

2. After the accounting by Registrar and Accountant, and auditing by the Judge, and inspection by the Colonial Treasurer and his officials, what is the use of the auditor?
3. After the Registrar, Judge, Accountant, and Auditor have severally compiled, accounted, inspected, audited, of what use is the inspection by the Colonial Treasurer and his officials?

To these I must add the question, Is there a Supreme Court responsible to the suitors and claimants, and exercising its jurisdiction for the good of the people? At all events, it is desirable that before the Colonial Treasurer accepts this office of "Inspector of Supreme Court accounts," at (already) eight different registries, he should know what he undertakes to do. For the funds alluded to in your letter, and above noticed, do not comprise nearly all, the disposition whereof would be brought under his review. These are for example—

1. *Fees and Fines*.—In order to inspect these accounts to any profitable purpose, he must review, and for that purpose examine all the different writs, affidavits, orders, rules, and other processes (a vast array), and will probably require a special Act to enable him to summon before him on some kind of novel Subpoena "*Ductis Tecum*" all the solicitors and solicitor's clerks in New Zealand to produce the processes taken out by them respectively (if not burnt or destroyed) to confront the array with the Registrars and Deputy-Registrars, and then decide, (if the evidence conflict), whether the lawyers or the officials are to be believed, and so whether the latter have accounted for all the fees and fines which they have received. If the inspection by the Colonial Treasurer fall short of this, his mission will end in merely checking the castings, which are supposed to have been already checked and passed by the Deputy-Registrar, Registrar, Judge, Accountant, and Auditor, besides being weekly reviewed by the Judge after all, and inspected oftener still. Then he must deal with

2. *The Estates of Lunatics*.—In my letter above mentioned of the 25th September, 1863, forwarded to the Colonial Secretary, two estates are adverted to as worth respectively about £1,000 and £12,000 (the latter estate in consequence of the course of events will probably soon rise greatly in value.) Of these estates, the smaller has been carefully nursed by Mr. Outhwaite.

A mortgage, principal and interest, is nearly paid off, and the matter awaits taxation of costs in order that the estate may be dealt with for the benefit of the lunatic and his infant daughter, by lease or otherwise. In the larger estate, Mr. Outhwaite, acting as committee of the estate, secured the same, and has now taxed the various costs; a new committee of the estate has been appointed (the proper bonds having been entered into) various calls have been met and anticipated, including the maintenance and care of the lunatic, with an annual allowance for the support of his wife and family, and lastly, an order has been made for investing the balance on real security, such security and the deeds to be approved by the Registrar on reference to him for that purpose by the Court. One of the daughters of the lunatic has also been married under my consent, after a close enquiry into the desirability of the marriage, and after obtaining the best guarantees practicable for her welfare.

3. *Infants*.—The remarks which I may presently make in connection with the accounts, &c., arising out of the management under the Supreme Court of the estates of lunatics, will apply to those of infants under the like control.

But besides these and other matters of account which may come within the working of the Registrar's office (such as wards, guardians, trusts within the Trustees Act, &c. &c.) The Supreme Court especially while the Provincial Governments continue, is liable to extraordinary visitations through some folly or wickedness of the General Assembly—*e.g.*, the large fund thrown down upon the floor of the Courts under the "Auckland Harbor Debentures Act, 1860," and the "Auckland Harbor Debentures Amendment Act, 1863." Probably if I had acted with proper firmness, I should have absolutely refused to make any order under the latter Act. But perceiving what the Legislature and the Provincial authorities had in view, I have endeavoured to carry out their wishes as I interpreted them. Accordingly, the Supreme Court entered the market as a money-lender and broker. £30,000 has been passed, under orders of the Court, through bankers' hands from the Provincial Treasury to a select number of mortgages on securities which were chosen with extreme care, and the Registrar has already received more than £1,000, and handed (say) £1,000 over to the Province by way of the first half-year's interest to pay the interest on the Debentures. Questions of account and of monied-discretions still arise. Thus the Province pays (I rather think) £7 per cent. interest on £25,000, and £2 per cent. per annum sinking fund, making £9 per cent. on £25,000. The Supreme Court is getting eight per cent. (and a little more possibly,) but say £8 per cent. on £30,000, and I have hitherto consented to pay over the interest at £8 per cent. on £25,000—thus providing for one half only of the sinking fund, in addition to the full half-year's interest on the Debentures until the Court should have a fair accumulated balance of ready cash to meet any contingency, and make the Debenture holders sure of their interest on the days when it shall fall due.

These form materials for some of the accounts which the Colonial Treasurer would undertake to inspect and I suppose to regulate. All these I presume I am to understand are to be weekly gone through by the Judge. It will be readily understood why both the Judge and Registrar would be relieved of much trouble by a competent person attached to the Court who might assist in making up and keeping the different accounts.

It must be also evident to any one who will endeavor to work out in detail the conduct of business such as I have outlined above, why I said at the outset that some sort of Accountant General's Department would at last and might soon become essential.