

STATUTES ON THE LAW OF TORTS. By Stephen Chapman, M.A., Q.C.  
[London: Butterworths. 1962. civ (incl. index) 475, 708 pp. £3.10.0d.]

Mr. Stephen Chapman, in his preface, very modestly states that his book “does not profess to be a work of erudition or even of original research: it makes no attempt to launch any new satellites in the nebulous regions of jurisprudence or to lay bare by microscopic dissection any deep seated diseases in the corpus juris. It is designed without any pretensions, and also without any apologies, as a work of sheer utility.”

As a work of sheer utility, Mr. Chapman’s book is an unqualified success. The law of torts has over the years benefited greatly from the reformist zeal of Parliament. Indeed every common lawyer looks back with a sigh of relief to all the reactionary and anomalous rules which the parliamentary broom has despatched to the dustbin of history. Parliament has not however done this work in one cleaning, but in hundreds of them and over many years. The result is that the law student and law teacher have to refer to literally hundreds of statute books in order to obtain an understanding of the modern law of torts. For the busy practitioner this is a constant physical inconvenience. Mr. Chapman’s book is therefore to be welcomed for it collects together, in its manageable size of about four hundred and fifty pages, some one hundred and forty-five of the more important legislations in the law of torts.

Mr. Chapman has written a lucid historical background to each of these legislations. In these backgrounds, Mr. Chapman briefly and accurately states the law prior to the enactment of the acts and contrasts it with the provisions of the acts. This is followed by a very detailed and adequate discussion of each of the sections of the acts. All the important relevant cases are cited and discussed and the author rounds off the discussion of each section or subsection with a statement of the propositions of law which he has induced from an analysis of the provision and the judicial precedents.

There are however a number of minor mistakes. The case, *Knupffer v. London Express Newspaper, Ltd.* [1944] A.C. 116 is not authority for the proposition that, “In the case, however, of the original composer of the words complained of, it is no defence that he was in fact writing about an entirely different person, who in fact exists and of whom the words are true.” (page 289). On the same page, the facts of *Cassidy v. Daily Mirror* [1929] 21 K.B. 331, [1929] All E.R. 117 are misstated.

Notwithstanding these minor errors, the book is to be recommended.

T. T. B. KOH.