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Lord and Lady William Bentinck, by Ingres. Drawn in Rome, 1816. Musée Bonnat, Bayonne. frontispiece

'Priegovi seguitiate la vostra stella, e non ne lasciate andare un iota per cosa al mondo, perché io credo, credetti, e crederrò sempre che sia vero quello che dice il Boccaccio: che egli è meglio fare et pentirsi, che non fare et pentirsi.'

'Pray follow your star, and give up not an iota of it for anything in the world, for I believe, have believed, and ever shall believe in the truth of Boccaccio's saying: that it is better to act, and be sorry, than not to act, and be sorry.'

Niccolò Machiavelli
to Francesco Vettori, 25th February 1513