cash-books, the English accounts, the Savings Bank accounts, and all other transactions of the Treasury; and the General Ledger is posted from the Journal.

The ledger balances are taken out monthly on a printed sheet containing the ledger headings. This is sent to the Audit, and is there checked against a similar sheet prepared in the Audit.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The position and duties of the Auditor-General are somewhat different in South Australia from those in other colonies. He is appointed under a very short Act passed in 1862, which, assuming that the office already existed, provided that he should receive a commission under the hand of the Governor and the public seal of the province. His office is not held under good behaviour.

His powers are defined to be—to require Government officers to adhere to the regulations made by the Governor in Council under the Act, and to furnish him with explanations of their accounts, and, in failure of compliance, he has to report to the Responsible Minister of the department. In case of a vote being exceeded, or any departure from the regulations involved, he must obtain the signature of the Chief Secretary in addition to that of the Minister of the department, and must obtain, in the latter case, the sanction of the Governor in Council. The Auditor is, however, not only Auditor but the Public Accountant of the colony, and prepares and publishes the periodical statements of the receipts and expenditure of the Government.

The system of account seems to be derived from old instructions to the Governors of Crown Colonies, based on the recommendations of a Committee of the House of Commons, somewhat prior to 1850, directing the mode in which the accounts of colonies should be kept, and sent to England for audit by the Audit Board. They do not appear applicable to the circumstances of a colony under the present system of Government.

Little need be said of the mode in which the accounts of South Australia are kept at the present time, because the system is about to undergo considerable change in compliance with the recommendations of a Commission on the Public Accounts, which has recently published an *ad interim* report containing a very large amount of valuable information bearing on the whole question of public accounts; and it seems probable that the position of the Auditor will be altered, and that the Treasury will here, as in all other colonies, be made responsible for keeping the public accounts, the duty of the Audit Office being confined to certifying to their correctness. It is sufficient to say that at present whilst the Treasury keeps a cash-book, journal, and ledger by double entry, the two latter are not posted from the cash-book, but from monthly abstracts of the receipt and expenditure made up in the Audit Office and sent down to the Treasury for entry. These abstracts are, however, checked with the Treasury cash-book. The result is that the Treasury accounts, for whatever use they may be, are months in arrear, the entries for April, May, and June not being posted in November. Meanwhile the accounts of the colony for the year ending the 30th June have long since been published by the Audit Office.

A further peculiarity of the system is that the Audit accounts treat vouchers which have passed Audit and been sent on for payment, as paid. In the Treasury too these accounts are treated as paid in the general accounts, but are carried into a suspense account; and a very long list of those whose claims are their outstanding is published annually in the *Gazette* as a notice to claimants to apply for their money.

The principal books kept in the Audit are the Warrant and Abstract Ledger, which is entered direct from the vouchers, and serves to show the expenditure under the several heads of the estimates, and to provide that the warrants shall not be exceeded under any head; and the Abstract of Expenditure out of Revenue to provide that the votes shall not be exceeded. Cabinet warrants, however, for excesses on votes being entered as votes, the provisions against excess appear superfluous. The accounts are not kept by double entry.

A monthly account of receipts is rendered by every Collector to the Audit,