

The Ashby Gang.

WILLIAM SANDLANT, 69, was charged with stealing a quantity of wool and a cask of gin, belonging to Messrs. John and Thomas Davys, of Ashby, on the 17th of March. Mr. John Davys and Charles Lee (assistant to Messrs. D.) having deposed to the gin being sent by a boy, in a cart, the latter stated that he did not miss the cask till he had got nine miles from Ashby towards Stapenhill. Price (the Ashby constable) produced the cask, which he found in the prisoner's house. Thomas Pickering (an accomplice brought from goal to give evidence) said that Sandlant brought the cask of gin and some wool to his (Pickering's) house in Ashby, and said that he had got the property from the prosecutors. There were several marks on the cask which Sandlant burnt out. Pickering underwent a very severe cross-examination by Mr. Burnaby (Mr. Hildyard being for the prosecution) who showed clearly that Pickering was a thorough-paced villain. Notwithstanding the marks had been erased, the prosecutors identified the cask. Mr. Burnaby, in addressing the Jury, commented on the fact of Pickering being a person of very bad character, and also that his evidence was unsupported, in which the Chairman, in a great measure coincided, but, notwithstanding, the Jury found the prisoner Guilty. A previous conviction was then proved against the prisoner, but owing to there being several other charges against him, his sentence was deferred.

SANDLANT was again arraigned for stealing several brushes, and a quantity of other articles, from the shop of Mr. Crossley, grocer, Ashby, and an old woman named ELIZABETH BODELL, was charged with receiving some of the goods, knowing them to be stolen. Mr. Hildyard again conducted the prosecution, and Messrs. White and Burnaby defended the prisoners. Pickering (being again admitted Queen's evidence) said that, about last Michaelmas, he and Sandlant got into the prosecutor's warehouse about midnight, by means of some skeleton keys, and carried off the goods in question. Price (the constable,) deposed to finding some of the stolen property in the houses of both the prisoners. Thomas Astle said that he saw Sandlant and a companion go towards the female prisoner's house, at Swadlincote, with a bag in his hand, which, from their suspicious motions, (Sandlant and his companion having walked before the door for some time while there were other persons in the shop,) he supposed they left there. Reuben Newbold having corroborated the last witness's evidence, Mr. Dewes (attorney for the prosecution) was sworn, whose testimony was objected to by Mr. Hildyard, but eventually he was allowed to give his evidence, which was to the effect that the female prisoner, when before the Magistrate, stated that she had never bought anything of Sandlant in her life, that she had not known him for three years, and that she knew nothing of Pickering. Mr. Crossley identified the property as that which he had missed from his warehouse, and said that he had never sent any goods to Swadlincote. William Radford, a lodger at the female prisoner's, said that Pickering had repeatedly come to Mr. Bodell's shop with potatoes. After

Pickering had been very roughly handled by the Learned Counsel for the defence, both gentlemen addressed the Jury for their respective clients, (Mr. Burnaby urging that the prosecution was vindictive, considering that Sandlant had been convicted,) and Mr. White (on behalf of Bodell) called her charwoman, (Marianne Ward) who said that Pickering had brought some malt and potatoes to the house in a bag, but that he did not say he brought them from Sandlant. Two or three other witnesses deposed to the fact of Mrs. Bodell having purchased potatoes, malt, &c. from various parties, and others were called to her character. Mr. Hildyard, in his reply, denied that the prosecution was vindictive, remarking that the case against the female depended on the conviction of the male prisoner, and that, Sandlant being already liable to transportation for life, a second conviction would not be of much consequence, as far as he was concerned. The Chairman having summed up at considerable length, the Jury found both prisoners Guilty, when Sandlant was sentenced to transportation for life, and Bodell to nine months' hard labour.—This case alone occupied the Court nearly five hours. Pickering, being admitted Queen's evidence, was not tried: we suppose he will be detained in custody until he has given evidence against the remainder of the gang, (which embraces some of his near relations,) who, we believe, have been sent to Derby for trial. The four other indictments against Sandlant were not pressed.