

Australia, are instances, as also the numerous islands about New Zealand, together with Perim, Sokotra, and other islands at the mouth of the Red Sea, on the route to India.

The story of the seizure of Perim, in 1855, though, I believe, often told and well known, is always interesting and amusing.

A French admiral was sent out expressly to take possession of Perim, hitherto unnoticed by the English. He called at Aden, where the English Resident, being very curious 'as to the object of his visit, invited him to dinner, plied him with good wine and many questions. Learning by these means that he meant to sail again at daybreak northwards the Englishman suspected Perim as his object, and in order to obtain an excuse for leaving the table without exciting the suspicions of his guest, he was seized suddenly with a violent fit of coughing, which compelled him to leave the room. Directly he was outside, he sent for the commander of the only ship in the harbour under his orders, and directed him to sail immediately for Perim, there to plant the British flag and put some seamen ashore. The French admiral presently retired to his ship, and sailed next morning, only to arrive at Perim and find the English already in possession. He returned to his station a sadder and a wiser man.

A third group may be formed for the present out of the Protectorates at the Straits Settlements on the West African coast, in South Africa, and also over New Guinea, all established in the interests of the colonies on which they border, but not otherwise concerning the Empire as a whole.

Fourthly, we have a group of Naval Stations, most important as bases of supply and harbours for the Navy and Mercantile Marine, and without which in these days of heavy coal consumption and costly ships, it would be impossible for the Navy adequately to perform its duties.

Such are Heligoland in the North Sea, Gibraltar and Malta in the Mediterranean, Bermuda in the North Atlantic, St. Helena and Ascension in the South Atlantic, Port Hamilton (since abandoned) off Corea, whence it was intended that our ships should watch the Russian North Pacific squadron, and the Falkland Islands, near Cape Horn, which were occupied, I am informed by the Colonial Office, mainly to protect the whale fishery in those seas.

Such Stations as these, commanding the principal trade routes of the world, are simply invaluable to an Oceanic Power, and I