

his worst, is his oft-quoted 'earnest appeal'³⁷ for treacle. No sooner had Elliott set up business than his ink rollers needed recasting:

We beg to inform our readers that there is great probability of the press at which this paper is worked being rendered utterly useless by the want of rollers. These rollers are the instruments used for the purpose of inking the forms, and an essential ingredient in the construction of them is treacle, and treacle we have been unable to obtain for money. If any of our readers have any of this important article, and will spare us some of it for love and money united, we shall be infinitely obliged to them. We are not *very* particular as to the price, but treacle we must have, or not only the *Examiner*, but bills, cheques, and the laws of the Benefit Society must remain forever unbedeviled.³⁸

When rollers replaced ink balls as instruments for 'beating the forme' in the 1820s, the essential ingredients for their composition were fine glue and molasses or treacle whose proportion might vary; a typical recipe was 2 lb of glue, 6 lb of molasses and 1/2 lb of Paris white.³⁹ No good printing could be done without ink rollers. As the *Nelson Examiner* was printed as planned on the Saturday (25 June 1842) following this public appeal, it may be assumed (as Mackay speculates) that Elliott procured some molasses. This nevertheless suggests that Elliott was unable to improvise ink balls, as the Reverend William Colenso, the missionary printer, did a few years before him in 1835. The ingenious Colenso could still print with his relatively poor equipment without rollers.⁴⁰

Nineteenth-century printing house working conditions were difficult and unattractive. Pioneering colonial printers encountered several hardships, among which were scarcity of labour and materials.

Despite the general effectiveness of the apprenticeship system as a means of renewing the ranks of labor, there are many indications that journeymen printers were exceedingly scarce throughout the colonial period. They, and their masters too, for that matter, were constantly on the move. A feature of the lives of the eminent printers of that day was their frequent removal in early manhood from one colony to another.⁴¹

Wroth's observation on the labour problems of the colonial printer in eighteenth-century America is applicable to mobility in the printing job market in New Zealand. Samuel Revans, printer of New Zealand's first newspaper, had worked as a newspaper man (shortly after his apprenticeship in London) in Canada where he participated in the Canadian independence movement of Papineau. On leaving Canada, he seems to have had a brief spell of work in the United States of America en route to London, from where he came to New Zealand. Other Wellington printers such as James Muir had a variety of experiences before joining Revans. After his apprenticeship in Edinburgh with Ballantyne, Sir Walter Scott's printers,