



**The Gaelic topography of Scotland: And what it
proves, explained, with much historical,
antiquarian, and descriptive information,
illustrated with map**

James Alexander Robertson

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1869 Excerpt: ...besides meaning that last, is a distinctive appellation for a fane, or place where heathen worship was held. Since Christianity was introduced, churches came to be built where the pagan stone circles had existed; and still later, in many cases where the 'Clachans' had been, houses, as well as a church, came to be built, and so those not acquainted with Gaelic, fancied 'Clachan' meant a hamlet, or village, which is a mistake. There is an expression still used by Highlanders, which has reference to the point now spoken of, and which proves very strongly the Gaelic language of the present day being the same as spoken by the heathen Caledonian. This is in the expression employed in asking the question as to going to a place of worship, when it is common to say, 'Am bheil thu'dol do'n clachan,' the meaning being, 'Are you going to the stones.' No reference to a church, but to the stones.' From whence is it possible for this expression to have arisen, except it had been in use by the heathen ancestors of the Highlanders, when going to their stone circles, stones of sacrifice, and others dedicated to their deities? and of course the meaning of the expression is 'are you going to the worship to be held at the stones of sacrifice, and such like.' 'Clachans' occur in four counties south of the two firths, and in several to the north of them; they appear in Lanark, Ayr, Wigtown, and Kircudbright. There are also examples of Clachs, of which many will now be given, and that appear in different places. 'Clachnaheala' is in the island of Lismore, courJty of Argyle; it is 'Clach-na-h-eala,' or 'the stone of the swan;' and the superstition regarding it was, that being sacred, any one who had committed a criminal act, and was able to get to and touch this stone, he...

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