

THE CHURCH SERVICE SOCIETY NOTES

Regional Conference

The 1978 Conference was held in September last at Dundee, within St Mary's Parish Church.

After Holy Communion, celebrated by the President, Professor J. K. S. Reid, members adjourned to Kirk House to hear a paper by Dr John W. Fraser of Farnell on "Liturgy and Evangelism".

Adherents of a certain school of theological thought might, in their polarity, have termed it — Liturgy *or* Evangelism. It was good therefore to sit at the feet of Dr Fraser and to hear expounded the evangelical basis of Liturgy. Turning first to a recently published account of a revivalist evangelical campaign in Belgium, Dr Fraser subjected it to a shrewd, careful and statistical assessment. By contrast, his emphasis was on Liturgy — the weekly proclamation in Praise, Prayer and the Word, of the mighty acts of God, right through the Christian year, beginning at Advent — and his conclusion? A sudden burst of evangelical fervour — with its spectacular emotionalism — is not to be compared to the consistent message of any parish church faithfully proclaimed, week by week, throughout the year.

In the afternoon there was an illuminating discussion which explored many of the points made. At the close, the vote of thanks was proposed by the Rev. P. M. Gordon.

The ample facilities at Kirk House were matched by the excellent hospitality, and it was a pleasure to have from Mr Macmillan, at the lunch interval, the stirring and colourful history of the City Centre Church of Dundee and its present involvement in all aspects of city life.

There was an attendance of 26 members and friends.

Centenary Lecture

The Centenary Lectureship foundation, which marks the Centenary of the Society in 1965, provides for a biennial Lecture, the aim of which is to promote scholarship in worship.

Since the institution of the Lectures in 1970, the first four were given by liturgical scholars of the Reformed tradition. For the fifth Lecture (1978) the Society turned — for the first time — to a theologian of the Anglican Communion, the Reverend Dr A. M. Allchin, Canon of Canterbury.

The Lecture, entitled "The World is charged with the

Grandeur of God: Worship and the material Creation" was delivered at Edinburgh, in the Martin Hall, New College, on 13th November, and at Aberdeen, at King's College, on 14th November.

From his Gerard Manley Hopkins quotation, Canon Allchin moved easily to his theme of the epiphanies of God, beginning Biblically with the Burning Bush and culminating in the Incarnation. In the material creation the immanence of God is a continuing experience, which calls man perpetually to see and respond to the Glory of God, and to lead all creation in His praise.

There followed at both centres a lively and useful discussion which was skilfully guided by Dr Allchin.

At Edinburgh, where the President, Professor J. K. S. Reid presided, the vote of thanks was given by Professor D. B. Forrester. At Aberdeen, the Department of Systematic Theology were associated in promoting the Lecture which was given the status of a University Lecture. The Rev. A. Stewart Todd, Vice-President, introduced the lecturer, and at the close, the warm appreciation of all present was expressed by Professor J. B. Torrance.

The Lecture fully maintained the high standard evinced in previous lectures. All who attended will indeed look forward to reading and studying the subject in print in the next issue of *Liturgical Review*.