

## 20 RELIGION, COLONISING AND TRADE

His breadth of view is illustrated by the statement in the essay 'Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms and Estates,' that 'all states that are liberal of naturalisation towards strangers are fit for Empire.'<sup>1</sup>

His views on colonising are contained more especially in the well-known essay 'Of Plantations,'<sup>2</sup> and in the letter of advice which he wrote in 1616 to the Duke of Buckingham when the latter became favourite to King James.<sup>3</sup> It may be presumed that in the letter of advice he paid more attention to what would be palatable to the King's man and the King than would be required in the essay. In the letter he suggested that Commissioners should be appointed in the nature of a Council to 'regulate what concerns the colonies and give an account thereof to the King or to his Council of State.' In 1616 there can only have been three English colonies in existence, Virginia, Bermuda and Newfoundland; and a Council for Virginia had been constituted before the colony was actually started. Bacon, therefore, was commendably early in suggesting a Council for English colonies generally. Colonies and foreign plantations he considered 'very necessary, as outlets to a populous nation.' Both in the letter and in the essay he denounces the wickedness of sending out criminals to be the material wherewith to plant a colony. We think, as he thought, that 'it is a shameful and unblest thing to take the scum of people, and wicked condemned men, to be the people with whom you

<sup>1</sup> *The Works of Francis Bacon*, *ut sup.*, vol. vi, p. 447.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 457-60.

<sup>3</sup> *Letters and Life of Francis Bacon* (1872), *ut sup.*, vol. vi, pp. 21-2, 49-52.