

Regional Conference

LAST October the Society visited the South Parish Church, Skelmorlie, for the annual conference ; there was an attendance of 24 members and friends. After Holy Communion, celebrated by the President the Rev. G. Rendle Leatham, B.D., and a talk on the church by the minister, members adjourned to a nearby hotel where, through the generosity of some parishioners at Skelmorlie South, they were entertained to lunch. The hotel ballroom with its panoramic views of the Firth of Clyde, proved to be a spacious setting for the afternoon session, and members settled most comfortably to hear a paper by the Rev. David R. Easton, M.A., Greenock, St. Paul's.

By his choice of the arresting title, "Public Worship—Renaissance or Extinction", Mr Easton evidently intended to startle us. Certainly he found no difficulty in instancing much that is wrong or unhelpful in our present situation—a built in antiliturgical bias on the part of many, an over emphasis on the intellectual, the prevalent idea that worship is something done by the worshippers for themselves, the sheer boredom of the people on so many occasions. Pointing to the obvious need for re-appraisal, Mr Easton went on to formulate some guiding principles, exemplifying also some practical steps.

There is a need to regain the Christo-centricity of worship, as it was in the early church, seeing the Lord's Day as the celebration of the Resurrection, worship as a Eucharistic feast with Christ sitting at Table with His own.

There is a need for the note of joy in worship, as in the French Calvinist tradition, sombreness to be dispelled by the adoration of Christ present.

There is a need for symbolism and drama, painting and music, and skilful imagination on the part of the minister as he leads his people.

There is a need for an apologetic of worship, to get people past what is stereotyped, to a revelation of what worship really is. The minister must teach, and go on teaching about worship, both from the pulpit and in the parish magazine.

Morning service while the same in form and order, should have changing emphases each Sunday, and a month's

schema might include Baptism, Intercession, Preaching the Word, Communion, with a fresh approach to the distinctiveness of the festivals.

The Conference was the second one dealing with subjects under consideration by the Church of Scotland Working Party on Reformed Worship, and undoubtedly it served to stimulate interest in these researches, which it is understood, are nearing completion.

Members might care to note that the **next Conference** will be held in **Edinburgh, at the Kirk of the Greyfriars, on Monday, 19th October, 1970.** Details will be circulated to our members in the area. All others who wish to attend should inform the Hon. Secretary who will be pleased to forward a programme.

Notice Boards

WHILE members of the Society may well be suspicious of banner headlines as savouring of the disorderly, it is surely not in keeping with good order that Notice Boards advertising services should be ill-written or too small in type. They should be legible at a comfortable distance and should be sited boldly and not apologetically tucked away in a corner. There is no guarantee in these days that they will not suddenly be obscured by the moving of a telephone kiosk or some such operation, but at least the committee or member of Kirk Session responsible for publicity should check to see that the good order of this vital link with the congregation and the public is not taken for granted. It may need an overhaul. Along with this goes the control of ephemeral advertising material on church notice boards out of doors and in church porches. It hardly gives the impression of a live congregation if the latest meeting announcement is that of one which took place six months ago or even one month ago.