

her repressive measures. And now that matters have settled down, our surmise proves to have been correct, and the reply is given. England has emerged from all her difficulties abroad. Prince Bismarck has been satisfied for the moment by the concession of everything he demanded, and it is but a question of time before we see the German flag run up as a token that the Samoan archipelago has been annexed to the empire. Indeed we may have cause to be thankful if that prove to be all, for, according to various authorities, Germany needs, not detached patches of tropical country unable to support in any number a population of European origin, but territories capable of rivaling America and the British Colonies, and that may be so settled as to prove powerful adjuncts to the empire, both with respect to population and commerce. But Prince Bismarck has only to arouse the fears of the English Government, and all he desires will be placed at his disposal, with a hearty wish that it may turn out so as to afford him every satisfaction, and secure his continued support and patronage for the conciliatory neighbour that holds him in such regard. It no longer depends, in fact, upon England's firmness in defending her own, but on the moderation of those whose interests clash with hers, as to what England shall yield. Prince Bismarck has been appeased by material concessions for the present, and valid hopes for the future, and, therefore, let John Bull rejoice. No immediate danger threatens him from that quarter. Russia, too, has been appeased. The Czar has nothing to find fault with or will have nothing to find fault with in the course of the next two or three days, during the course of which every point in the Russo-Afghan negotiations will have been settled to his entire satisfaction. Some little hitch, indeed, still remains at the time when we write, a mere trifle, however—perhaps as to whether Russian outposts shall continue to occupy the Zulfiar Pass or retire to Pul-i-Khatun, which commands the Germal Pass, leading, a little further to the north, into the same country into which the Zulfiar leads. A matter, moreover, of comparative indifference, since the Russians remain in possession of Penj-deh, conquered under the very nose of the protesting English Government, and by a slaughter of the forces whom that Government had virtually sent there and were pledged to support. It is probable, nevertheless, that we shall hear in a few days that the Russian frontier runs from Pul-i-Khatun, through the Zulfiar Pass and Ak-robot, to Penj-deh, and it may be some faint remonstrances as to this arrangement demanded by the Czar that have delayed the conclusion of the agreement. The London newspapers say that the point of difference is but a trifle, and it will be conceded by Mr. Gladstone in a day or two. Peace, again, is restored in the Soudan. "Needs must go when the devil drives" would seem to have been the motto under which the peace in question was made—a fierce climate, a resolute enemy not yet encountered in his full force, and most formidable when met with in detachments. The want of means of transit, the want of efficient forces, for, according to all accounts, the Indian troops, on whose aid so much stress had been laid, proved wholly below the mark—failing in that discipline which alone in several instances enabled the English soldiers to save their lives. Such seem to be the conditions under which peace was restored in the Soudan. Britannia retires gracefully—glad to have saved her bacon, as the saying is—from all the three points of danger in which she stood, and is now prepared, under the becoming symbol of the white feather, to resume with fresh vigour the work of her Irish campaign. There is no iron Chancellor there to be encountered by her; the iron hand is on her own side, and strikes in her interests, and she will gladly find herself at leisure to strengthen it. There is nothing to prevent her, for she deals with an unarmed people, who are totally unable to resist her. The answer of Mr. Gladstone, then, has been to the effect that coercion would be resumed, or rather continued, since it has never ceased, in Ireland, and that, meantime, no remedial legislation should take place respecting that country. Verily the resolve is worthy of a people whose hey-day of empire has passed by, and who are now entering on the downward path. For let it not be mistaken that marks of weakness abroad, coupled with tyranny at home, are not the notable signs of decline. Rome itself, that mighty empire, fell in just such a way. On all the frontiers there was weakness, and falling back, and bribery—and is it not bribery to give up territory over which in some instances the British Government had a prior claim, and which in others it was bound by treaty to protect, to foreign powers? But nations who are bribed are but made bolder, and less easily satisfied in their demands, and the present relief prepares the way for future difficulties that can be solved alone with the utmost loss and degradation. There were, moreover, tyranny and corruption at home when Rome began to decline, and tyranny and corruption are to-day glaring marks of the English Government in Ireland. The precedent for the course of policy, then, followed by the Gladstone Cabinet has been a bad one, and the Prime Minister's explanation as to his contemplated proceedings in Ireland furnishes an unlucky omen as to the destiny of the Empire.

