



[A Moral Lesson]

They say that the home is the main and best source of education. For some unknown reason the following incident which happened to me while I was still a very small boy of probably five or six years old remain in my memory as vividly as the day it happened about 80 years ago. Certainly, I was not more than seven years old, because my grandfather, 'An-Sheoc' John Macleod died in 1924.

My paternal grandparents' thatched house was close to our own house and there was, the usual small window at the top of the wall in the thatch in the byre end of the house, consisting of a single pane of glass of about one foot square. Probably it was a portable window for the purpose of letting the hens in and out of the byre.

Boys will be boys, and idle hands are mischievous hands. Seemingly I felt challenged to aim a stone at this window. It took quite a while and a lot of stones before I eventually scored a direct hit and crashed a stone through the glass. It was then that I realised my guilt and the folly of my action, and I ran to hide under the nearby rock, much the same as the story of Adam and Eve.

After a suitable while I innocently popped my head up to see if all was clear, and lo and behold, there was my grandfather, a tall quiet dignified man, reputed to be an unusually strong person. There was nothing for it but to face the consequences. To my surprise he did not scold me as expected, but said quietly: 'Angus, you should not have broken the windows'. Then we both walked away silently. That was my first and abiding practical moral lesson in right and wrong. The old man was then 80 years, an experienced man. As a young Gaelic speaking child whose mother passed away when he was very young, he emigrated to Canada, in the service of the Hudson Bay Company. He used to say he learned to read the Bible sitting under a tree in Canada. In his old age he was a man of the Book and read it regularly and preached from it as a local Church Elder in the village Prayer House both on Sunday and the weekday prayer meeting.

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