

1422. Now, with your help, the Commissioners hope to agree upon a more simple mode of book-keeping for the future. How many of those Index to Estates books are there?—I think about twelve.

1423. And there is one Record-book?—Yes.

1424. That is, thirteen altogether?—Yes. The special advantage to be claimed for the Index to Estates is this: You get all the letters written to the office on business collected together in one page of the book. That you would still have in a record-book properly ruled, with lots of room for particulars.

1425. So that then you would simplify that part of the working of your office considerably?—One record might hardly carry the business. If you have perhaps a thousand estates in active operation, you might want a thousand pages in the book. Of course, a good many of the estates would not want a whole page to themselves, nor anything like a page. It is rather difficult at times to gauge the probabilities of an estate. It may look very small at first, and turn out a big affair. That is very frequently the case.

1426. But you must bear this in mind: that this would be a memoranda-book and a Register, and that you have still always the ledgers to get fuller particulars from?—Just so.

1427. You spoke of some extra ruling in your ledgers for certain entries, I think, in a suggestion that you made in connection with your report to the Commissioners. What was that?—It was to bring the investment accounts of estates into their accounts in the individual ledgers, and also to bring in the value of the unrealised estates, so that the ledger accounts would show the total value of the estates.

1428. But if you had plenty of room in that portion of your ledgers under the heading of "Particulars" you could write and carry any memoranda you found necessary there?—Yes, you could.

1429. So that extra ruling beyond the three ordinary money-columns would not be necessary. And do you not think, where you have got particulars to keep of investments without money-totals, they would be better in a register, giving the date of the mortgage, the term, rate of interest, particulars of property, when due, when payment of the interest? And that kept in alphabetical order?—Yes; it seems convenient to have an Investment Account, I think, with the current account.

1430. Do you mean, to keep two separate accounts under one page of the ledger?—Yes.

1431. Would not that be rather complicated. In order to transfer moneys from one account to another you would still have to make vouchers? If that system were necessary the accounts would certainly be better to be separate.—The advantage of having them together is, that you can see on one opening the whole value of the estate, whether invested or on current account.

1432. Then, if you found it necessary to take money from an estate to invest, would the ledger not show that?—It would also show the credit in the Investment Account. It would place the money from the current account in the Investment Account.

1433. Where you invest money, do you first take the money you wish to invest and put it to the credit of an Investment Account?—Yes.

1434. Why take it from the proper account until the investment is ripe to receive it?—The money is not taken until the investment is actually made.

1435. Then, it is paid to the borrower?—Yes.

1436. Why is the account necessary?—Unless you have an account the money is taken from an estate with a credit to show how the money is invested.

1437. You would charge an estate supplying the money, and you would credit the Investment Account, which really belongs to your office?—I would charge the estate with the money, and credit the estate investment account with that same money. Then, we should have the office Investment Account as well.

1438. Why the necessity of keeping so many accounts for such direct transactions? If you have an office Investment Account, for which you make a corresponding entry to the entry charging an estate, is not the office Investment Account sufficient, with the individual account in the ledger, to give you any particulars you require?—It is. My idea in my suggestion was this: that, on issuing the money out of the estate account for the investment, the estate account would be debited with the amount issued, and the cash-book would be credited. Then, the estate investment account would be credited, and the office Investment Account debited.

1439. And then would you have another entry?—No; that would be all.

1440. You would have an entry in the General Investment Account?—That is not a case in point—that is, where the office invests out of the general funds.

1441. Then, why not keep a Private Investment Account, which would refer to moneys you lent on behalf of private estates?—We have that. The Special Investment Account is the aggregate of investments on individual estates.

1442. That is, an estate which would be credited with any money that you for a purpose had charged to an individual estate?—The money having been issued from the Cash Account, the Cash Account is credited, and you want a debit entry for it. That we do by debiting the Special Investment Account. On issuing the money from the estate the Special Investment Account is debited.

1443. Then, you think that it would be better to adhere to the usual rule in connection with the money-columns of your ledger?—Yes, I think so.

1444. Then, I notice that you have no column for showing whether the balance is in credit or in debit?—No, we use the same column; and if it is a debit balance we put the figures in red ink.

1445. Then, do I understand; wherever red-ink figures appear in the balance column of your ledgers it indicates a debit balance?—Yes.