

In producing mezzotints the plate is first roughened by a heavy tool having a large number of teeth, each of which produces an indentation. A print at this stage would yield a rich, soft black. The plate is then worked upon and the design elaborated, the result being a rich, soft impression, with vagueness and want of precision of detail. Etching, with its firmness and precision supplies, when combined with mezzotint, the want of energy and definiteness in the latter. They are, therefore, often seen in combination, as in the *Liber Studiorum*.

Engraving is much less free than etching, owing to the necessity of overcoming the mechanical difficulty of the process. The instrument used, the burin, is not easy to handle, requires a certain amount of force, and is always slow. The lines are cut into the plate, and are produced in varying depth or broadness by pressure, and without the use of acid. As it is a costly process in point of time, this, rather than any artistic deficiency, has led to its decline.

Wood engraving is the method of producing a design upon a wooden block by cutting into it, leaving parts higher than the rest, which parts, when inked, give an impression on the paper, leaving the lower parts white.

It will be noticed that this is the reverse of the result obtained by etching and engraving, where the lines and indentations in the plate take the ink and are reproduced, the higher portions of the plate remaining white. This, however, is a very meagre description of wood engraving, but perhaps sufficient to illustrate its points of difference from the other processes noticed.

The following description of the various kinds of impressions or proofs of etchings applies equally to those obtained by the other processes :

"Trial," or "Artist's Proofs," as at one time they were properly called, are the impressions (generally very limited in number) taken, from time to time, from a plate while it is in progress, for the information and correction of the artist,