

ever had. If I miss one, he comes and hands me his fare."

THERE are now 7,395 more companies of Christian Endeavor than there were one year ago. The ranks have increased the past year more than they increased in the entire first eight years of the army's history.

MADAGASCAR'S Societies have already increased in number to more than 90, with a membership of about 3,500.

Selections.

PRINCIPAL FAIRBAIRN ON RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

Most of the sermons preached in Oxford on Sunday morning had reference to the visit of the British Association; but by common consent that of Principal Fairbairn, at Mansfield College, treated of the relation of religion to science with conspicuous originality and force. It was a vigorous protest against the exclusion of religion from the study of history and social progress. Choosing for his texts the declaration of Caiaphas that it was expedient that one man should die for the people, and that of Pilate that he had power to crucify Christ or release him, Dr. Fairbairn insisted on the comparative reasonableness of the natural and the evangelical views of Christ. The representatives of the natural view were Caiaphas, the High Priest, and Pilate. The exponent of the evangelical was the Apostle John. The natural view of the priest was expressed in his counsel of expediency that Christ should die for the people; that of Pilate in his claim that he had power to crucify or to release. They were men of cultivated political intelligence who judged according to their lights, but their lights were dim. By an act of extraordinary faith John read the meaning into Jesus which his cultivated contemporaries failed to find. His interpretation may be called a prophetic hypothesis, for it did not so much explain facts that had been or that were, as facts that were to be. Jesus was to him the only-begotten Son of God, descended to earth and made flesh that He might declare the Father. Between these views a long history now stood as an arbiter, and made the question, in a sense, scientific. Two things filled the preacher with wonder: the immensity of the field covered by the sciences which the Association recognised, and the inadequacy of these sciences to the interpretation of man and his universe. Where scientific inquiry

stops is even more remarkable than where it begins and whither it goes. It begins with those mathematics which are pure metaphysics, and rises through the mere concrete sciences to man as a social and economical being. But the most remarkable thing of all is that it leaves religion almost entirely untouched, or touches it at the very remote or conjectured point of savage beliefs. Yet without religion man never is. It is woven into his earliest ideas of nature; it is inseparable from his last. The society he creates expresses it. His language is instinct with it. His first philosophy is a theology, and in a theology his science ends—all the more that he may refuse the name the ideas he cannot escape.

The most impressive vision that can come to any of us is that of a man in his innumerable generations feeling after God. That feeling shows him a being whose very time involves eternity, whose finitude is an infinite. But if religion be so necessary to man, the religious person is the most potent factor of change and movement in history. The creative spirit in religion touches man at every point, and determines by his action on the person the future of the race. Now he belongs to the order of the creators of religion. Nor can it be doubted that he holds the foremost place. He did not create the idea of God, but he raised it to the highest point at once of purity and potency. He perfected Monotheism, and made deity, whilst spiritual, so attractive as to become the ideal which governed man. He so acted upon the religious subject as to give for the first time value to the individual yet unity of the race. He created, too, the enthusiasm to save, making the sinful not the mere criminal to be condemned, but the last to be redeemed and rescued. The religion he introduced was as moral as the God he revealed; and the society he conceived and created was one that knew no distinction of caste and order, but only a brotherhood of spirit and unity of life. The Scriptures he created to be the inspiration and guide of His people rose in obedience to what seemed a spiritual necessity. In the light of his achievements the problem stated at the outset must be studied and solved. Could the rigorous naturalism of the cultured intelligence solve it? The immediate result—the death Jesus suffered—might justify the naturalism, but what of the ultimate effects? If there was nothing in him to explain these, what was the religion but a freak of nature, inexplicable, a sort of madness of the spirit? But how can it be so explained and the reasonableness of man in his belief and service of it maintained? If there were order in nature there could be no chance in history, for chance is a term of ignorance, not of knowledge. But if order reigned in history, the person most necessary to it could be no product of