

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

have said if he had not said them for us. We will wonder, he says, why he left out this man and put in that man and so on, whilst, last of all, one censor will, he adds, be found who will wonder why he wrote it at all. The writer gives his answer with infantile simplicity and confiding helplessness saying, "I am sure, I don't know, I promise never to do so again." We trust he may break that promise, in some sort at least, for a pleasanter bit of reading of its kind during a few of the dog days could not be found. The stories he tells are not altogether new, in fact many of them rather the reverse, but there is a refreshing crispness in the way of telling them which is all his own. The articles originally appeared in the *Albany Law Journal*.

A PRACTICAL TREATISE ON THE OFFICE AND DUTIES OF CORONERS IN ONTARIO, WITH AN APPENDIX OF FORMS. 2nd Edition. By W. F. A. Boys, LL.B., of Osgoode Hall, Barrister at Law, Toronto. Hart & Rawlinson, 1878.

The first edition of this very useful little book was published in 1864. The present is more complete. The principal addition is a chapter on antidotes, which doubtless, will be useful to those Coroners who are not medical men, as most of them are at present. Whether or not it is wise to entrust duties, which are mainly of a judicial character, and which require for their proper discharge a legal training and some knowledge of the law of evidence, to medical men is a question of some importance, and has heretofore been discussed in these pages. Mr. Boys gives information for both classes, and a careful reading of this book would lessen the number of "good things" we see occasionally in the public prints touching many of those who belong to this venerable body.

We recently came across in that repertoire of light legal literature, the *Albany Law Journal*, a reference to a case reported in Plowden, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, which we shall cite for the benefit of those interested in "Crown's Quest Law." Sir James Hales committed suicide by throwing himself into a water course. The Coroner having

duly sat upon him, presented that, "passing thro' ways and streets of the said City of Canterbury, he the said James Hales did voluntarily enter the same and did himself therein voluntarily and feloniously drown." Suicide being a felony, his estates were in consequence forfeited. But it was pleaded that Sir James did not commit suicide; he only threw himself into the water, and suicide, implying death, as he did not die during his life he did not commit suicide. Then did Sir James commit suicide during his life? He only threw himself into the water in his lifetime, but that was no felony, and the suicide not being complete until his death—and he did not die during his life—he therefore had not, it was argued, committed felony. This question might be a standing one for discussion when the time arrives for competitive examinations for would-be coroners.

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Judge Freedman, in charging the jury in a case tried last week in the New York Superior Court, made some pertinent remarks upon the interesting subject of the value of a lawyer's services. Litigants, and those who have occasion to apply to the profession for service or advice, are too apt to estimate the worth of what is done for them by the time occupied in doing it, and, therefore, are very much dissatisfied, when a charge of a considerable amount is made for what apparently occupied only a few hours or a few days of the counsel's time. But as Judge Freedman says:

"To become proficient in the necessary knowledge relating to all these matters involves years of self-denial, close application and devotion, and a study of almost a lifetime. A lawyer's compensation is, therefore, not to be measured merely by the time he actually spends in the discharge of his duties. An advice given in a short interval, but founded upon years of previous acquaintance with the question involved, may, in an important case involving large interests, be worth quite a sum of money."

The popular feeling in reference to lawyer's charges is, however, to some extent encouraged by the action of certain members of the bar who, to secure business, underbid their brethren, and certain others who habitually make no charge for advice even to those able and willing to pay.—*Albany Law Journal*.