

PREFACE

THE study of prints begins in the nursery in the contemplation of toy-books with pictures, unaccompanied by any uneasy qualms as to "states."

It is a matter open to question whether the younger units of the present generation, who have grown up in the environment of the pictorial magazine and journal and the thousand-and-one forms of illustration by modern process, quite realise the departure from the older methods of engraving. Finely wrought steel engraving is a lost art, and the wood engraver of middle-Victorian days with his sandbag, his boxwood block, and his graver has gone to that most permanent of all furrows, the grave itself, which Time has cut enduringly.

In order therefore to approach the study of prints, the beginner has to look back to accustom his eye to engraver's work of a time immediately preceding our own. To-day photo-mechanical processes have taken the place of the graver and the skilful hand and trained eye of the craftsman behind it. In the course of the volume it will be shown what sins of