BULLUM VERSUS BOATUM.

Two Resurrected Legal Stories that Amused Our Grandfathers.

When we were boys there was current a celebrated legal case, which was at once the wonder and horror of the age. It was known as the famous bull and boat case, or, to give its legal title, Bullum vs. Boatum. The facts were these: In the quiet village of Laydown lived William Jones and Thomas Smith. Jones was the owner of a fragile boat and Smith was the proprietor of a raging bull. One evening Jones, who had been visiting his girl on the other side of the river, tied up his boat to the shore with a rope made of hay. He, I mean the bull, was fri-lang his tail in the breeze with a doesamy-tellow-want-a-horn sort of an air. He suddenly smelt hay, and following his nose he discovered the boat and the hayband.

As a matter of course, he tasted this new kind of rope, and he found the ends so succulent that he commenced to eat the coils around the post; and in order to do this thing thoroughly, he stepped on board the boat. As he bit, nibbled, pulled and chawed, the rope broke, and the next moment the tide (which waits for no man, much less for a bull) carried the boat and the bull into the center of the river. The bull no sooner felt that his "bark was on the waves" than he tried to kick the boat back again into its place; and as he plunged away, fore and aft, his hind legs went through the bottom, the

His hind legs went through.

boat turned upside down, and not being able to swim with his legs in the air, he was drowned.

Boat and bull were afterward found lying dead in each other's arms—or legs. Then came the suit. Jones sued Smith for the value of the boat, and Smith sued Jones for the worth of the bull. This is the great case of Bullum vs. Boatum. It was argued fifteen times before a full bench, that is to say, each occupant of the bench was full.

First came the argument for the bull:

"The bull," roared his counsel, "was strictly within his rights. He was exercising his legs in the evening. Hay was his natural food. The right to eat hay was given him by Magna Charta. He was suddenly tempted by a delicious hayband, and he did not resist. It was not in the nature or constitution of a bull to resist temptation. He ate that hayband—and in order to eat the whole of it he got into the boat. It was perfectly plain that if the boat had not been there, my client could not and would not have stepped aboard; and then this noble specimen of energy and push could not have perished"—and so on, and so on, for five days in succession.

Then up rose the great admiralty lawyer on behalf of the boat.

"The bull was palpably in the wrong. Why? The bull went to the boat; the boat did not come to bull. 'My client' was gently and peaceably floating on the tide of the watery events when this red-headed rake of a bull ate up the anchor and hawser, tore it from its fastenings, jumped in, had a ride for nothing, kicked the bottom out, and died in an attempt to swim with his horns and tail. If ever there was a case of piracy and burglary combined, this was the one, and the bull was the culprit. Look at the natural consequences—and—and"——

Here the chief justice suddenly woke up and said: "I have had enough of this. Take your decree, Brother Bullum. It is the most infamous case of willful and malicious negligence on the part of the boat that I have ever come across in my professional career. Think of it. A boat tied with a hayband to the shore. Can human turpitude and moral delinquency go further? The bull was within his constitutional rights. He has a natural, inalienable lien upon all hay. The bull was no sailor, and the boat knew it; and, what is more infamous still, took advantage of his ignorance of navigation, and drowned him with his feet in the air. I feel like giving heavy, yes, punitory, damages in this case, as a warning to boats to keep their bottoms away from bulls."

There is a judgment that is a judgment. This is a case which every lawyer ought to know by heart; it is an inexhaustible mine of legal lore. I regret to add that the judge died soon after the decision, and that he is still dead.—Read before Cincinnati Literary Club.

An Almanac as a Witness.

John Philpot Curran defended a poor devil who was charged with robbing a nobleman. On trial the victim positively identified the thief, saying, though the robbery occurred at night, the moon was bright enough to allow him to see the face of his assailant. The driver and footman both gave similar testimony. Curran addressed the court and the jury. He pleaded that his client was not guilty—had been at home, fifteen miles away from the scene of the robbery at the time of its occurrence. He could not prove an alibi, for a wife could not testify for her husband, and his child was not old enough to know the import of an oath; but he could introduce the only witness the prosecution had depended on for identification—the moon. "The driver and footman testified as they did because their master did so." There Curran called for the almanacs. Several of the red-bound pamphlets were brought in. The judge took one. Turning to the date of the robbery, which occurred at 11 o'clock, it was discovered that no moon arose that night, and the prisoner was acquitted. He talked to Curran afterward, and the attorney said: "You gave me £20 ($100 of our money) to defend you. Well, I only get about £2 of that. It cost me £18 to get those almanacs printed!" —Columbia Jurist.

of it. If you throw away the first letter you only anglicize it to "'abit," the second, and you have a "bit" left, the third, "it" still remains, and even when you discard all but the last, you have the original to a "t."—Cincinnati Graphic.