

Beauties of the Buses.

SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.

PART I.

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[1d.]

SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.



THERE was a young and valiant knight,
Sir Eldred was his name,
And never did a worthier wight
The rank of knighthood claim.

Where gliding Tay, her stream sends forth,
To feed the neighbouring wood,
The ancient glory of the North,
Sir Eldred's castle stood.

The youth was rich as youth might be
In patrimonial dower;
And many a noble feat had he
Atchieved, in hall, and bower.

He did not think as some have thought,
Whom honor never crown'd,
The fame a father dearly bought,
Cou'd make the son renown'd.

The better thought, a noble sire,
 Who gallant deeds had done,
 To deeds of hardihood shou'd fire
 A brave and gallant son.

The fairest ancestry on earth
 Without desert is poor ;
 And every deed of lofty worth
 Is but a claim for more.

Sir Eldred's heart was good and kind,
 Alive to pity's call ;
 A crowd of virtues grac'd his mind,
 He lov'd, and felt for all.

When merit rais'd the sufferer's name,
 He show'r'd his bounty then ;
 And those who cou'd not prove that claim,
 He succour'd still as men.

But sacred truth the Muse compels
His errors to impart ;
And yet the Muse reluctant, tells
The fault of Eldred's heart.

Tho' kind and gentle as the dove,
As free from guile and art,
And mild, and soft as infant love
The feelings of his heart ;

Yet if the passions storm'd his soul,
By jealousy led on ;
The whirlwind rage disdain'd controul,
And bore his virtues down.

Not Thule's waves so wildly break
To drown the northern shore ;
Not Etna's entrails fiercer shake ;
Or Scathia's tempest roar.

As when in summer's sweetest day,
 To fan the fragrant morn,
 The sighing breezes softly stray
 O'er fields of ripen'd corn ;

Sudden the lightning's blast descends,
 Deforms the ravag'd fields ;
 At once the various ruin blends,
 And all resistless yields.

But when, to clear his stormy breast,
 The sun of reason shone,
 And ebbing passions sunk to rest,
 And shew'd what rage had done :

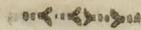
O then what anguish he betray'd !
 His shame how deep, how true !
 He view'd the waste his rage had made,
 And shudder'd at the view.

The meek-ey'd dawn, in saffron robe,
Proclaim'd the op'ning day,
Uprose the sun to gild the globe,
And hail the new-born May;

The birds their vernal notes repeat,
And glad the thick'ning grove,
And feather'd partner's fondly greet
With many a song of love;

When pious Eldred walk'd abroad
His morning vows to pay,
And hail'd the universal Lord
Who gave the goodly day.

That done—he left his woodland glade,
And journey'd far away:
He lov'd to court the stranger shade,
And thro' the lone vale stray.



Within the bosom of a wood,
By circling hills embrac'd,
A little modest mansion stood,
Built by the hand of taste.

While many a prouder castle fell,
This safely did endure ;
The house where guardian virtues dwell
Is sacred, and secure.

Of eglantine an humble fence
Around the mansion stood,
Which charm'd at once the ravish'd sense,
And screen'd an infant wood.

The wood receiv'd an added grace,
As pleas'd it bent to look,
And view'd its ever verdant face
Reflected on a brook.

The smallness of the stream did well
The master's fortunes shew ;
But little streams may serve to tell
From what a source they flow.

This mansion own'd an aged knight,
And such a man was he,
As heaven just shews to human sight
To tell what man shou'd be.

His youth in many a well-fought field
Was train'd betimes to war ;
His bosom, like a well-worn shield,
Was grac'd with many a scar ;

The vigour of a green old age
His reverend form did bear ;
And yet, alas! the warrior-sage
Had drain'd the dregs of care :



And sorrow more than age can break,
And wound its hapless prey;
'Twas sorrow furrow'd his firm cheek,
And turn'd his bright locks grey.

One darling daughter sooth'd his cares,
A young and beauteous dame;
Sole comfort of his failing years,
And Birtha was her name.

Her heart a little sacred shrine,
Where all the virtues meet;
And holy hope, and faith divine,
Had claim'd it for their seat.

She rear'd a fair and fragrant bower
Of wild and rustic taste,
And there she screen'd each fav'rite flower
From every ruder blast,



And not a shrub or plant was there,
But did some moral yield ;
For wisdom by a father's care,
Was found in every field.

The trees, whose foliage fell away,
And with the summer died,
He thought an image of decay
Might lecture human pride.

While fair, perennial greens that stood,
And brav'd the wintry blast,
As types of the fair mind he view'd
Which shall for ever last,

He taught her that the gaudiest flowers
Were seldom fragrant found ;
But wasted soon their little powers,
Lay useless on the ground :



While the sweet-scented rose shall last,
And boast its fragrant power,
When life's imperfect day is past,
And beauty's shorter hour.

And here the virgin lov'd to lead
Her inoffensive day,
And here she oft retir'd to read,
And oft retir'd to pray.

Embower'd she grac'd the woodland shades,
From courts and cities far,
The pride of Caledonian maids,
The peerless northern star.

As shines that bright and blazing star,
The glory of the night,
When sailing through the cloudless air,
She sheds her silver light:



So Birtha shone!—but when she spoke
 The muse herself was heard,
 As on the ravish'd air she broke,
 And thus her prayer preferr'd

‘ O bless thy Birtha, power supreme,
 ‘ In whom I live and move,
 ‘ And bless me most by blessing him
 ‘ Whom more than life I love.’

She starts to hear a stranger's voice,
 And with a modest grace
 She lifts her meek eye in surprize,
 And sees a stranger's face.

The stranger lost in transport stood,
 Bereft of voice and pow'r,
 While she with equal wonder view'd
 Sir Eldred of the Bower.