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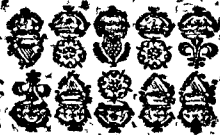
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THE
WORKS
OF THE FAMOUS
Nicholas Machiavel,
CITIZEN and SECRETARY
OF
FLORENCE.

WRITTEN
Originally in *ITALIAN*, and from thence newly
and faithfully Translated into *ENGLISH*.



LONDON,

Printed for *John Starkey*, *Charles Harper*, and *John Amery*, at the *Miter*, the *Flower-de-Luce*, and the *Peacock*, in *Fleetstreet*. 1680.



THE SEVERAL
TREATISES

Contained in this

BOOK.

1. **T**He History of *Florence*.
2. **T**he *Prince*.
3. The Original of the *Guelf* and *Ghibelin* Factions.
4. The Life of *Castruccio Castracani*.
5. The Murther of *Vitelli*, &c. by Duke *Valentino*.
6. The State of *France*.
7. The State of *Germany*.
8. The Discourses on *Titus Livius*.
9. The Art of *War*.
10. The Marriage of *Belphegor*, a Novel.
11. *Nicholas Machiavel's* Letter in Vindication of Himself and his Writings.

THE
HISTORY
OF
FLORENCE,

CONTAINING

An account of the Heroick Enterprizes, Publick and Private
Transactions; with the Civil Dissentions, Changes
and Alterations in that

GOVERNMENT

ALSO AN

Account of the Affairs of *ITALY*, and the Actions,
Designs and contrivances of most of the
PRINCES and *STATES* therein

IN

Eight Books.

By *NICOLAS MACHIAVEL*.

LONDON,

Printed for *John Starkey, Charles Harper, and John
Amery, at the Miter, the Flower-de-Luce, and
the Peacock, in Fleetstreet. 1680.*



THE
EPISTLE
TO
CLEMENT, VII

BEing commanded by your Holiness (whilst in a private condition) to writ the History of *Florence*, I addressed my self to it with all the art and diligence wherewith nature and experience had endued me. Having deduc'd it to the times, in which, upon the death of *Magnifico Lorenzo de Medici*, the whole form and model of *Italy* was altered; and being to describe the height and importance of what followed in a loftier and more vigorous stile, I judg'd it best to reduce what I had written till those times into one Volume, and present it to your Holiness, that you might at least have a taste of the fruit you had sown your self, and of my labour and cultivation. In the perusal of this work your Holiness will see first, to what ruine and convulsions our Country was expos'd for many ages by the variations of Governments, after the declension of the Roman Empire in the

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West. You will see how your Predecessors, the *Venetians*, the Kingdom of *Naples*, and the Dukedom of *Milan* took their turns of Empire and Sovereignty in this Province. You will see your own Country refusing obedience to the Emperors, by reason of the divisions, and those divisions continuing till under the protection of your Family, it began to settle into a Government. And because it was your Holiness particular command, that in my character of your Ancestors, I should avoid all kind of flattery, true praise not being more pleasing to you, than counterfeit is ungrateful; fearing in my description of the bounty of *Giovanni*, the wisdom of *Cosimo*, the courtesie of *Piero*, the magnificence and solidity of *Lorenzo*, I may seem to have transgressed your holiness direction, I do most humbly excuse my self, both in that, and whatever else in my descriptions may appear unfaithful to your holiness dissatisfaction; for finding the memoirs and relations of those who in sundry Ages made any mention of them, full of their commendations, I must either present them as I found them, or pass them by as if I envied them. And if (as some write) under their great and egregious exploits there was always some latent and ambitious design, contrary to the interest and liberty of the publick. I know nothing of it, and am not bound to relate it: for in all my narrations I never desired to cloak or palliate a dishonourable action, with an honourable pretence; nor to traduce a good action, tho to a contrary end. But how far I am from flattery

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ry, is to be seen in the whole course of my History, especially in my speeches, and private discourses, which do plainly, and without reservation, describe with the sentences, and order of their language, the dignity and humour of the persons. I avoid likewise in all places such words as are impertinent to the verity, or reputation of history, so that no man who considers my writings impartially, can charge me with adulation, especially if he observes how little or nothing I have said of your holiness own Father, whose life was too short to discover him to the world, & I too downright to expatiate upon it. Nevertheless had he done nothing more but given your holiness to the world, that very thing outweighs all the actions of his Ancestors & shall leave more ages of honour to his family, than his malevolent fortune took years from his life. I have endeavored, (Most Holy Sir) as far as might be done without blemish to the truth, to please all people, and it may so fall out I have pleased no body. If it should, I should not wonder, seeing in my judgment it is impossible to write any thing of our own times, without offence to several. Yet I come forth cheerfully into the field, hoping that as I am honoured and employed by your holiness goodness I shall be defended by your holiness judgment; and then with the same confidence & courage as I have writ now, I shall pursue my engagements if my life lasts, & your holiness continues amongst us.

The

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INTRODUCTION.

