

4 RELIGION, COLONISING AND TRADE

Overland,' was published in 1589, and the second edition of the work, expanded into three volumes, was published in 1598, 1599, 1600.

One of the earliest sixteenth-century documents in the collection is 'A Declaration of the Indies,' etc., the often quoted letter or 'persuasion,' in which, in 1527, Robert Thorne, an English merchant resident in Seville, urged King Henry VIII to have a route to Cathay sought for by the north. It begins, 'Experience proveth that naturally all princes be desirous to extend and enlarge their dominions and kingdoms.'¹ Here was the simplest and most rudimentary motive for the expansion of England, from the point of view of the King of England. He was presumed to want a larger kingdom, just as in better times for landowners than the present it would have been natural for a small landed proprietor to want to add more acres to his estate; and inasmuch as the Tudor kings and queens of England and their subjects were, except in Queen Mary's reign, very much of the same mind, it can be taken that the people of England, like their sovereigns, were more or less wishful to enlarge the English kingdom. This is more than a rather pointless truism. The small size of England in comparison with some other leading countries of Europe was very apparent as the sixteenth century went on its course, and so was the fact that a much smaller country, Portugal, had vastly enlarged its borders and proportionately raised its status in the world. Modern history was then very young. By the young size is taken for strength, and peoples cannot afford to ignore

¹ Hakluyt, vol. ii, p. 159.