

parted chiefly by those who have particular Interest in them; and this may be done with so much Plausibility as to deceive Persons of the best understanding. With great Humility, therefore, I submit the Thoughts in the following Treatise to Your Consideration, and that of the Publick. They arise from Attachment to no Party, and, so far as I can perceive, to no particular Interest. They have been generated by Reading and Reflexion on the History of other Nations, and a good deal of Attention paid to the Causes of Prosperity or Decay in several Cities and Counties of this Kingdom. I have generally found, that Bodies of Men, as well as private Persons, were incessantly pursuing after Things which proved prejudicial to them, after they had attained them. And in many Cases it was easy to see, after some Years Experience, that the Prosperity of Societies had been owing, in a great Measure, to a Circumstance or two, which all the while they were groaning under, and crying