

# Practical Wood Carving

## INTRODUCTORY

Harry Hems, the celebrated English carver, says: "No doubt, as a matter of position it is better to be a good wood carver than a good joiner, but a poor carver is a long way down the scale below the handy carpenter. It is not every one that has the natural 'gift' to become a really clever carver of wood. Parents should ever be careful to give their sons several months' probation ere the fate of the youngster is decided upon. If a boy has no real talent for wood carving he never ought to be apprenticed to the profession, for hard work and the most diligent application will rarely make up for lack of natural ability. Of all the many hundred businesses that go strictly hand in hand with the building trade, that of a figure carver in wood for architectural purposes has its fewest representatives. It is probable that in all England at the present moment there are not forty men who can carve even decent figures in wood. The position, therefore, of these skilled craftsmen is an envied one; there is a constant demand for their services; they command good money, and their occupation, always varied and never representing really hard manual labor, is one of the most delightful pursuits a man can possibly follow.

"Ordinary wood carvers do not pretend to be masters of the figure, and when at rare intervals they attempt it the results are seldom successful. A great gulf