

Nor know we anything so fair
 As is the smile upon thy face:
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds 45
 And fragrance in thy footing treads;
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
 And the most ancient heavens, through Thee,¹
 are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
 I call thee: I myself commend 50
 Unto thy guidance from this hour;
 Oh, let my weakness have an end!
 Give unto me, made lowly wise,
 The spirit of self-sacrifice;
 The confidence of reason give; 55
 And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me
 live!

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR²

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
 That every man in arms should wish to be?
 — It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
 Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought: 5
 Whose high endeavours are an inward light
 That makes the path before him always bright:
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern

¹ Nature obeys physical law or duty.

² Composed in 1806; published in 1807. This is considered the greatest of all Wordsworth's patriotic poems. It was inspired by the death of Nelson, although some points were suggested by the loss of the poet's brother John. It is the idealized Nelson, however, who stands out prominently in the poem. The poem throws light upon Wordsworth's own nature. It shows that he was not devoid of sympathy with a life of heroism, if that heroism left behind it no taint to mar its memory.