

## TO BENEDETTO BUONMATTAI

*Firenze, September 10th, 1638*

Ego certe istis utrisque Unguis non extremis tantummodo labris madidus; sed si quis alius, quantum per annos licuit, poculis majoribus prolutus, possum tamen nonnunquam ad illum Dantem, et Petrarcham, aliosque vestros complusculos, libenter et cupide comessatum ire. Nee me tam ipsae Athenae Atticae cum illo suo pellucido Ilisso, nee illa vetus Roma sua Tiberis ripa retinere valuerunt, quin saepe Arnun vestrum, et Faesulanos illos Colles invisere amem.

### 1806 – Translation by Robert Fellowes

I will now mention the favourable opportunity which you have, if you wish to embrace it, of obliging foreigners, among whom there is no one at all conspicuous for genius or for elegance, who does not make the Tuscan language his delight, and indeed consider it as an essential part of education, particularly if he be only slightly tinctured with the literature of Greece or of Rome. I, who certainly have not merely wetted the tip of my lips in the stream of those languages, but, in proportion to my years, have swallowed the most copious draughts, can yet sometimes retire with avidity and delight to feast on Dante, Petrarch, and many others; nor has Athens itself been able to confine me to the transparent wave of its Ilissus, nor ancient Rome to the banks of its Tiber, so as to prevent my visiting with delight the stream of the Arno, and the hills of Faesolæ.