plaintiff cannot be relieved; so likewise, if no such cause of action ever did exist; if it did once exist, but is shewn to have been, since, and before the institution of the suit, wholly barred, satisfied, or extinguished in any way whatever, the plaintiff cannot have any relief; because it appears, that when he instituted his suit he had no cause of action, no just ground of complaint whatever as alleged. For it is a fundamental principle in the administration of justice in whatever form, or by whatever tribunal it may be administered, that where there is no cause of complaint there can be no foundation for granting relief.(*t*)

But however self-evident this principle may appear to be, when contemplated in relation to a suit brought by one plaintiff against no more than one defendant for relief, upon a simple, entire, and indivisible cause of suit; yet, it does not appear to have been so readily and distinctly perceived where the cause of action has been compounded of various items; or where the satisfaction for the cause of suit is asked for in damages, or to an indefinite amount to be ascertained by an estimate of the nature and extent of the injury; and especially where that complexity has been increased by the relief being sought from a plurality of defendants. The cause of suit, at law as in equity, may be made up of a variety of parts joined together as one whole, or it may be an injury which can only be satisfied by some pecuniary equivalent; or the cause of suit may be the right to a subject which is in itself divisible; or it may be that the several defendants, although interested and connected as privies and parties, are yet liable only disjunctively, or in separate proportions.

Thus where the next of kin of the deceased filed their bill to recover their respective distributive shares of the surplus of certain portions of his personal estate, alleging, that he had died intestate as to those portions of it, and on the hearing it being shewn, that he had died intestate only of his *silver plate*, the plaintiffs had relief as to that, but as to the rest the bill was dismissed. The defence made and sustained going to a part only of the subject claimed, it appeared, that the plaintiffs had a valid cause of suit, and were therefore relieved.(*u*) So, in general, if a man brings an action for two things, for the recovery of both of which the action will lie, but on the trial fails to sustain his claim to one of them;

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(*t*) Rigeway's Case, 3 Co. 52; Brace v. Taylor, 2 Atk. 253; Piggott v. Williams, 6 Mad. 95.—(*u*) Sprigg v. Weems, 2 H. & McH. 266.