

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.