

MENUM AND TEUM—ON A LESSON ENFORCED.—For several months past, the Illinois Central Railroad company have been annoyed by repeated complaints of packages of goods being broken open whilst in transit over that road, and rifled of part of their contents. It is true, no one of the loses was of very serious amount, but the annoyance of being continually called upon to attend to settling for half a bush. of apples taken out of a barrel—or a peck of peaches pilfered out of a box, was quite enough to test the patience of the General Freight Agent.

The officers of the I. C. R. R. made up their minds that so far from allowing the area of privileges to be extended, they were decidedly of the opinion, that it ought to be narrowed, and with a view of giving their employees a practical lesson upon the laws of *Meum* and *Teum*, secured the services of Pinkerton & Co. of the North Western Police Agency, of this city, as teachers in this somewhat obsolete theory.

Our readers must not fancy that Pinkerton & Co. started on this task by lectures or by long-winded theoretical articles, done up in pamphlet form, nor that they take the trouble to call round and notify those they intend to enlighten—that they (P. & Co.) were retained for any such a purpose as curtailing the privileges, or correctly defining the law in relation to mine and thine. On the contrary they very carefully avoided all publicity of their acts.

The first thing that Pinkerton & Co. did in the way of making out the theory, was to go and purchase sundry articles of clothing, boots &c., and consign them to various supposed merchants along the line of the I. C. R. R. and its connections. If any one had been curious enough to have observed very closely the travel of those boxes, he might perhaps with the aid of a good pair of highly magnifying glasses have seen, that just about the time those goods were necessary to go South, it was necessary that Mr. Pinkerton should go South too; and that when the aforesaid goods traveled North, Mr. P. also traveled north, and our observing friend might have said that it was a singular coincidence. But if he had also observed that just so soon as those same goods took another direction, our friend Pinkerton appeared to have changed his mind and found that it also was necessary for him to take the same course as the goods were going. Our observing friend would probably have pondered over the matter and arrived at the conclusion that this was a very singular coincidence, and it is barely possible that he might have thought that there was some magnetic attraction in those same boxes, which was drawing as shrewd a detective as Pinkerton is all round the Southern part of Illinois. But if our friend had been at Wapella Station, DeWitt Co. Ill., on Tuesday last, the mystery would have been unravelled, for if we are correctly informed, it was upon that day that Pinkerton & Co. deemed it advisable to come out with their views upon this great question of *Meum* and *Teum*.

On the morning of that day Mr. Pinkerton called upon Mr. Spaulding, Station Agent at Wapella, and informed him that there were some goods in a certain case that had arrived there the previous evening, which he, (P.,) would like very much to look over. Three o'clock A. M. was not the best time in the twenty-four hours comprising the day, to check out goods; but P. appeared to think that in this case, darkness was better for him than light, and that the dim rays of a lantern were far preferable to the more daz'ing light of the sun. The goods were checked out, and, although Pinkerton said they were his goods, and although they fell short one coat, one vest, and one pair of pants, he did not chafe very much at the loss, for instead of crying over the "spilt milk," he promptly went to work to discover where the missing goods were, and more than once sleeper was awakened from his dreams and strongly queried as to his knowledge of the missing coat, vest and pants. To all of Pinkerton's enquiries a decided negative was given; but at length P. got into a room in the car-house, occupied by two *honest* employees—Peter and Mathew Keefer, where, neatly done up in a package, were found the identical missing suit of clothes, all of which in addition to the usual coat mark, bore the private mark of the Detective.

In order to obtain a Judicial decision upon the question of mine and thine, Mr. Pinkerton called upon Esquire Laners and obtained a warrant, with which constable Clark called upon the Messrs. Keefer to attend before the Justice, who asked Peter and Mathew to give bail in five hundred dollars each, to appear before the Circuit Court of DeWitt County, to answer to a charge of larceny, in default of which, he committed them to the jail of DeWitt County at Clinton. In case there shou'd be any one desirous of further instruction on this question of *meum* and *teum*, Messrs. Pinkerton & Co. we doubt not, stand ready to give practical illustrations of their peculiar theory in regard to the law.