

returns of the actual cost of Printing for the General Government throughout the Colony from the year 1857, and obtained the following accounts:—

The actual cost in 1858 was .....	£1907.
"    "    1859    "    .....	3884.
"    "    1860    "    .....	1666.
"    "    1861    "    .....	3500.

The cost for 1862 was estimated at £4000, out of a Revenue of £187,000, that being the nett income of the General Government, or  $\frac{1}{4}$ ths of the gross amount of £300,000, the estimated ordinary Revenue arising from Customs for this year.

The question of printing referring exclusively to the General Government, this sum of £187,000 was considered the more correct basis upon which to frame our calculations.

We compared this expenditure with that of such Australian Colonies as could be considered most nearly on a par in Revenue with New Zealand, where Government Printing Presses were established—selecting for the purpose the Colonies of Tasmania and South Australia.

On examination of their Blue Books, we found our choice to be fortunate, as they both appeared to be of about the same bulk in matter as that of New Zealand.

The Tasmanian volume is got up in a strikingly handsome manner, and handsomely half-bound, calf and cloth.

The South Australian volume is more noticeable for the clearness and precision of their statistical and tabular papers, of which there are a very large quantity.

In both these Colonies, they combine Bookbinding with their Printing Establishment.

It would have been of material assistance to us, if, from the finance accounts in these volumes, we could have ascertained the original cost of their respective Presses: in this we were not successful.

We therefore addressed the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, requesting him to write to those Colonies for the information; the answers will be valuable and suggestive for the guidance of the Government.

However, if not the cost of the original outlay, we found from the estimated finance accounts the annual cost of maintaining those establishments to be—

In Tasmania, with a Revenue from Customs in 1860 of £134,000, a gross cost of £4215, inclusive of an item of £620 for stationery. Rejecting this, the nett cost of their establishment for that year was £3595.

In South Australia, with a Revenue from Customs in 1860 of £114,000, the actual cost of their establishment was £4200 for that year.

A reference to their Blue Books of other periods do not show a material difference; these sums may therefore be fairly taken as the average annual cost of the establishments in those two Colonies.

Having thus failed in completing the required information from the Blue Books, and unable to await answers from those Colonies, we determined, with the evidence of some of the professional Printers in Auckland, by comparing it with that which was adduced before the Printing Committee of the House of Representatives in 1858, and is printed in their Report (App. 1858, F—No. 3), a copy whereof is annexed, to frame an approximate estimate of the plant required for the present use of the Government, of the cost of such plant, the necessary outlay for establishing a Government Printing Establishment; and of the annual cost of its maintenance; and to base that estimate upon the quantity of work required to be done during a Session of the Assembly.

We accordingly found that four different sorts of type are required—pica in the largest quantity; for, though only used for the Statute Book, it appears to be of material advantage and economy to be able to keep a number of Bills standing during the Session, to avoid the expense of re-composition. We therefore estimated that 5000 lbs. at 1s. 6d. would be required, which would admit of 160 folios of standing stuff, besides 160 extra folios of current work.

Small pica, for the Journals of both Houses, 1000 lbs., at 1s. 9d. per lb.

Long Primer, for Appendices and Gazette, 2500 lbs., at 2s. per lb.

Brevier, for side notes, foot notes, &c., 500 lbs., at 2s. 6d. per lb.

These prices for the type are high, but we retained them expecting that, admitting of a margin of 3d. to 4d. on the lb., type known in the trade as "extra hard" could be procured, which would not want renewing more than once in seven years.

The cost of two presses, with their requisite adjuncts, &c., inclusive of the cost of type as above, and an allowance of 10 per cent. for costs and charges of shipping, &c., we found would be £1776; or, allowing for an extra quantity of quadrats, numerals, &c., for statistics and finance accounts, we consider £2000 as a liberal estimate of the original outlay.

The space required would consist of two rooms, a compositors' room and a press room; neither of these need exceed 22 ft. by 12 ft. (Of course this would not comprise storage room.)

We are also advised that a press, with all the necessary plant, when packed would not be bulky, not displacing more than three tons of measurement burthen.

The cost of maintaining such an establishment we estimated at from £2000 to £2200 per annum, —inclusive of rent, and an allowance of 8 per cent. on original outlay—consisting of a working staff for the Session, as follows:—

Government Printer .....	£350
Clerk, Reader, and Storekeeper .....	200
Wages to Compositors, &c. ....	1200
Rent and Interest .....	260
Contingencies, and wear and tear	

(5 compositors, 3 boys, 1 pressman, 1 pressman and compositor.)

These estimates were carefully considered; and, after being compared with those of other