

rent, that I shall indulge myself in the hope, that the influence of this Society will soon be exerted for the establishment of some Institution of a public description, in which the Law may be taught AS A SCIENCE—A science which, though hitherto neglected, is of the first importance to mankind, and “with all its defects, redundancies and errors, is the “united reason of ages—the pride of the human intellect.” (1)

RESPONSIBILITY OF ATTORNEY.

Ignorance.—Negligence.

Lord Mansfield remarked that “an attorney ought not to be liable in cases of reasonable doubt,” 4 Burr. 2060. He is bound to show reasonable skill, and reasonable diligence. A Solicitor’s profession implies an undertaking of reasonable diligence; but this does not mean that he shall be obliged to make good to his client every loss which the client may perhaps be able to show might have been averted by an excessive assiduity, or an extraordinary exercise of vigilance and activity. It is useless to put cases by way of illustration, since we have a recent decision in the House of Lords, in a number lately published of *MM. Clarke & Finelly’s Reports*, vol. 12, p. 91, showing the opinions of law lords on the subject. The question arose upon an appeal case from Scotland. We cannot do better than give a short summary of the speeches, in the order of their delivery. The action had been brought against a writer to the Signet at Edinburgh, for an alleged error or mistake committed by him as an attorney or solicitor for the plaintiff.

Lord Brougham said, it was of the very essence of such an action that there should be negligence of the description which we call *crassa*,

(1) *Burke’s Works*, 4to. vol. 3, p. 134.