

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE
by Sir Henry Wotton

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

Whose passions not his masters are;
Whose soul is still prepar'd for death
Untied unto the world with care
Of princes' grace or vulgar breath;

Who envies none whom chance doth raise,
Or vice; who never understood
The deepest wounds are given by praise,
By rule of state, but not of good;

Who hath his life from rumours freed;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruins make accusers great;

Who God doth late and early pray,
More of his grace than goods to send,
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.