

**POEMS  
AND SONGS**

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Poems and songs by James Black Cameron

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**JAMES BLACK CAMERON**

**POEMS  
AND SONGS**



# POEMS AND SONGS.

BY

JAMES BLACK CAMERON, F.E.I.S.,

GRANGEMOUTH.



WILLIAM P. NIMMO,  
LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

1877.

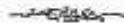
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## P R E F A C E.



**J**AMES BLACK CAMERON, eldest son of the late John Cameron, engineer, was born in Greenock on the 6th October 1833. While still a child, his family removed to London; but on the death of his father in Jamaica they returned to Scotland, and settled in Glasgow. Up to this time his education had been carried on at home by his mother, a woman of considerable mental power. Being now ten years of age, his friends thought that the time had come when he should be sent to school. He was accordingly enrolled as a pupil in the Normal School, and for upwards of three years studied under Mr Hislop, the head-master. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed as an engineer in the Vulcan Foundry, Port Dundas; but before six months had passed, his right arm was accidentally caught by some machinery, and so mangled that amputation of the hand was necessary. Unable now to prosecute a trade, he returned to the Normal School,

and under the tuition of the head-master, Mr Forbes, now of Dumfries Academy, made such progress that at the early age of seventeen he received an appointment as assistant to the late Mr Craig, of the Glasgow Industrial Schools ; and about a year thereafter he was elected teacher of Springbank School. Although prior to this he had shown a strong tendency to literature, it was at this time that its pursuit became an absorbing passion.

Conducting a large school, with little assistance, during the day, and an evening school for five nights in the week, would be considered sufficient work for any man ; but the love of literature was so strong within him that his studies were often carried on till early morning. This could not continue. His health gave way. He resigned his situation, and for six months he was confined to the house. During this enforced retirement he applied himself to the study of the Spanish language, intending to go out to an uncle in South America, for the sake of his health ; but his uncle dying, this design had to be abandoned. It now became a serious question what he should do ; whether he should devote himself entirely to literature, or resume teaching. He accordingly wrote to Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, enclosing a specimen of his work, stating his position, and asking for advice. To this a very complimentary and kind reply was received, advising him to continue his studies, but not

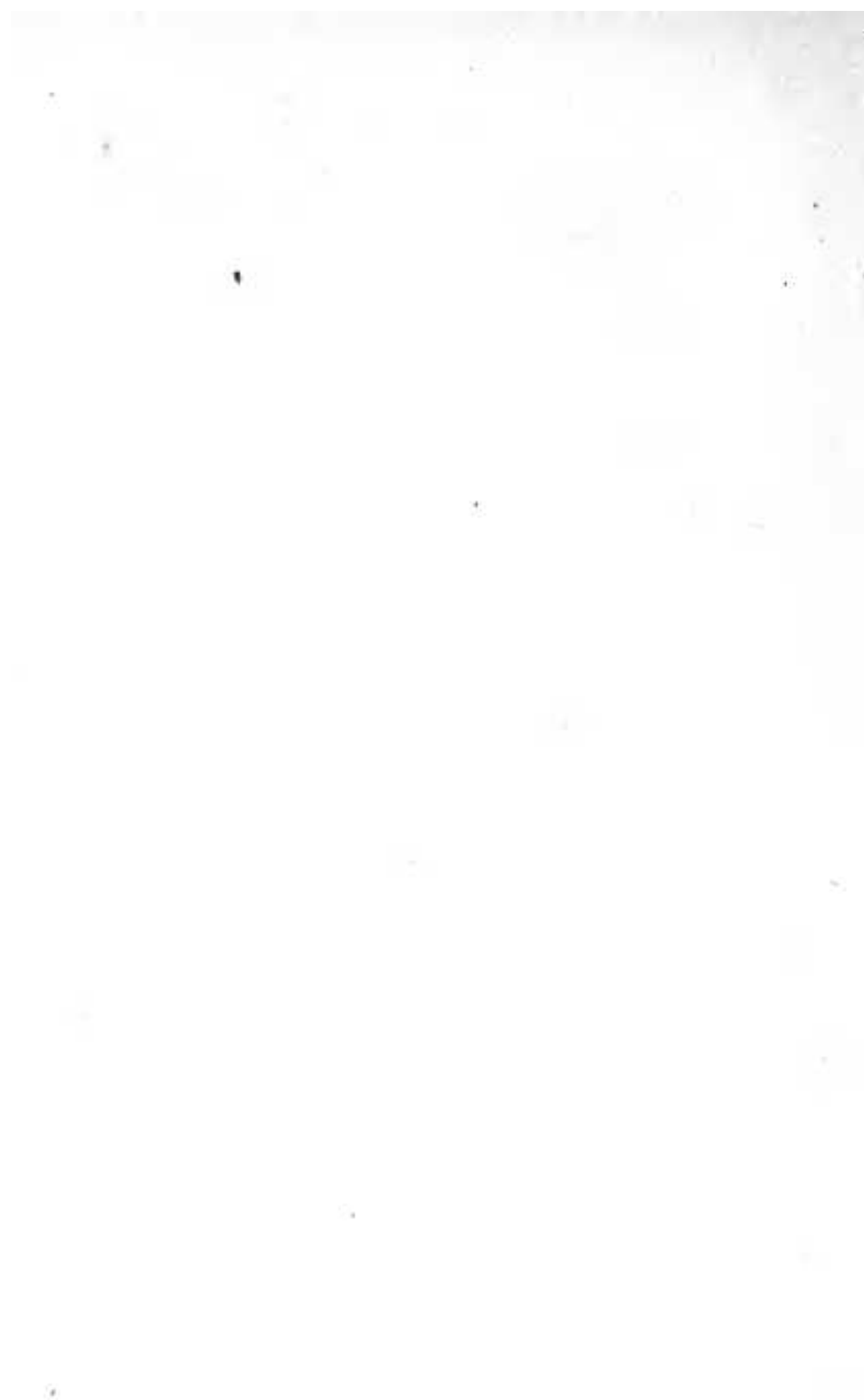


to abandon his profession until he had made such a name in literature as would secure him against the necessity of becoming a literary hack. Shortly afterwards he received an appointment to Hollandbush School, near Denny, where for five years he taught so successfully that very great regret was felt when he accepted his last situation, the mastership of Grangemouth Subscription School.

During all this time he was storing his mind from the treasures of Spanish ballad and Norse legend; yet he never ceased to cultivate his powers as a writer, both of prose and of poetry; and his contributions were frequent, not only to the columns of the local papers, but also to those of Edinburgh and Glasgow. Had he devoted himself entirely to literature, he would doubtless have won for himself a high position among the writers of this country. But working all day in a worrying and mind-fagging profession, his productive powers were limited; but yet he has produced some pieces which we venture to predict will live.

He died at Grangemouth on the 22d of May 1876, leaving a widow and two children.

At the urgent request of many friends this volume—a selection from his poetical compositions—has been issued.





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