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# **A Manual of British Geography**

**Hughes William**

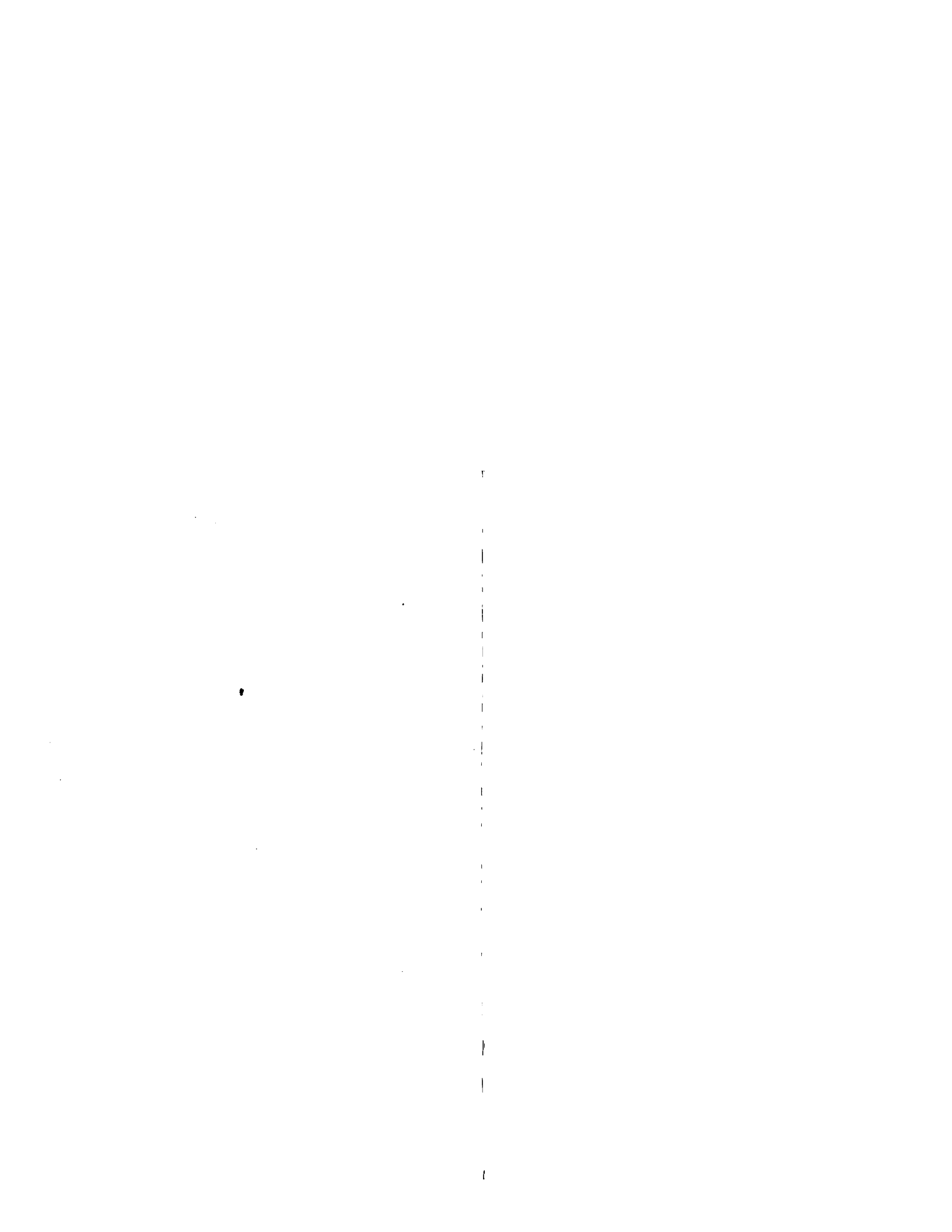
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**Title: A Manual of British Geography**

