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LEGAL ACCOUNTING. By William 1H.  
Shannon. St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing  
Company. 1951.

C. Vernon Kane

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stimulating more thinking and research on the problems which it indicates" so that "it will have fulfilled its main purpose."

EDWARD H. WALL

BARRISTER AT LAW  
LINCOLN'S INN,  
ENGLAND

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LEGAL ACCOUNTING. By William H. Shannon. St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Company. 1951. Pp. 366. \$5.00.

As the title suggests, this book is designed to meet the ever-widening needs of attorneys for a manual on accounting principles and procedures. Although the author holds an LL.B. and is a C.P.A., one might suspect that he has pursued a predominantly academic role—judging from the style of his writing.

The preparation of this book has met with the usual difficulty of books on accounting for laymen: that of confining within a single volume the material which represents much of the curriculum of an accountant. Judgment of the merits of *Legal Accounting* must be reserved since there are few other works with which comparisons can be made.

In his first chapter, the author presents an admirable definition of the role of accounting in business and law. A somewhat lengthy version is offered regarding the relationship of professional accountants and lawyers. The next three chapters on accounting principles and the expression of business transactions in terms of accounting also are helpfully defined.

When, in Chapter 5, however, the author begins to explain and illustrate specific transactions, there is reason to believe that he will probably leave his readers behind him in the detailed explanations and over-complicated graphic illustrations. The over-usage of arrows and footnotes may serve only to reassure the reader that accounting is a difficult subject. Since this phase of the book absorbs over half of its pages, serious doubts may be raised about the author's service to a layman.

The book closes strongly, however, in the last two chapters which get to the product of accounting, namely, financial statements.

In the preface, Professor Shannon stated, "Terminology is introduced and styled to avoid misleading connotations." This appears to have been a most unfortunate liberty since it is difficult to see what purpose can be served by expressing the same thoughts in special terms which, if adopted by lawyers, will serve only to widen the gap of misunderstanding with accountants as to the meaning of accounting language. It is the equivalent of trying to abandon the use of Latin in the law.

Another criticism of the book is offered by the superfluity of footnotes—there are over 575 of them in 327 pages. The footnotes bespeak the tre-

mendous research that underlies the book and, were it not for the heavy reading created thereby, would be very desirable. A more functional feature is the 11-page table of law cases dealing in accounting matters. This is an invaluable source reference for attorneys and accountants alike.

By starting with an assumption that accounting is best taught to laymen by synthesis of the basic entries into statements, the author shouldered a heavy load which he did little to lighten by his book. Whenever someone will decide to take the opposite viewpoint—namely, of starting with the statements and analyzing them as far down into the details as is necessary—a contribution to the layman is quite possible.

In the reviewer's opinion, *Legal Accounting* is worth having, not because it is a well-written book, but for its undeniably invaluable source material.

C. VERNON KANE

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ACCOUNTING,  
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

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CASES AND MATERIALS ON FEDERAL TAX PROCEDURE. By Richard A. Hausler. Second Edition. MIAMI: Miami Law Center Foundation, 1952. Pp. 577. \$6.50.

The true test of achievement in legal literature is the fulfillment of a public need. Professor Hausler's *Federal Tax Procedure* fills a public need in the field of taxation. In this second edition, he continues to present the only complete casebook coverage of tax procedure.

The book, accordingly, represents a long awaited addition to legal literature. Professor Hausler should be commended upon his entrée into a previously unexplored casebook area of law, viz., tax procedure. This procedural aspect of the law is as important in taxation as it is in other fields. For it is axiomatic that good practice necessitates *both* good procedure and good substantive law.

In the first chapter of *Federal Tax Procedure*, there is a full discussion and explanation of sources of tax information. There is a thorough presentation of such matters as bibliography, various types of suits, and the selection of the appropriate court. In the succeeding chapters, the progress of a case is traced as it finds its way through the tax judicial system. Chapters are thusly devoted to pre-trial procedure, deficiencies and overassessments, and a particular consideration of the tax court. Likewise, chapters are devoted to the specialized features of tax litigation, such as petitions, answers, rules of evidence, motions and the actual procedure followed at the hearing itself. A special chapter is also devoted to appeals. Finally, there are chapters devoted to such important tax procedural matters as refunds, res judi-