

MACHIAVEL's Dedication

OF THE

P R I N C E,

TO THE

Most Magnificent LORENZO DE' MEDICI *.

THOSE that court the favour of Princes, commonly bespeak their good graces, either by making them rich presents, or procuring such things for them, as they know they most delight in: hence we often see them presented with fine horses and armour, curious pieces of embroidery, jewels, and other such things, as are suitable to their quality and grandeur. For my own part, though I am ambitious of presenting myself to your Highness, with some testimony of my devotion to you, I am possessed of nothing more precious (to myself at least) than the knowledge of the conduct and achievements of great men, which I have gained by long practice and experience in modern affairs, and continual study of ancient history. Having therefore reduced my reflections, after a severe and repeated examination of them, into the compass of a small volume, I make bold to offer it to your Highness: not that I have the vanity to think it worthy of your presence, though I trust your usual humanity will take it in good part; since it is not in my power to present you with any thing more valuable than the means of acquiring that knowledge of mankind in a very short time, and with little pains, which has cost me so much trouble, and so many years to collect, and that too with infinite peril and hazard. It is not decked out, indeed, with an ostentatious pomp of language, or swelling

* Duke of Urbino, Lord of Pesaro, &c. He was the Son of Pietro de' Medici, and Father to Catharine, Wife to Henry II. of France. He died in the year 1519.