

periods, or any of those meretricious arts, with which many are wont to decorate their writings: as I had much rather it should pass unnoticed and disregarded, if Truth alone, and the Importance of the Subject are not sufficient to recommend it. Nor will it be thought presumption, I hope, that a person of my low condition, pretends to give lessons of government to Princes: for as those that take maps of Countries, usually stand upon a plain to consider the nature of mountains and high places; and upon the top of a hill, to survey the plains and valleys: so, it is necessary to be a Prince, in order to know the nature and disposition of subjects; and no less so to be a subject, to judge properly of a Prince.

May your Highness then accept this small present, with the same good will that it is offered. If you are pleased to read and consider it with attention, you will be convinced how passionately I long to see you arrive at that height of grandeur to which Fortune, and your excellent Virtues daily call you [a]: and if you should some time or other vouchsafe to look down from the summit of your greatness, upon a man in so humble a station, you will see how long, and how unworthily I have been persecuted, in the most cruel manner, by the extreme and unrelenting malevolence of Fortune.

[a] See the last Chapter of the Prince.

SOME