When I first took upon me to write the History of Florence, and its transactions both at home and abroad, I thought to have begun at the year 1434, at which time the Family of the Medici (exalted by the merits of Cosimo, & his father Giovanni) was in greater authority than any other in that City; believing that Messer Leonardo d' Arezzo, and Messer Poggio, two excellent Historians, had given particular description of all the passages before. But upon diligent perusal of their writings to inform myself of their orders and methods, that thereby my own might have better approbation, I found that in their narratives of the Florentine Wars, and foreign negotiations, they had been accurate enough; but in their civil dissensions, their intrinsic animosities, and in the effects which followed them, they were either totally silent, or where any thing was mentioned, it was with such brevity and abruptness as could yield neither profit nor recreation to the reader. Which I conceive they did, either out of an opinion, that they were inconsiderable, and unworthy to be transmitted to Posterity; or else they apprehended a necessity of reflecting upon some great persons, whose family would be disobliged thereby; both which arguments (if I may speak it without offence) are beneath the grandeur and magnanimity of a great person. For if any thing in History be delightfull or profitable, it is those particular descriptions; if any thing be usefull to such Citizens as have the Government in their hands, it is such as represents the feuds and dissensions in the Cities, that thereby they maybe enabled to maintain their own unity at other peoples expence; if the example of any Commonwealth moves a man, certainly that which is written of ones own makes a much stronger impression; and if the factions of any State were ever considerable, the factions in Florence were not to be pretermitted; the greatest part of other States have not had above one, which sometimes has advanced, and sometimes ruined the Government; but Florence has had many divisions. Everybody knows how in Rome after the expulsion of their King, there arose division betwixt the Nobles and the people, which continued till one of them was oppressed. So it was in Athens, and all the Commonwealths which flourished in those times; but in Florence the first dissention was betwixt the Nobles; the next betwixt the Nobles and Citizens; and then betwixt

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betwixt the Citizens and the Plebs : in all which, one was no sooner superior, but it divided again; and the effects of those divisions were Murders, and Banishments, and dispersion of families, such as never occur'd in any City, that can be remembered. And truly in my judgment, nothing demonstrates the power of our City so much as the consequences of those divisions, which were enough to have subverted and destroyed any other in the world. But ours grew still greater thereby, so remarkable was the courage of the Citizens, and so efficacious their industry for the advancement of their Country, that those few which surviv'd the miseries of their Predecessors, did more by their constancy & courage towards the advancement of their interest, than the malignity of those accidents could do to depress it. And doubtless had Florence been so happy after it had freed it self from the Empire, to have assum'd such a form of Government as would have preserv'd it in unity, I know not any commonwealth, either ancient or modern, that would have exceeded it, or have been comparable to it, either in riches or power. For it is observable, after the Ghibilins were driven out of the Town in such numbers as all Tuscany and Lombardy were full of those exiles, the Guelfs, and such as were left behind in the expedition against Arezzo (which was the year before the battle of Campaldino) were able to draw out of their own Citizens 1200 Horse, and 12000 Foot, And afterwards in the war against Philippo Visconti Duke of Milan being to try their fortune rather with their riches than their arms (which at that time were very much weakened) in five years space (which was the length of that war) the Florentines expended five millions, and 500000 Florens; and when that War was compos'd, to ostentate and publish the power of that Commonwealth, they march'd out with an army, and besieged Lucca. I do not see therefore, for what reason these divisions should not be worthy of relation; and if those Noble Authors were restrained by fear of offending the memory of such as they were to speak of, they were mightily out, and seem not to have understood the ambition of mankind, and their desire to have the names of themselves and ancestors transmitted to Posterity; nor did they remember that many people, not having opportunity to make themselves eminent by good and laudable acts, have endeavour'd to compass it by any way, how scandalous and ignominious soever. Neither did they consider that the actions which carry greatness along with them, as those of Governments and States, what ends soever they have and which way soever they are described, do still leave more honour than infamy to their Family; the consideration of which things prevail'd with me to alter my design, and to begin my History from the very foundation of the City: and because it is not my intention to transcribe what has been

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been done before by other people, I shall relate such things only as occur'd within the City to the year 1434, mentioning the accidents abroad only so far as will be necessary for the intelligence of the other; after which year I shall give a particular description both of the one and the other. Besides, for the better and more lasting understanding of this History, before I treat of Florence, I shall discourse of the means by which Italy fell under the dominion of those Potentates which govern'd it at that time; all which shall be comprehended in my four first Books: the first shall give a short recital of all transactions in Italy, from the dissolution of the Roman Empire to the year 1434. The second shall give an account of all affairs from the foundation of the City of Florence, to the end of the War against the Pope, which commenc'd upon the expulsion of the Duke of Athens: the third shall conclude with the death of Ladislaus King of Naples; and in the fourth we shall end with the year 1434, from whence afterwards to our present times we shall give a particular Narrative of all proceedings both within the City and without.

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