**CURSED WITH RICHES.** MR. RUSKIN hardly seems to fall in with that view of the prosperity of England which we find so frequently put forward. The view to which we allude is that which represents England, as the first among Protestant countries, enjoying an especial degree of wealth arising from her fidelity to the teachings of the Bible, and

possessing in a particular manner the fruits of the Reformation. The assertion is a common one to hear from Protestant lips, and more especially it is repeated, even *ad nauseam* by those who are of a controversial turn. The prosperity of England as a Protestant country is contrasted with the poverty of certain Catholic countries, and all other considerations being set aside, claimed as the effects of reliance upon the "open Word," and upon that alone. According to Mr. Ruskin, however, it would hardly seem that the commercial aspect of England has much in common with true religion, and the beatitudes by which the same writer replaces those taught by Jesus Christ, though they may well befit a country making worldly prosperity its sole object, are hardly Scriptural. Mr. Ruskin accuses the English people of looking upon usury as the most useful branch of commercial industry, and as being largely engaged in it—to the encouragement of much that is evil, but especially of warfare—and the beatitudes which he proposes as those that have been substituted for the code known in former times are the following:—(1). Blessed are the rich in Flesh, for their's is the kingdom of Earth. (2). Blessed are they that are merry and laugh the last. (3). Blessed are the proud, in that they have inherited the earth. (4). Blessed are they which hunger for unrighteousness, in that they shall divide its mammon. (5). Blessed are the merciless for they shall obtain money. (6). Blessed are the foul in heart, for they shall see no God. (7). Blessed are the war-makers for they shall be adored by the children of men. Are these, indeed, the maxims of a country especially blessed by God with the gift of temporal prosperity in reward of their spiritual excellence—or are they those of a people whose natural qualifications, aided by various circumstances and opportunities, have made them rich, and who have made of their riches an idol? The answer should not be difficult to return. Mr. Ruskin, who, nevertheless, professes to believe that the "pastoral office must be for ever the highest in every Christian land," is very hard upon the Bishops of the Anglican Church who, he declares, have sunk into the mere vergers of their cathedrals, and nothing more, and he suggests that recourse shall be had to the "every-man-his-own-Bishop" party, with its Bible society, missionary zeal and right of infallible private interpretation, to ask at least for some small exposition to the inhabitants of their own country of those Scriptures which they are so fain to put in the possession of others." But has not that party already done its best for England and expounded the Scriptures to their last verse again and again, and is it not doing so at this moment? What of the Church of England itself at the time of the Reformation when it placed but little value on episcopal consecration, or orders of any kind, and welcomed to its pulpit the godly men of whatsoever conventicle it might be? What of its evangelical party down to this day? What of the great Methodist movement, by which the masses were supposed to be evangelised to their inmost recesses? and what of the Salvation Army of the present hour that with a greater extravagance than even that of the earlier Methodists makes its constant and noisy appeal to the populace? If all these things have been so far insufficient, and notwithstanding all their zeal and all the labours of those engaged in them have not prevented the growth of the usurer's spirit, or made impossible the utterly carnal mind that Mr. Ruskin describes in his modern beatitudes, what hope is there that more remains to be done by such means with success? Every Protestant engine has been tried and found wanting, and what hope remains for the future? Verily the prospects are gloomy, but above all we obtain a view of things that shows us England anything rather than enjoying a prosperity that is the reward of a faithful adherence to a purer form of religion. We see her cursed by a prosperity that has smothered in her heart every thought of God or heaven. Catholic countries, therefore, that are in comparison reproached with their poverty may well rejoice. Dives under his purple and fine linen, and in the midst of his feasting, bears the marks of the outcast and displays them, but Lazarus among his rags shows signs that Abraham's Bosom awaits him.

It is interesting to learn, as we do by cable, that THE BIBLE AT PROTESTANT England possesses at last an approved version of the Bible, and that the sacred volume has been received with satisfaction. The volume

in question is the Revised Version, of which the New Testament had already been published, and which has now been completed by the publication of the Old Testament. We know not what changes have been made in this last publication from the version published under the authority of King James, but if they in any degree approach those that were made in the New Testament they must be both numerous and important. The changes made in the New Testament, in fact, were subversive of the character of that portion of Holy Writ, and by what they expunged as well as by what they left doubtful, they placed the whole matter before every thoughtful man under an aspect that must have been as disquieting as it was novel. Verses, or portions of verses, on which grave doctrines were based, and that had been used with effect in important controversies were pronounced spurious and done away with, or so altered as to assume a completely different meaning. What seems to us to be almost worse, serious questions