

nized, although under pressure he was compelled to lease the littoral to the contending parties.

Thus, within less than a year, Germany had obtained four important footholds on the African continent, which by the process of accretion were developed into the enormous territories over which she held undisputed sway until the outbreak of the present war. Her empire in Africa, acquired through the foresight and energy of her merchants and explorers and held owing to the vigorous and spirited action of Bismarck, had an area of 1,028,000 square miles, as large as Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, England, Spain, Portugal, and Italy combined, but nevertheless far smaller in extent than the African possessions of either Britain or France.

IV.—THE VALUE OF THE GERMAN AFRICAN COLONIES.

It has frequently been assumed that Germany in acquiring her colonial possessions in Africa only secured territories which other countries had considered more or less worthless. This may be true with regard to German South-West Africa, where the long stretch of desert coast-line—an absolutely sterile belt varying in width between thirty and fifty miles, with only one good harbour at Walfish Bay¹—had supported the erroneous impression that most of the interior was useless for agricultural purposes; but it is certainly incorrect so far as Togoland, Kamerun, and German East Africa are concerned. By obtaining these three territories Germany secured most valuable tropical storehouses, where the products needed for her growing

¹ Walfish Bay and a small surrounding strip of territory were proclaimed a British possession in 1878 and annexed to Cape Colony in 1884.