

the printer's composing tool in which he sets the lines of the text in type.

Third, the type must be inked by hand. On such handpresses as the Albion and the Columbian, hand-inking is the only method possible by nature of the machine; but with such presses as the Vandercook cylinder press, the automatic inking mechanism must be removed to allow the genuine sense of handcraft printing to be fully present.

Fourth, handpress printing of books immediately throws one into the international arena of fine printing. I don't think there's any way to avoid this. If a work is known to be hand-printed, it will automatically be evaluated within the current milieu of hand printing craftsmanship, and that within the general history of fine printing by hand. I must say this is no comfortable situation, when the main models I have been able to examine in New Zealand have been the Doves, Kelmscott and Golden Cockerel presses, all of which are well represented in the Alexander Turnbull Library's fine printing collection. What it means I think is one chooses either to simply muck about in the shed with an old printing press, or to acquire at considerable labour, cost, and some risk to one's emotional stability, standards of excellence comparable with the finest anywhere in the world.

Fifth, handpress printing of books necessitates limited editions. The process obviously is labour intensive and materials costs reflect the equally labour intensive procedures of handmade papermaking and hand-binding. For instance, a book of 100 pages in 200 copies could very well cost \$15,000 to \$20,000 to produce, and take a year from the first production stages to the completed book. The retail price of such a book could very well be \$600.

Sixth, a handpress is a very specific instrument and conversations I have had over recent years with a wide variety of people, including tradesmen, have shown that many are confused about just what exactly a handpress is, and what sort of procedures define a printing press as a handpress. I quote Lewis Allen: '. . . we must define *handpress*: it is one where the type is inked by a hand-held roller, the paper is fed by hand, and the impression activated by hand There are two classes of handpress which answer the definition and have the strength to give adequate impressions: the platen variety such as the Columbian, Albion and Washington; and the cylinder press such as the Asbern and Vandercook—but only when the automatic inking unit is detached.'⁴ The confusion I refer to, even among printers, is that many people believe the primary characteristic of the handpress is that the paper is fed into it by hand. Now, certainly for handpress printing the paper must be hand-fed, but there are many presses which are hand-fed but which are not