**Author: Hughes William**

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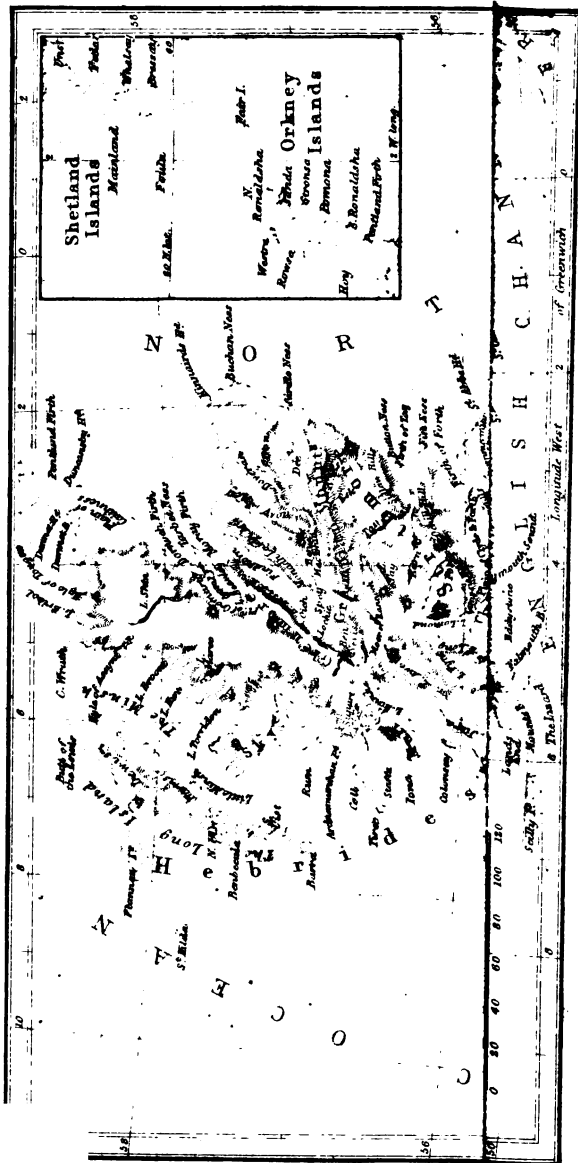
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A MANUAL  
OF  
BRITISH GEOGRAPHY:

EMBRACING THE  
PHYSICAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND DESCRIPTIVE GEOGRAPHY

OF  
ENGLAND AND WALES,  
SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND.

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FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

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BY  
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Author of 'The Construction of Maps,' &c., &c.

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## P R E F A C E .

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At a time when the value and necessity of geographical studies are universally admitted, it would be superfluous to enter into any argument in favour of the superior importance of a correct knowledge of the geography of our own country. The improved means possessed by schools at the present day, in the use of the numerous Maps and other works illustrative of physical geography which have recently appeared, together with the general interest attaching to the entire subject, seem to render this a favourable time to furnish those engaged in education with a clear digest of British Geography, based upon the natural features and productions of our islands, and the influence which these have exerted upon the development of industry among their inhabitants.

The views entertained by the writer upon the subject of geographical tuition have been already placed before the public,\* and the present volume is an attempt (within the limited sphere to which it extends) to carry them into practice. In accordance with these, it is regarded as an object of primary importance to give the learner correct ideas of the *position, magnitude, form, surface, climate, and natural productions* of the countries which it is intended to describe,

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\* 'Remarks upon Geography as a Branch of Popular Education,' &c. London, 1847.

since it is these circumstances which have guided the exercise of man's industrial powers, and in a great measure compelled their direction into particular channels. When, by the aid of constant reference to maps (and, if possible, by the additional practice of map-drawing), these facts have become well fixed in the mind, the circumstances of population, the position of manufacturing and commercial emporiums, and the various details of descriptive geography, will be found to follow in an easy and natural order, and to possess an interest which does not otherwise belong to them. It must always be borne in mind that mere *names*—simply as such—are of no use, and that they only possess value when associated with facts or circumstances which render them deserving of being committed to memory. Among the most interesting and attractive of such particulars are the historical events with which they may have been connected, the eminent men to whom they may have given birth, the striking features of natural scenery which they may represent, the various productions of the physical world for which they may be celebrated, or the achievements of human skill and industry of which they may constitute the evidence. In a less striking degree, the relative position of mountains and valleys, of moorlands or marshes,—the situation of towns on the banks or at the mouths of rivers,—the proximity to salient points of coast,—with numerous other circumstances,—present additional facts, of which the judicious teacher of geography will avail himself in imparting interest to his subject, which (instead of being a dull routine of exercise for the memory) will thus be raised to the dignity of a science, and invested with a correspondent degree of attraction.

In the present volume, the writer has endeavoured to present the information which it contains in a more generally attractive form than such works usually assume. While *school* Geography consist principally of lists of

names, arranged in a dull and monotonous succession of alphabetical or other tables, so long will the subject of which they treat be regarded as dry and uninviting, and its pursuit be felt by the youthful learner as a task unprofitable in its attainment as it is often unattractive in appearance. In the arrangement of this 'Manual' the writer has had regard to its use as a *reading-book* not less than as a geographical class-book, and trusts that it will be found not devoid of the characteristics required for such a purpose. The desire to accomplish this will perhaps be held to justify the occasional omission of subordinate details which might have given greater completeness to some of the topics which the work embraces. But while not unconscious of such imperfections, he is yet sanguine enough to hope that it will be found calculated to render assistance in the cause of education, and believes that the most experienced teachers will coincide with him in saying that it is better to fix attention upon the leading features of any branch of study, and to teach these *thoroughly*,—than to run the risk of destroying the general interest of the subject, and a perception of the mutual coherence of its parts, by fatiguing the mind with a multiplicity of minute and comparatively unimportant details upon any of its lesser subdivisions. The consideration of *how much of any subject* it is likely that (in the great majority of cases) the time and opportunity afforded for the purpose *will admit of being taught* is a matter of the most practical importance to the school-master, and one by which the task of preparing the present work has been largely guided.

Islington,  
January 15th, 1851.