

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE.

How happy is he born and taught,
That serveth not another's will ;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill ;

Whose passions not his masters are ;
Whose soul is still prepared for death
Untied unto the world with care
Of public fame or private breath ;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Or vice ; hath ever understood
How deepest wounds are given with praise,
Nor rules of state, but rules of good ;

Who hath his life from humours freed ;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat ;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great ;

Who God doth late and early pray,
More of his grace than gifts to lend ;
And entertains the harmless day
With a well-chosen book or friend.

This man is free from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall ;
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639).