

as if it were perfect, or which builds conclusions upon theories which have yet to be proved. He characterizes his former position as a youthful folly and points out that fifteen years ago there was something to be said on behalf of the new teaching, which cannot be said for it any longer. Then oriental archaeology was still struggling to find its path in the darkness, but now discoveries have been made that furnish the most crushing replies to the dogmas of the higher critics. Hebrew history and literature no longer stand alone. Archaeology enables us to test the historical statements of the Pentateuch and to compare the documents contained in it with those of other oriental nations, and the result is that the Old Testament is vindicated. He concludes that the Pentateuch is substantially the work of the author whose name it bears.

It is well known that "higher critics" adduce against this conclusion arguments founded on the language of the books of Moses. To this Professor Sayce replies as follows:

There is one tremendous fact to which the "higher critics" in this country resolutely close their eyes, but which ought to be more than sufficient to weigh down all the lists of words and idioms that were ever marshaled together. Against the evidence of the lists is the evidence of the doctrine and tradition of the Christian church throughout the eighteen centuries of its existence. The same method and arguments which have made of the Pentateuch a later and untrustworthy compilation, whose divine origin and character are discernible only to the critics themselves, would, if applied to the Gospels, end in the same results. In this country, it is true, our critical friends have hitherto kept their faces steadily averted from the New Testament, but the Protestant critics of the continent have been less timid or prudent, and the way along which they should walk has long been pointed out to them by the Tubingen school. And even if we confine ourselves to the Pentateuch, the consequences of the "critical" position are serious enough. It is not only that the conception of the Mosiac law which lies at the back of our own religion, which was assumed by our Lord and His Apostles, and which has been held ever since by the Christian church, is swallowed up in chaotic darkness; we are forced to assign the origin of the belief in the divine message and supernatural authority of the Law to successful fraud. I know we are told that what would be fraud in modern Europe was not fraud in ancient Israel, and that with an improvement in manners and education has come an improvement in morals. But the question is not about ancient Israel and its ideas of morality, but about the immutable God, under whose inspiration, if we are to follow the teaching of Christ and Christianity, the Law was given to Israel. The "higher critics" never seem to me to realize that their conclusions are opposed to the great practical fact of the existence of traditional Christianity, and that against this fact they have nothing to set except the linguistic speculations of a few individual scholars. It is not Athanasius against the world, but Nestorius against the church. On the one side we have a body of doctrine which has been the support in life and the refuge in death of millions of men of all nationalities and grades of mind, which has been witnessed to by Saints and martyrs, which has conquered first the Roman empire and then

the barbarians who destroyed it, and which has brought a message of peace and good-will to suffering humanity. On the other side there is a handful of critics, with their list of words and polychromatic Bibles. And yet the "higher criticism" has never saved any souls or healed any bodies.

It is impossible to follow this reasoning without feeling the truth of it. True religion, in any instance, will stand the test of the scientific crucible. It is so with the principles taught anciently, and it is the same with the principles revealed in this dispensation. Their ultimate vindication and victory are assured in the fact that they are true.

### LOOKING FOR WAR.

The latest dispatches from London are to the effect that a feeling of uncertainty and depression is prevailing in England, owing to the political situation. It is becoming evident that Russia, notwithstanding the official denial in St. Petersburg, has secured concessions of China supposed to be prejudicial to British interests in Asia, and Russia's warships now are actually anchored off Port Arthur, in spite of the protests raised in England against it. Then the situation in Asia Minor is assuming a grave aspect. The insurrectionary movement is growing, and there is no immediate prospect of peace and tranquility within the sultan's domain.

At present England is but little prepared to enforce any of her demands upon her troublesome neighbors. The British empire encompasses the globe, but it is doubtful whether the various interests could really be united in a struggle for the supremacy of the mother country in any one particular region. As long as Great Britain can maintain peace she is likely to keep at the head of Europe in commercial and other peaceful enterprises, but apart from that, the British lion nowhere inspires great awe. Certain it is that Turkey is very restive and would probably like to sever her connection with British bondholders, while China is openly drawing near to Russia. France is constantly operating in Egypt against British interests, and Japan, too, seems to have discovered that her future depends on her relations with the United States and Russia. Under the circumstances England would have to fight her own battles. The St. James Gazette thinks the situation is such that there is no time to lose in getting the naval and military armaments in a complete state of efficiency, and this feeling seems to be general. It will be fair matter of congratulation if war can be averted much longer.

### HOMESTEAD AND DESERT ENTRY.

SALT LAKE CITY,  
November 4, 1895.

To the Editor:

Please answer the following query and greatly oblige several subscribers to your valuable paper: If a person takes up land under the homestead act, does he forfeit his right to the desert act, or is he

still allowed, if he so desires, to take up more land under the desert act?

Yours respectfully,

HOMESTEADER.

A person's action under the homestead law does not affect or interfere with his rights under the desert land act.

### THE SIBERIAN RAILROAD.

The work now going on in Asia—the construction of a railroad line across the immense steppes of Siberia—is one of the greatest importance. In the first place, it will exceed in length any railroad on the globe by over two thousand miles, the entire length being 4,686 miles from Tcheliabinsk in the Ural mountains to Vladivostok on the coast of the sea of Japan. Before the close of this year, the road will be opened as far as the river Obi, and the government is pushing the work with an energy that promises to have it finished long before the time set for its completion. It is carried on silently and without ostentation, but it is none the less one of the greatest undertakings of the century.

The work was begun in 1891 simultaneously at the two extremities of the line. It will be a single track road with the probability of the necessity of doubling it in a not distant future. The cost is estimated at about \$165,000,000, and the government defrays all the expense.

Concerning the motives that decided the Russian rulers to undertake this gigantic work La Nature points out that they were partly political and partly economical. In former wars, it has been demonstrated that Russia suffered on account of her lack of railroads. With better facilities of communication, she would probably have been able to raise the blockade of Sebastopol in the Crimean war. And in the same way, the destruction of Russian arsenals in Kamtschatka by European fleets proved the necessity of modern lines of communication with the eastern Asiatic coast. And this need has only been emphasized by the recent occurrences there. The conflict between China and Japan may blaze up again, and in that event the Trans-Siberian road will enable Russia to play a more important part than hitherto.

But apart from this, the land traversed by the road is wealthy in resources beyond calculation. In the south the country can be made to produce cereals enough to supply the market of the world. Farther north the immense forests can be used for timber and will be, as soon as transportation facilities are supplied. Metallic deposits are distributed all over Siberia. Iron, lead, silver, copper, platinum and gold are found in abundance, as is also coal. It is therefore evident that the road under construction will be of immense benefit to the Russian empire. By it the commerce of the far East will be transformed. Siberia will be peopled, the current of immigration for years to come being likely to turn that way. Russian statesmen are well aware of the importance of this railroad, and the government will therefore see to it that it is rapidly completed and opened for traffic.

A suggestion has been made that the United States railroad system be ex-