

No. 189, by Prof. Herkomer, R.A., is striking in composition, and in the arrangement of strong contrast of yellow and red. Mr. John Collier sends a portrait of Mrs. Reginald Smith, and Miss Blanche Jenkins a portrait of Mr. Alfred F. de Pass that is carefully painted and pleasant in colour. There is not much of interest or great merit in the Balcony. No. 255, *In the Clouds*, by Walter Crane, is thin in colour and weak in treatment. *Love among the Ruins*, by John Cooke, 269, is a small study unusually lovely in its original colouring. Miss Hilda Montalba, 318, *The Alps, from the Venetian Lagoons*, and Miss Clara Montalba, No. 401, *The Redentore*.

The New Gallery, although full of good work, especially among the landscape painters, cannot be considered a striking exhibition. Dr. Watts and Sir Edward Burne-Jones are not seen at their best, and there is no picture of overwhelming interest. Nevertheless, it is a most pleasant exhibition.

### A Book of the Week.

"A Beginner." By Rhoda Broughton. 6s. Bentley & Son.

What a joyous thing it is, for a jaded reviewer in these days, to come upon a genuinely merry book that provokes health-giving laughter, and arouses that wholesome sense of fun which lies dormant in most people who have not spoilt and ruined their appetite for mirth by reading too many up-to-date stories about the equality of the sexes and hereditary failings, etc., etc.

Emma Jocelyn writes a novel, so do hundreds of girls; but Emma's novel is published at her own expense (of course), and gets reviews and criticism in all the papers. Emma's novel deals with "The Interaction of the Passions," and she thinks that she entirely comprehends the nature of the tremendous theme with which she endeavours to grapple. Miss Broughton allows us, however, to suspect that her heroine does not really understand the "Passion" about which she writes with such unsophisticated *naïveté*. Emma's aunt is delightfully human and natural, and she entreats her niece "to give me time to get used to the idea that I have been warming a volcano in my bosom"! I doubt if anyone can describe a dinner party with so much vivacity as Miss Broughton, and with what a keen bright sense of humour she can depict dull people and their conversation; and then, how vividly she can paint with her pen an out-of-doors picture as a background for her characters. Emma's interest in reviews and reviewers is naturally intense, and some most quaint misunderstandings arise about the authorship of a scathing criticism that appeared in *The Porch*, the most famous of the weekly papers. The fate of the Reviewer and the mortification of Emma is the most delectable reading we have had for many a long day. It is so funny; but to tell why it is so funny would spoil the entire interest of the story, which is well conceived, well presented, and well written from start to finish!

There is a most comic description of a visit that Emma pays to a young author genius in his shabby home in South Kensington where she goes to see his mother "To tell her what I think of him, to thank

her for having made him what he is!" The distinction of social position between Emma's literary friends and her own relations is most delicately delineated, and the stinging worry that she endures over the out-spoken criticism on her *improper* novel are none the less ludicrous, because Miss Broughton has had the art of making us really very sorry for the girl-writer all the time; but the lash of the reviewers are as nothing to the biting sarcasm of her aunt's indignation, and the yet more aggravating admiration of her very silly cousin Lesbia. At the end of the story, the whole edition of the unfortunate novel was bought up and burnt except five copies that had passed into the relentless hold of the public libraries. (As a technical criticism, I cannot, however, help wondering what became of the review copies? I doubt its being possible to withdraw *all* the review copies of any novel from circulation.) If Emma Jocelyn was a Beginner, Miss Broughton is certainly not, her books are always entertaining, and though some of them are not entirely to be recommended for family reading, this one will do no schoolgirl anything but good, and at the same time it may be read with amusement by learned judges and wise politicians, for it is most mirth-provoking, and it is so good to laugh! so good to laugh! Let us hope Miss Broughton will make haste and soon, very soon, give us another novel as bright and as acceptable.

A. M. G.

### Inventions, Preparations, &c.

#### THE NURSE'S WATCH.

It gives us much pleasure to call the attention of our readers to the very serviceable watches manufactured by J. N. Masters, of Rye, Sussex. "The Nurse's Watch" has, on an ordinary lady's size, the unusual advantage of a second hand, which is clearly marked on the dial plate. The prices of these are extremely moderate, and a similar remark applies to the clocks and jewellery produced by the same maker, which are both tasteful and cheap. We have had in use, for some time, a clock produced by this maker, and can speak in the highest terms of the excellence of its manufacture and perfect regularity.

#### PURE COCOA.

The cocoa produced by the Compagnie Coloniale which has been submitted to us is in the form of bars which experience and custom have shown to be most convenient. The preparation appears to us to be carefully and well made, and certainly contains a large proportion of the fat which thoroughly pure cocoa should contain, but which comparatively few preparations do contain although this constituent supplies their chief value as a food. We have tried it carefully, and find that it is most palatable and nutritious, and that it is taken well by invalids who have been unable to digest other preparations. It can be obtained in pound packets, price 4s., from all grocers and confectioners.

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