

PREFACE

BOOKKEEPING as a *science* is unchangeable—the principles are fixed; but bookkeeping as an *art* is constantly undergoing changes to suit the varying opinions of accountants, as they adapt it to the ever changing needs of modern business, or discover new and shorter methods of recording business transactions. In these days of world-wide competition the complexities of trade and commerce and of business in general call upon the accountant for finer distinctions in the details of records, more varied combinations of these details and closer computations, than ever before; his work must be so systematized that the necessary information from his department shall not only be accurate and complete, but immediately available. The teacher should endeavour to impress the principles thoroughly on the mind of the learner; the learner will then himself become the inventor of new forms to suit special circumstances.

The treatment of this subject is presented in two books, called respectively the "First Course" and the "Second Course." The former deals with the general principles, with the more elementary applications thereof and with the simpler forms of record; the latter deals with the more advanced applications of these principles and with the more specialized forms of record.

In the "First Course" alternative methods of beginning the work are suggested. In the initial exercises the subject may be introduced either by using the individual accounts or by making complete journal entries for each transaction from the start. For some sets the attention is confined to the Journal, as the only posting medium, the Cash Book and the Bill Book being used, first, as auxiliary books, and later, as principal books; as business offices differ very much in the forms and ruling of such books, only some of the most general forms have been illustrated, but sufficient to enable the young bookkeeper to adapt himself to the various forms he may meet with in actual business. The learner is asked, in the "Instructions" at the beginning of each set in the "First Course," to make out a number of business forms; it is not intended that these instructions shall be followed slavishly or that all of the exercises and sets shall be worked out, but rather that the work will be adapted to special circumstances, and that the number of exercises, sets and business forms will be curtailed or increased, according to the needs of individual cases.

The proprietor, whether he be a single proprietor or a partner, is distinguished from his business, and is considered much the same as an outside person, being debited when he receives from his business on account, and credited when he gives to it. The business is thought of, as buying and selling, receiving and giving. The proprietor is a debtor to, or creditor of, his business as much as any other person; when the business becomes insolvent he is a debtor and owes to the business, from his private means, the amount of the Net Insolvency; when the business is solvent he is a creditor, and the business owes him the amount of his Net Capital.

The "First Course" closes with the use of some special books and special ruling and with an introduction to Single Entry Bookkeeping. The "Second Course" commences with a review and completion of Single Entry, and continues with the more advanced stages and special forms of Double Entry, including Manufacturing, Cost Accounting and Joint Stock Company work.