[*two rules*]

# PREFACE.

*T2HE writing of Characters was a Kind of Wit*
*much in Faſhion in the Beginning of the laſt*
*Century. The two principal Authors in this Way*
*were Sir* Thomas Overbury, *and Dr.* John
Earle *Tutor to Prince* Charles *in* 1643, *and after*
*the Reſtoration Dean of* Weſtminſter, *and ſuc-*
*ceſſively Biſhop of* Worceſter *and* Saliſbury. *How*
*agreeable theſe Sorts of Eſſays were to the public*
*Taſte may be judged from Sir* Thomas’s *little Book*
*having fourteen Editions before* 1632, *and the*
*Biſhop’s ſix between* 1628 *and* 1633. *Whether*
Butler *has equalled or excelled them, and what*
*Place he is to hold in this Claſs of Writers muſt*
*be left to the Deciſion of the Public, as the Inte-*
*reſt and Prejudice of a Publiſher may render me*
*a ſuſpected or an incompetent Judge. The Reader*
*will have an Opportunity of determining for him-*
*ſelf, as they have all attempted to draw the ſame*
*Pictures.*

*As in ſuch a Variety of Characters there muſt*
*be ſome drawn from Originals in general the ſame,*
*and only differenced by particular Circumſtances,*
*the ſame Obſervations are ſometimes repeated.*
*Whether the Author in this Caſe requires any Apo-*
*logy muſt be left to his Judges the Critics ; it is*
*enough for me that I can ſay I have done him*
*Justice in publiſhing them.*

*As moſt of theſe Characters are dated when they*
*were compoſed, I can inform the curious, that they*
*were chiefly drawn up from* 1667 *to* 1669, *at*
*which time, as has been before obſerved,* Butler
*reſided in* Wales *under the Protection of Lord*
Carbery.