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GOOSE THAT CAME TO DINNER—AND STAYED!

THE comely barnacle-goose that came to dinner at Cross, Co. Clare, some weeks ago, and stayed, is again in the news (writes our Ennis correspondent). Mr. T. Moriarty, Inspector of Schools in Clare, a great lover of natural history, called on Saturday to see the goose and was surprised to witness the intimate relations existing between the at first very unwelcome visitor and its erstwhile bitter enemies.

OVERTURES AT FIRST REJECTED.

When the goose arrived in the poultry yard of Mr. J. Hedderman, of Cross, West Clare, it immediately set about making pals with a gaggle of domestic geese. They indignantly rejected its friendly overtures. With a tremendous flapping of wings, excited cackles and scornful pecks, they drove it with contumely from the precincts over which they exercised jurisdiction.

But Miss Barnacle was made of stern stuff. Undaunted, she returned again and again to the scene of her eviction and endured many indignities. The persistence of Robert Bruce's spider had nothing on that little goose. Eventually, by relentless persistence, she either won the admiration of her enemies or wore down their opposition. She is now regarded by the geese of Cross as an honoured visitor, and, in fact, an established member of the flock.

DIFFERENT TRAITS.

Mr. Moriarty states that the desire to become a member of the flock may be due to loneliness or a gregarious disposition. Barnacle-geese, he says, have different traits to those of the common grey or bog geese. There are a few islands west of Killkee, notably Bishop's Island, which are much frequented by barnacle-geese. These islands are inaccessible to the fowler, hence their popularity with wild birds as a safe sanctuary. If both hands of a person are clapped the sound echoes from the mainland to some of the islands and produces a wonderful whirring of wings from the startled birds.

MUTTON ISLAND.

Barnacle-geese also frequent Mutton Island, off the coast of Quilty, where the wreck of the French vessel, "The Leon 13th," lies buried in the sea, following a heroic rescue of the crew by the courageous fishermen of the little village, whose valiant achievement was commemorated by the erection from public subscriptions of the beautiful Catholic church, "The Star of the Sea."

Rules Governing Punishment Of Children In School

THE rules of the Department of Education as to the infliction of punishment in schools were quoted during the hearing of an important case at Corofin, Co. Clare, Court on Thursday last. According to these, a child should not be slapped for lack of knowledge, but could be for being bold or disobedient. A light cane can be used, but the child must not be slapped on any part of the body except the palm of the hand.

AT Corofin District Court on Thursday of last week, Miss Nora Minahan, N.T., Corofin National School, was charged with assaulting Ronald O'Loughlin, Newtown, Corofin, a schoolboy, aged 7 years.

Evidence was given for the complainant that he, his brother, Patrick, (8½) and another boy had been laughing while at their desk in school and for this each had been given two slaps by the defendant, who looked vexed at the time. Later Ronnie made them laugh again and the teacher called him out from the desk and with the "rung of a chair" gave him 14 slaps on the palm and knuckles of his hand and also on his leg, which two days afterwards was found to be swelled. Treatment was given by Nurse B. Kenny, Corofin, on the instructions of Dr. M. McNamara, now in Australia, and not available to give evidence. The boy had also received treatment from Dr. V. Evans, of the County Hospital, Ennis, who said he had found no evidence of external violence on either the boy's leg or knuckles. The condition of the boy's leg had been caused by an infection which sometimes could be caused by a pin prick.

THE DEFENCE.

Mr. I. M. Houlihan, solr., defending, produced the stick which he said had been used by the defendant and described it as a light bamboo cane.

Miss Minahan, the defendant, in evidence said she had punished the child for putting his legs up on the desk. She gave him a light tip with the stick produced and told him to put his feet down. She did not remember how many slaps she had given on the hands, but never gave more than six. It was ridiculous to say she had given him 14 slaps or that she had struck the boy on the back of the hand.

DEPARTMENT'S RULES.

The defendant also said that there were rules made by the Department of Education as to the manner in which punishment was to be inflicted. A child should not be slapped for lack of knowledge but could be slapped for being bold or disobedient. A light cane should be used and the child was not to be slapped on any part of the body except the palm of the hand. As far as she knew there was no regulation governing the number of

PRINCIPAL'S EVIDENCE.

Ignatius Cleary, Principal Teacher, Corofin School, gave evidence as to the manner in which punishment was usually administered in the school. He said there were certain children for whom it was difficult to devise appropriate punishment. They had calloused hands and a teacher might as well be slapping the table as slapping them. A person had to have real experience of a school to understand the question of punishment as applied to a particular boy.

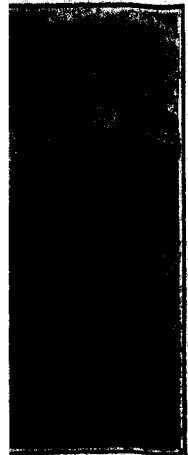
Asked by Mr. Houlihan as to the status of Corofin School and its teachers, witness said that in the past four years its pupils had won £1,400 in Co. Council scholarships and they had been won by the least well-to-do members of the community. Last year they had sent 16 children to the Gaeltacht for a month.

JUDGE'S REMARKS.

Justice Gordon Hurley said that striking a child on the leg was going outside the powers of a teacher. Ninety-nine out of a hundred teachers were doing a good job in very difficult circumstances and as Mr. Cleary had pointed out, in some cases the punishment had to be fitted to the individual. However, they did sometimes find that unpleasant phenomenon, the sadistic teacher, and to protect children from such resort must be had to the courts. He did not think Miss Minahan fell into that category and he thought she was unfortunate to be in court. She admitted having done to the little boy what had been done before and what will be done again and what would never have come to light but for the improbable and extraordinary result in the infection of the leg, which occurred as a consequence.

"SOME LITTLE DOUBT."

He was in some little doubt as to whether the blow did cause the infection but the probabilities were too strong to allow any alternative conclusion. Miss Minahan, however, admitted she struck the boy on the leg and as Mr. T. A. Lynch, solr. for complainant, had pointed out, that was a technical assault. He thought it was proper that the courts should adopt the rules laid down by the Department of Education as the basis for legitimate chastisement. He would find the charge proved and dismiss it under the Probation Act.



Williamacurra Weston,

Former

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T.D.

Election both myself and I spoke at Castlehe stated that more than 100 houses were built in a single year.

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HEALTH ACT.

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Need For More Accommodation At Clare Co. Hospital