

ANNOYING THE VICAR OF WITHERNWICK.

AN APOLOGY IN THE "MAIL."

A SEQUEL AT LEVEN POLICE COURT.

Before Mr T. B. Holmes and Mr T. B. Jackson, at the Leven Police-court, to-day, the Rev Walter Radford Welch, vicar of Withernewick, summoned Alfred Nightingale, coal dealer, of the same place, for unlawfully, and to the annoyance of the informant, using obscene language.

Mr H. Wray appeared for complainant, and Mr B. Suddaby for the defendant.

Complainant stated that on Friday, the 11th May, he was driving with his sons on the highway, and passed defendant, who was driving a coal lurry. Defendant pulled up and used abusive words, imputing immorality. As complainant drove on he could hear defendant using further abusive language, but could not distinguish the exact words.

Cross-examined: He had not misconducted himself with defendant's wife, nor had he ever admitted having done so. In fact, he had always denied this accusation which defendant had made against him.

In re-examination, complainant said an apology was inserted in the "Hull Daily Mail" by the wife of the defendant, admitting the allegations were without the least foundation, and expressing regret for the "wickedness and folly which caused her to give utterance to such unfounded charges."

Complainant's two sons, Walter Radford Welch, jun., and Arthur Radford Welch, who were with their father at the time of the alleged offence, corroborated their father's statement.

Mr Suddaby, on behalf of the defendant, admitted that the language complained of was used, but pleaded great provocation. He added that the conduct of the complainant was the talk of the village, and though he had had every opportunity of prosecuting defendant and his wife for slander he had not done so. They had hoped that he would bring such an action against them, as the allegations which they made against him were true. The apology which had appeared in the "Mail" had been obtained by threats.

The Chairman said the charge against defendant had been proved, and he would have to pay a fine of £1, including costs. The Bench had nothing to do with the reasons which had prompted defendant to insult the complainant.