

paid on the realisation of assets; and then you can see whether they agree with your entries in your ledger. Would not that be a more proper way of keeping the book than that?—There must be a large amount of unnecessary writing in a book like this.

3482. Would it not be much more satisfactory, both for yourself and the Public Trustee, to be able to add up the columns on realisation, and see that the amounts stated as assets when the estate first came in unrealised agree with the amounts shown as having been realised by actual cash-payments into the ledger?—When an agent reports he sends in a general report which sets out the assets of the estate. We copy his general report into our Assets and Claims, and we state here the value of the assets as reported by the agent.

3483. You make no attempt to balance this book in any shape or form upon realisation of the estate, nor do you see that it agrees with your ledger?—The entries in the Assets and Claims book are the amounts carried into the ledger.

3484. There may be amounts in the ledger which are not there?—Yes, there are interest and receipts, showing that the estate has run on for many years.

3485. If I wanted to know what the income of an estate was from your Assets and Claims book, I could not tell?—The Assets and Claims book was not intended to do that, but the Mortgage Register would show you the investments on account of each estate, and the interest upon investments.

Mr. ALEXANDER WATT examined.

3486. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Watt, you are employed by Messrs. Kirkcaldie and Stains?—Yes.

3487. Who are very large silk-mercers and drapers, and deal with soft goods and all things pertaining to that trade?—Yes.

3488. I presume you understand that trade thoroughly?—I have been twenty years at it. I have been at Marshall and Snelgrove's, in London.

3489. Do you know hand-made lace?—I do.

3490. Is hand-made lace very valuable?—Not at the present day. It is valuable, but not so valuable as it was twelve years ago.

3491. Does the value vary according to the width of the lace and the weight of it, and the fashions?—Yes.

3492. Would you call that [small parcel of lace in Mrs. Dallon's estate] good lace?—It is real Irish crochet.

3493. Is that valuable lace?—We have it in stock at 6s. a yard. Twelve years ago we could have got 12s. a yard for that lace; to-day it has a slow sale at 6s.

3494. You would be prepared to sell me the same lace as this at 6s. a yard?—Yes; and I would say a cheap lace at that price.

3495. And quite as good as this?—Yes.

3496. Is your lace hand-made?—Yes. Real Irish crochet is all hand-made. We have lace at £1 a yard, which we reduced at stock-taking to 10s. There are fully three yards in the piece produced. There are laces now sold in London at from one to three hundred guineas a yard.

SATURDAY, 25TH APRIL, 1891.

The Rev. CHARLES DANIEL DE CASTRO further examined.

3497. *The Chairman.*] Well, Mr. De Castro, on the subject of this packet of lace which you sent up to the Commissioners yesterday, where did you say you found it?—Tied up in a separate package in my drawer.

3498. In your writing-table?—Yes.

3499. Not in the strong-room?—No.

3500. Was there any other article with this, belonging to other estates?—I think not. I put away a lot before I went away.

3501. Mr. Stanley Hamerton, when he brought the parcel up yesterday, told the Commissioners there were other articles in your private drawer—that you had told him so?—No; I said there were from time to time, not now.

3502. Will you tell me this—how long this packet of lace has been in your drawer?—I cannot say. It has been in my possession since the time the jewellery was sold—March last year.

3503. In fact, before the jewellery was sent to the auction-sale?—Yes.

3504. Long before?—Yes.

3505. Then the lace has been in your possession since the jewellery-casket came into your possession?—Yes.

3506. How long has it been in the drawer of your writing-table?—It would be separated from the other things when the jewellery was sold.

3507. Did you put it in your drawer when you separated it from the casket, and sent the jewellery to the auction-room?—Yes, because I had no instructions to sell the lace. I did not know there was any value attaching to it.

3508. Now, Mr. De Castro, has that lace been out of the Public Trust Office since it came in?—[A pause.] No; it has been in the drawer.

3509. I wish you to answer me: have you never taken this lace out of the Public Trust Office since you first received it in the office? [A pause.] Why do you hesitate?—I did take it out once.

3510. Where did you take it to?—I took it to my own house, and asked what the value of it was.

3511. How long was it at your own house? Long? How long is it since you took it up to your own house?—Some time ago; I cannot tell now.