

Portuguese, Dutch, Spaniards, French and English being successively engaged in the effort to acquire colonies, and with varying success, until in the long run, thanks to her vast naval superiority, England came out after Waterloo in 1815 the greatest gainer, with an already large and varied assortment of colonies, Canada, the Cape Colony, the West Indies, huge possessions in the East Indies, fortresses in the Mediterranean and elsewhere.

From that time and until a very few years before the commencement of the present reign, or for nearly twenty years, very little was done in the way of additions to the Empire, Botany Bay, in New South Wales, and two or three points in Tasmania had been utilised as convict settlements, but they had made little progress as colonies. Then with the increase of wealth, the revival of trade and general prosperity, and leisure at home, due to the long peace, men's minds turned once more to possessions abroad. The "deadly fascination" of St. Chrysostom, and within a few years all the rest of the great colonies in Australia were settled and fairly started on the road to prosperity, the older colonies received a great impulse, and constitutional government was, after a short struggle, granted to those colonies which now possess it, to Canada in 1840, to New Zealand in 1854, to the Australian Colonies in 1856, and finally complete responsibility to the Cape in 1872.

Later on again, and right down to the present time, the annexations, additions, and what may be called "rounding off" of territory, continues, Fiji in 1874, Cyprus in 1878, one-third of New Guinea in 1884, the Naval Station of Port Hamilton on the Corean Coast, and the huge area of Bechuana Land in South Africa, with other minor additions, in 1885, Upper Burmah at the beginning of last year, and finally the island of Sokotra towards the close of the year, and, I believe, a small block of territory on the East Coast of Africa, near the Equator, either annexed or protected under an arrangement with the Germans, who have grabbed a much larger piece to the south.

In all, omitting the two last-named countries, and Burmah, itself a country as large as France, and which is annexed to India, some 280,000 square miles of territory, or considerably more than double the area of our own Islands, and more annexations, protest as we will, are looming in the near future.

In this respect we seem to go on as the man pictured in *Punch* as smoking in a railway carriage :—