



### **Acquitted of Purse Theft**

William Hutchings was charged with stealing a purse containing money from the person of Robert Matthews, at Swindon.

Mr. Herbert Saunders prosecuted.

The prosecutor is a mechanic employed at the Great Western Railway works at Swindon. On the 20th July he was drinking at several public-houses, at one of which he fell in with the prisoner. He treated the prisoner with some beer, and was himself, the worse for liquor. He gave an old man a shilling for a ride on his donkey, and the prisoner and a man named Wheatley walked on either side to "push" the animal up. When he last treated the prisoner he had a sovereign and some silver in his purse. Some time afterwards, he missed the purse, and the police were communicated with. P.C. Strong went in pursuit of the prisoner, and found the purse and 6¼d in his possession. The prisoner's defence was that the prosecutor gave him the purse, telling him there was a shilling in it with which to get some beer. A baker named Staplehorn said he saw the prosecutor give the purse to the prisoner, saying there was no money in it.

The prisoner was acquitted, and the Chairman cautioned the prisoner not to make such a goose of himself again. His expenses would be disallowed.

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