

Monthly Messenger.

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To our readers one and all we offer our sincere thanks for past favours and encouragements in connection with this magazine. Very heartily do we wish such of them a "Happy New Year." Doubtless the year on which we have entered will bring to us unknown joys and sorrows. If we cannot tell what even a day may bring forth, how much less, what may be revealed during the days of an entire year. But we need not fear to venture into the future, because the kind and unerring Providence who has guided, comforted, and sustained in the past, is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." His power and goodness are equal to every emergency.

"His love in times past forbids us to think
He will leave us at last in trouble to sink."

God's people have no promise that they will be exempt from trials and afflictions, but they have a blessed assurance that they will be preserved in them, and eventually saved from them.

We think it is plainly taught in the Word of God, that before the end of this dispensation there will be a short season of great trial for the church and people of God. That season may be nigh at hand. At this present moment there is much uneasiness and unrest among the nations. The war cloud seems spreading and lowering over Europe. Perhaps we have seen the beginning of the end. God may now be preparing the way for the final overthrow of the enemies of the truth, and for the accomplishment of His gracious purposes, promises to His ancient people, to the Church, and the world at large. But the Prince of Darkness, like the proud Egyptian King of ancient times, will not relax his grasp without a desperate struggle. The forces of wickedness are marshalling for a great conflict. The enemies of God's truth were never more daring than at present, and it is quite in harmony with history to expect that a brief triumph will be permitted to them. It is not for naught that Infidelity, Rationalism, and Ritualism have made such remarkable progress within the last few years. This trinity of iniquity has overspread Britain and the Continent of Europe, and threatens to overthrow the faith once delivered to the saints. Though there may not appear to be any affinity between these enemies of the Cross, they are agents of the same crafty foe, and will work in harmony for the same object, namely, to set up Antichrist in the Temple of God. We have seen the last-named of these agents of Satan earnestly seeking a union with the two largest and most corrupt forms of Christianity on the Continent. In due time this union will be accomplished. Then a pure Christianity and a simple form of worship will be confronted by a united and powerful foe—a foe

not only possessing vast ecclesiastical powers, but likewise political supremacy—a foe able to wear out the saint of the Most High God, and change times and seasons. We should be prepared for the coming crisis. Those momentous events should not come upon us unawares. The inspired volume forewarns us; therefore we should search it. The study of prophecy is sadly neglected by many professing Christians. We shou'd remember that the Holy Spirit has said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," etc. With the study of prophecy we should combine watchfulness and prayer. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord shall find so doing."

THE YOUNG MEN'S MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION.

The second session of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association was opened by the president, the Rev. T. Hall, in the classroom of Queen's-road Chapel, on the first Wednesday in November. Mr. Alex. A. Parsons was re-elected secretary, and W. A. McKillop, treasurer. The association has been only one year in existence, yet it has made remarkable progress, and opens with encouraging prospects of increased success. It numbers now thirty members. The evenings are occupied with debates, essays, readings, and recitations, and the members take a lively interest in the proceedings. We heartily recommend this association to the fostering care of the church.

HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of this society will be held in February. The friends of the society will, it is hoped, take a deeper interest than ever in its affairs. We want more money, strong faith, and more earnest prayer. Through the kindness of the Colonial Missionary Society, the committee have been enabled to engage the services of Mr. J. Thompson as an additional missionary, under the direction of the Congregational Home Missionary Society, and early in this month he is to proceed to his work in a remote part of this island. In his zeal, prudence, and piety the committee and the church have the fullest confidence.

ALCOHOL.

Why do men drink ale, porter, wine, gin, rum, brandy, or whisky? Simply because they contain alcohol. It is the same substance that druggists call "spirits of wine." It is produced by fermentation. Malt, grapes, sugar-canes, and other sweet substances, are mashed and fermented, and the liquor thus produced becomes intoxicating. Ale and porter contain from 5 to 9 per cent., the rest being chiefly water;