

**LANDS, CLASSICAL
AND SACRED. IN TWO
VOLUMES. VOL. II**

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Lands, classical and sacred. In two volumes. Vol. II by George Nugent-Grenville

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GEORGE NUGENT-GRENVILLE

**LANDS, CLASSICAL
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LANDS,
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BY LORD NUGENT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CHAPTER I.

Journey between Hebron and Jerusalem—Khalkhal—Fountain of Simeon—Dr. Robinson's Biblical Researches—Pools of Solomon—Bethlehem—Franciscan Convent—Chapel of the Nativity—Field of the Shepherds—Well of David—Tomb of Rachel—Plain of Rephaim—Jerusalem.

THE road from Hebron as you "set your face towards Jerusalem," is rugged and dreary. The country of the vine, the mulberry, and fig-tree is no more. The richness of cultivation reaches no further than about a couple of miles to the northward of the town. What lies before you is grand in its outlines, but barren and desolate. A distant view of Mamre opens to the right. Dr. Robinson mistakes where he says (*Biblical Researches*, vol. i., pp. 317-318) that "what the Jews call the house of Abraham is at about five minutes' walk from the great highway" between Hebron and Jerusalem, in "a blind path to the right, at right angles leading to Tekua." You are nowhere within more than a mile of it. At the end of an hour and a half the hill and village of Khalkhal

appear on the right;—the Halhul of which the book of Joshua speaks (xv. 58), “Halhul, Bethsur, and Gedor.” (St. Jerome; ‘Onomasticon,’ article ‘Elul.’)

At the end of half an hour more, close by the road, likewise to the right, and on the side of a sloping bank, with an extensive plain running into the mountains in its front, a fine fountain of bright and sweet water gushes forth in an abundant stream: a little glade of close short turf is at the foot of the bank in which it rises. Behind it are some curious tombs of very remote antiquity, to all appearance Jewish, hewn in the face of the low rocks. This place is known by the Arabs under the name of “Ain Simin,” or the fountain of Simeon. In the plain in front was fought (A.D. 1192–3) a battle between Richard Cœur de Lion and Saladin, in which the Sultan, having by forced marches placed himself between Richard and Askalon, from whence he was advancing on Jerusalem, and thus having threatened to interrupt his supplies, with great loss of men on the Saracen side forced him to cut his way through them back to the sea-line, which he never more could leave; till, long deserted, and at last betrayed by Philip Augustus of France, his partner in the war, the English king, at the head of the last invading army who kept the field in that crusade, found all his remaining hopes of success extinguished.

In entering, for the first time, the land of the New Testament, a memorable epoch in life to all who visit it, every one, probably, who would form conclusions for himself on questions of fact or locality, resolves on some general system by which to collect evidence, and try its credibility. To prepare