

curiously misread history when he pitched upon the reign of Charles II as a golden age for planting English freedom overseas. There were some too who, with no love for the navigation acts, and with strong leanings to free trade, nevertheless contended that plantations carried off Englishmen who were wanted for trade. Roger Coke held that 'the trade of England, and the fishing trade, are so much diminished by how much they might have been supplied by those men who are diverted in our American plantations'; that the peopling of the plantations and the re-peopling of Ireland had drained England, and that attempts at further discovery of new plantations were to be deprecated as well as the project of peopling Carolina.¹ The verdict of 'Britannia Languens' on the subject in 1680 was a very wholesale condemnation of colonisation. 'These plantations may be considered as the true grounds and causes of all our present mischiefs; for, had our fishers been put on no other employment, had those millions of people which we have lost or been prevented of by the plantations continued in England, the government would long since have been under a necessity of easing and regulating our trade.'²

Opposed to this doctrine that the colonies had disastrously drained England of her population was a treatise on 'The Benefit of Plantations or Colonies,' by William Penn. 'Colonies,' he wrote, 'are the seeds of nations, begun and nourished by the care of

¹ Roger Coke, *ut sup.*: *A Discourse of Trade*, in Two Parts (London, 1670): *Reasons of the Decay of the English Trade*, pp. 7 and 10.

² *Britannia Languens*, *ut sup.*, p. 176.