

Bell's Weekly Messenger, 28 March 1836

CAMBRIDGE.

Mary Stoney, aged 24, was indicted for stealing an ermine muff and a mantilla, value 8l. the property of Stephen Thrower.

The prosecutor in this case is the late mayor of this town, and keeps a draper's shop, near King's College. The prisoner, a respectable-looking young woman, is most creditably connected, but is said to be an itinerant shoplifter. On the 8th of February she took a lodging at one Mrs. Ball's, in Cambridge, to whom she said her luggage was coming by a waggon in the evening, and that she had a very near relative at one of the colleges. She then requested Mrs. Ball to recommend her to a furrier, and Mr. Thrower's shop was pointed out to her notice. She went thither, and did him the honour of selecting two muffs and two mantillas, which she desired might be sent to her lodgings, where she would choose one of each, and "settle with the bearer," observing, that, "as they were to be a present from her brother, she could not decide without consulting him." A shopman was accordingly sent with the goods, with orders not to leave them without being paid for them. When the man reached the prisoner's lodgings she was not at home; but Mrs. Ball, who had been completely taken in by her modest and ladylike deportment, thought the man might safely leave the goods, and he did so. The prisoner soon afterwards returned, when she put on one of the mantillas, took one of the muffs, and sallied forth to "take a stroll in Trinity." Mrs. Ball told her Mr. Thrower's man would be there directly; on which she replied she would go herself to the shop and pay for the articles. The prosecutor, however, had not been idle in the mean time. He caused her to be watched, when it was found that she left the town by the Huntingdon-road, and was picked up by the Wisbech coach,

at which town she was taken into custody with the articles in her possession, meditating new frauds.

Mr. Leapingwell, for the prisoner, contended that these facts did not sustain an indictment for larceny, but at most only amounted to the offence of getting goods under false pretences.

The learned judge, however, was of opinion that the prosecutor had never parted with the property in the goods, and that it was for the jury to say whether the prisoner took them *animo furandi*, and summed up accordingly.

The jury found the prisoner Guilty. She was sentenced to be transported for seven years.