

placed before him an object of desire. Rasselas determined to pass the barriers and mingle with mankind. But for two years he was so absorbed in *visions* of public life that he failed to consider by what means he could carry out his resolution. Then followed four months of reflection upon life's brevity and rapid flux, of regret that so much time had been spent in inactivity, and in resolving to lose no more time in making idle resolutions. After a short period occupied in regretting his useless regrets over the irreparable past, he turned all his energies to effecting an escape. Various methods were devised and tried with failure, until at length the task was accomplished; and Rasselas and his sister, with Imlac the poet as guide, went forth into what was to them an unknown world.

It was now the desire of the prince to visit men of different ranks and conditions, in order that he might be fitted to make a wise *choice of life*. Accordingly they wait upon the high and the low, the learned and the ignorant, men of the world and hermits. Rasselas, as he at the *outset* beheld men pursuing their respective objects of ambition, thought every condition happy, and was led to consider it of no very great importance what choice he should make; but the farther he went in his inquiries and investigations the more fully he realized that appearances are not to be relied upon. The enjoyments of the young and gay proved shallow and volatile. Something real or imaginary marred the happiness of domestic life. Ignorant peasants considered themselves condemned to labor for the luxury of the rich, and hence hated those of higher rank. The rich lived in constant fear that their wealth might be destroyed, or seized by the hands of the covetous. The hermit was dissatisfied with a condition which was prospectively delightful, as it offered a pleasing contrast to tossing upon the boisterous sea of public life. The lives of those who attended to the administration of public affairs were "a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treach-

cry;" whilst those by whom they were surrounded were constantly censuring them and searching for occasions of fault-finding.

The fruitless search is continued by the prince and his companions until allurements vanish, when they adopt the sentiment *Vanitas Vanitatum* and resolve to return to the "Happy Valley."

This little novel abounds with valuable moral maxims. It is very suggestive in its nature, so that single sentences often serve to start long trains of reflection. Its influence upon most readers cannot be other than salutary. It awakens a feeling of the insufficiency of all terrestrial objects and pursuits to satisfy the longings of an immortal nature. While it does not pretend to give directions as to where unalloyed happiness may be found, it causes the rightly-disposed reader to look with hope beyond the present existence. Some condemn works of this character because they give mournful views of life, and increase the inclination which many have to melancholy. Upon this ground Young's *Night Thoughts* has been made the subject of frequent animadversions. But these are not the designed and legitimate effects of such productions.

That the majority are too much engrossed with the things of the present, few will deny. "To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity. This remark and what it involves may be carefully weighed by all with lasting good.

BLUNDERS OF THE TYPE.

Any one who has ever had anything of his printed has experienced the misery of having his choicest passages turned into arrant nonsense by some typographical blunder. *Macmillan's Magazine* gives a few specimens of this sort of thing, all of which have actually happened, and most of which are very comical:

"Where *waddling* in a pool of blood
The bravest Tuscans lay."

where for "waddling" read "wallowing."

"This provoked Pope's *ayah*," where for "ayah" read "ire."

In a passage on William Rufus occur the lines—