

Mr. Voltaire, the Editor of this Refutation, insinuates in his Preface to it, that the Author is a Personage of the highest rank and quality: but our office as Journalists obliges us only to give the public an account of such *works* as may at the same time be instructive and entertaining; and not to form rash conjectures of what some pains have been taken to conceal from our knowledge. But if it be true, as it begins to be reported, that a Prince is the Author of this performance, we may at least be allowed to thank Heaven, for having inspired a person with such sentiments, who is charged with the happiness of other men: for we do not know any book of morality that is comparable to it. There are several, indeed, that may conduce to form good Citizens: but where are those that are in all respects proper to form good Princes? Nothing like this has appeared since the time of the great and good Antoninus. A private man may learn elsewhere to regulate his conduct, and to live with decency in civil Society: but here Sovereigns are instructed how to govern nations. We heartily wish, as friends to Humanity, that all Princes and Ministers would read this book; if reading good books has still any power left to make them wiser and better, and the poison of Courts is not more prevalent, than the Antidote which we here recommend.

The Author's Preface is written in a strain of such Eloquence, as can only flow from a good heart. Let us give a sample of it. "In how wretched a situation (says he) must a people be, when they have every thing to fear from an abuse of power in their Sovereign; when their properties may hourly become a prey to his avarice, their liberty to his caprice, their repose to his ambition, and their lives to his cruelty! Such must be the circumstances of a State, governed by a Prince of Machiavel's forming."—Who is there that does not feel his heart touched, upon reading a passage so full of tenderness and paternal affection? Where is the man that would not shed the last drop of his blood for a Prince who thinks in this manner, who speaks of Sovereigns like a private man, whose sentiments, and principles, and affections, run in the same channel with our own, and who thus protests in the strongest manner against every kind of Tyranny and oppression?

What seems very extraordinary is, that the Author of this work should write in so pure a style, and be so familiar with a language, which, it is said, is not his mother-tongue. Many parts of it are penned with such energy, and the words are so well chosen and arranged, that for some time we could not believe it was written by a foreigner. Upon which account, we had recourse to the Editor, and had the satisfaction of seeing such evident proofs in his hands, that we had no longer the least room to doubt of the Author.