

practice by the Fanfrolico books themselves: the relative weighting of these two parameters. For the Fanfrolico Press the *what* was consistently of much greater importance than the *how*. This is not to say that the books were badly or inadequately or even inappropriately printed, but simply that the over-riding principle was whether or not the text conformed to the Fanfrolico 'ethic'. That Lindsay should convey his message by means of the Book Beautiful was relatively incidental.

Some attempt must be made to define this 'ethic'. The point above is confirmed by Stephensen's remark in *Fanfrolicana* that 'the Fanfrolico books individually and more so cumulatively, are achieving a literary and human affirmation which goes beyond mere typographical effectiveness'. He elaborates on this 'literary and human affirmation': 'In the poisonous atmosphere of "modern" literary weariness, ultra-sophistication and aesthetic shallowness, an attempt . . . is being made . . . to re-define beauty in terms of delight and to piece together the fragments of aesthetic consciousness shattered by the War . . . The signature of all these works is a love for life—the selective principle used by the Fanfrolico Press.' Norman Lindsay and 'Norman Lindsayism' are an essential element in all this. Initially in 1920 (later revised and republished) Jack's father had published his own philosophy under the title *Creative Effort* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1924)—a document which he himself admitted to be rather 'muddled', to say the least. However it struck some sympathetic chord of the Twenties generally, and was not without influence: it certainly ruled Jack Lindsay's life for the next ten years. Oblique references abound in *Fanfrolico and After*, and Stephensen states explicitly that 'our weapon against disintegration was the Nietzschean-Dionysian aesthetic which had been re-formulated in Australia in Norman Lindsay's *Creative Effort*, that great personality's "essay in affirmation"'.¹⁰

Another aspect of this was the notion of the Press as 'an Australian explosion in the English scene' which, Lindsay continues, 'politely ignored the noise, held its nose, and went on with its own business'.⁹ Adams writes rather condescendingly of the Press's attempt 'to storm the battlements of the established English literary position with a new approach and a new critique . . . a crude enthusiasm for literature as the essence of life against a sophisticated view of life as part of letters . . . there was something of the swaggering Australian provincialism in this'.³ There was certainly an ambivalence on Norman Lindsay's part; in a letter of 1924 quoted in *Fanfrolicana* he wrote: 'There are strong evidences that literature in England is moving toward a gayer and franker outlook . . . as for this place, Australia, it is a moribund hole,