[*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.