DEDICATION

To the right honourable and most excellentest of all ladies,
Frances, Countess Dowager of Exeter

Howsoever (Right Honourable and most virtuous Lady) this book may come to your noble goodness clothed in an old name or garment, yet doubtless (excellent madam) it is full of many new virtues which will ever admire and serve you; and though it can add nothing to your own rare and unparalleled knowledge, yet may it to those noble good ones (which will endeavour any small spark of your imitation) bring such a light, as may make them shine with a great deal of charity. I do not assume to myself (though I am not altogether ignorant in ability to judge of these things) the full invention and scope of this whole work; for it is true (great Lady) that much of it was a manuscript which many years ago belonged to an honourable Countess, one of the greatest glories of our Kingdom, and were the opinions of the greatest physicians which then lived; which being now approved by one not inferior to any of that profession, I was the rather emboldened to send it to your blessed hand, knowing you to be a Mistress so full of honourable piety and goodness, that although this imperfect offer may come unto you weak and disable, yet your noble virtue will support it, and make it so strong in the world, that I doubt not but it shall do service to all those which will serve you, whilst myself and my poor prayers shall to my last gasp labour to attend you.

The true admirer of your noble virtues,
Gervase Markham.