

as duke of Modena. This territory is bounded on the south by Tuscany and Lucca, on the north by the duchy of Mantua, on the east by Bologna and the papal dominions, and on the west by Parma; it is about fifty-six English miles in length, and thirty-six in breadth.<sup>1</sup> It is a fair and fruitful district, abounding in corn and wine. The duke, though a vassal of the Germanic empire, is absolute in his own dominions.

The father of Mary Beatrice was Alphonso d'Este, duke of Modena, son of Francisco the Great and Maria Farnese. Her mother, Laura Martinozzi, claimed no higher rank than that of a Roman lady, being the daughter of count Hieronimo Martinozzi da Fano, a Roman nobleman of ancient family, and Margaret, fourth sister of the famous minister of France, cardinal Mazarine. Mary Beatrice Eleanora d'Este was the first fruit of this marriage; she was a seven months' child, born prematurely in the ducal palace, October the 5th, 1658.<sup>2</sup> The name of Beatrice was given her in honour of St. Beatrice, a princess of the house of Este, whose spiritual patroness she is, of course, supposed to be. According to the legendary superstitions of Modena, this royal saint was accustomed to knock at the palace gate three days before the death of every member of the ducal family.<sup>3</sup> A runaway knock from some mischief-loving urchin may probably have frightened more than one of the princely race of Este out of several years of life, from having been construed into one of the ominous warnings of holy St. Beatrice.

The city of Modena claims the honour of the birth of Tasso, of Correggio, and the imperial general Montecuculi. A daughter of that house was educated with the young Mary Beatrice, and remained during life unalterably attached to her fortunes, through good and ill. "The father of Mary Beatrice," says a contemporary historian,<sup>4</sup> "was a prince who

<sup>1</sup> The city of Modena was the ancient *Mutina* of the Romans, so much extolled by the ancient writers for its wealth and grandeur before the injuries it received while Decius Brutus was besieged there by Marc Antony. During the long and obstinate defence of the place, carrier-pigeons were used by the consul Hertius to convey intelligence, and to this day there is a famous breed of pigeons in Modena, trained to convey letters.—Keyser.

<sup>2</sup> Leti Teatro Britannica.

<sup>3</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica.

<sup>4</sup> Leti.

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<sup>2</sup> Inedited Memor  
kingdom of France.