

the sight of the whole world, and especially in facts of which he could be no witness. On the other hand, the equitable part of our nation, for whom I write, will do justice to my candour and good intention : and though they may not agree with my sentiments, I promise myself that they will, at least, not suspect me of having any other view than the service of God, and the welfare of the public.

On this account I find myself obliged briefly to say, that I forbear declaring, whether on the present footing the trade from the Philippine islands be pernicious to Spain or not ; but that there is no method or way whereby not only the present minute commerce, but even one infinitely greater, may be so modelled, as not to be pernicious either to the crown in general, whose subjects the inhabitants of both parts are, or in particular to Old Spain, is what I cannot believe. What those measures may be, is as foreign to my province as it is above my capacity. What I know is, that in the reign of Charles V. Spain saw itself at the height of its prosperity. The number of its towns and inhabitants, which is the basis of the happiness of a state, was much greater : not only the cities, but the smallest places swarmed with people and manufactures. The products of the country were double ; and the same