp'd

A silken scarf to his heaving breast,
An highland kelt hung round his waist,
A mantle gay his shoulders grac'd,
All o'er with richest colours drest.

VI.

His eyes he op'd—then rais'd his head,
And spread his mantle wide ;
“ Emma, I come ”—he faintly said,
Then bow'd his head, and died !

VII.

They laid his body on the strand,
His locks wav'd on the yellow sand,
Each warrior o'er him hung :
The sea-mew scream'd, and hover'd around,
They heard the hollow death-note sound,
And his dirge the winds mournfully sung !