



# *Crime and Punishment*

*Seend*

## *Coal Theft*

Isaac Perrett pleaded guilty to having stolen 1 cwt of coal, the property of Adam Wragg of Seend; but in this case the Judge preferred to receive evidence of the way in which the theft was effected, and witnesses were therefore called.

The facts appeared to be as follows: - The prisoner was in the employ of a Mr Crisp, a butcher at Seend; and according to Mr Crisp, the prisoner came to him on the evening of the 28th of Jan and said, "We want some coal to go on with in the morning". Upon which Mr Crisp told him to go and fetch 1 cwt from Mr Wragg's wharf. He brought the coal on the following morning, and without enquiring how he had come by it, Crisp's wife gave him 1s, which he put in his pocket. It afterwards transpired however that he had helped himself without leave or license from any one, from a coal shed belonging to Mr Wragg, situated a short distance from the wharf, and he was therefore given into custody by Mr Wragg.

Still, but for Perrett's plea the case was one quite open to an acquittal. Perrett, however, declared that he had stolen the coal, and added that he had done it at his master's request; and that his master had given him 1s for the job.

The Judge said, whether his master had employed him or not, it was perfectly plain that he had stolen the coal – and this was not the first time he had been guilty of thieving. He had been sentenced to 21 days' imprisonment for a felony committed in Devizes only in Dec last; and he would now have 12 calendar months.

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