

more numerous than the Spanish Armada, our ships could sail faster and nearer the wind, and our guns shot more quickly and harder. But more important than this our religion was a religion of freedom and order, for although the main strength of English religion was moving towards Puritanism and the Puritans were not tolerant, still there was a strong religious element which though traditional was not Roman, an element which made possible the existence of such a family as the Ferrers, and such an establishment as the religious community of Little Gidding, and which represented gentleness and charity; moreover, Puritanism itself did achieve toleration with the appearance of the Society of Friends. There was therefore a spirit in England which offered a welcome to religious refugees of the reforming societies throughout Europe, and, besides that, the non-religious people in England, led by the Queen, were zealously anxious for religious peace as long as it could be reconciled with some measure of order.

Thus both the religious and non-religious elements of England combined to draw over to us the pick of the middle and industrial classes of Europe, and this most important result may be regarded as part of the fixed and conscious policy of the nation.

(3) Our advantages over other nations have on the whole been sufficiently described in Seeley's *Expansion of England*; it is only necessary here to emphasize the great importance of the fact that we were an insular nation, and so able to keep ourselves comparatively free from the entanglements of continental policy. This, as Seeley has pointed out, enabled us to concentrate our energies much more completely than the Spaniards or the Dutch or the French could do, on the acquisition of the empire of the New World; but furthermore, this