

3-1-1941

Miscellanea

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Recommended Citation

Kretzmann, P. E. (1941) "Miscellanea," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 12 , Article 21.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol12/iss1/21>

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Miscellanea

The Bible and War

1. The Fifth Commandment represents forever the fundamental principle governing the relation of man with regard to the body and life of his fellow-men, namely, that man must not commit murder. Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17; Matt. 5:21; Rom. 13:9; Gen. 9:5c.

2. The spiritual content and tenor of the Fifth Commandment is even intensified by the explanation given by the Lord when He includes also spite and anger in the prohibition of the commandment. Matt. 5:22; Lev. 19:17; 1 John 2:9, 11; 3:15; 4:20.

3. Yet the Lord has not only empowered, but even commanded, the government to take the life of man in punishment of murder committed. Gen. 9:6; Matt. 26:52; Rom. 13:4b.

4. Under the theocratic conditions of the Old Testament we find both defensive and offensive wars sanctioned by God. Ex. 17:16; Num. 21:1 ff.; 10:9; Deut. 20:12, 19, 20; Josh. 11:18; 1 Sam. 14:52; Prov. 24:6.

5. In the New Testament, in general, war is spoken of in an incidental fashion, and the calling of a soldier is not condemned. Luke 14:31; 1 Cor. 9:7; Luke 3:14.

6. It is the duty of every government to protect its citizens against enemies, if necessary, by force of arms. But God's warning against unjust wars is addressed to every government. Ps. 68:30.

7. Citizens owe allegiance and obedience to their government, no matter of what form this government may be. This includes service in war. Rom. 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:17.

8. While the Apology of the Augsburg Confession speaks of wars as calamities, our Lutheran Confessions plainly teach that just wars are to be waged, apparently making no distinction between wars of defense and wars of aggression.

Apology, III, 70: "David's labors, in waging wars and in his home government, are holy works, are true sacrifices, are contests of God, defending the people who had the Word of God against the devil in order that the knowledge of God might not be entirely extinguished on earth."

Apology, XVI, 55, 59: "Neither does the Gospel bring new laws concerning the civil state but commands that we obey present laws, whether they have been framed by heathen or by others, and that in this obedience we should exercise love. . . . The Gospel forbids private redress. . . . Public redress, which is made through the office of the magistrate, is not advised against but is commanded and is a work of God, according to Paul, Rom. 13:1 sqq. Now, the different kinds of public redress are legal decisions, capital punishment, wars, military service."

See also the Augsburg Confession, Article XVI: "Of civil affairs they teach that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to judge

matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers. . . ."

9. Luther also enjoins obedience to the government in serving in the event of war, making an exception only in cases of wars of aggression whose lack of justification can be clearly proved by the subjects of the country concerned.

"It must therefore be concluded on this point: To wage wars against equals must be a matter to which one is compelled and be done in the fear of God. But compulsion is when the enemy or neighbor attacks or begins hostilities and will not offer any assistance if one proposes justice, a hearing, an agreement, and if one endures evil words and mischievous tricks and does not make them an issue but persists in his headstrong behavior. . . . But in all this God's hands are not tied that He might command warfare against such as have given us no cause, as He bade the children of Israel war against the Canaanites; there we have enough compulsion to wage war, namely, the command of God, although such a war also may not be waged without fear and care, as God indicates, Josh. 7:1 ff., when the children of Israel were secure in their campaign against the men of Ai and were repulsed. It is such a matter of necessity when subjects wage war at the command of their government. For God commands that we be obedient to the government, and such a command is a necessity laid upon us; and yet it should be done with fear and humility. . . . The other question: What if my lord were wrong in his declaring war? Answer: If you know definitely that he is in the wrong, you shall fear and obey God more than him, Acts 5:29, and you shall not wage war or serve, since you cannot have a good conscience before God. . . . But if you do not have the information and cannot find out whether your lord is in the wrong, you shall not weaken an uncertain obedience for the sake of an uncertain right, but you shall, after the manner of love, assume the best of your lord." (*Ob Kriegsleute auch in einem seligen Stande sein koennen*. St. Louis Ed., 10:518 ff., §§ 59, 70, 71.) Cp. §§ 46, 51-53, which are addressed chiefly to the government. See also on Is. 9:5, 6:168 f., § 166; on Matt. 5:33-37, 7:460 f., § 228; Lillegard, *The Principles of the Separation of Church and State*, 9-15.

10. Most of the arguments advanced by "conscientious objectors" are the products of an *erring* conscience, one whose ideas are not rooted and grounded in Scripture. One of the most dangerous of such arguments rests on the allegation that, since in a democracy the citizens elect the men who constitute the government, the citizens themselves constitute the government. Although, in a democracy, the citizens may at all times try to influence the government in a lawful manner, it is wrong to identify citizenry and government. Citizens owe allegiance and obedience to the constituted government, Rom. 13:1 ff., except in cases which clearly come under Acts 5:29.

11. As for the individual Christian, Scripture clearly states that he should always be a lover of peace, Rom. 12:18-21, pray for peace, work for peace, and, to the extent of his ability and influence, try to keep his government in the ways of peace.

P. E. KRETZMANN

Striving for Peace

In the *Lutheran Standard* for January 18, 1941, an editorial appeared which bore the caption "A Time to Speak," which we here reprint:

There is "a time to keep silence and a time to speak." Now is the time for American citizens, for you and me, to speak on the subject of war and peace, of further entanglements in the affairs of the European nations.

Many—perhaps most—of you who read these lines heard addresses on two successive nights (Sunday, December 29, and Monday, December 30) on our nation's relation to the present European conflict. The first of these addresses, delivered by President Roosevelt, pleaded for every possible assistance to Britain short of war as the one way of conquering Hitlerism and preserving our democracy and national well-being. The second address, delivered by Senator Wheeler, pleaded for every possible effort to effect a just, reasonable, and generous peace as the best possible way of blasting Hitlerism and preserving and fostering the welfare of our own nation.

The public press spoke of Senator Wheeler's address as "an answer" to President Roosevelt's address, and the country doubtless took this view of the matter. While both speakers denounced Naziism in unmistakable terms and both speakers emphasized the importance of keeping America out of the war,—two points to which we, too, heartily agree,—there was a radical difference between them as to the best way of accomplishing this twofold objective. Perhaps a fair statement of the two views would be this: Our President believes that our safety and welfare lie in minding England's business; the Senator believes that our welfare and safety lie in minding our own business and doing all we can to end economic inequality and poverty and disease in our own land. The President believes that we must concentrate on helping England and Greece to destroy Hitler and his friends, and then all will be well in our world; the Senator believes that Hitler's rise was occasioned by injustices in Europe, which must be eliminated in order to eliminate Hitlerism, that we in America must concentrate on our own domestic problems, and that, unless we turn from a foreign policy that no longer means "trudging" toward war but "running" toward it, we shall soon make the last state of the world infinitely worse than the first by being ourselves "cast into the cauldron of blood and hate that is Europe today."

On this issue and its far-reaching consequences—who is prophet enough to state how great a stake the home, the Church, liberty, democracy, and every other cherished value have in this tremendous issue?—we, the people, should now speak. As citizens we should speak. As Christian citizens we should speak. It is well known that serious efforts have been made so to amend the Constitution of the United States as to provide for a referendum on war. Under such a war-referendum amendment the Congress would have no authority to declare war (save in the event of an invasion of the United States or its territorial possessions) until a proposed declaration of war was confirmed by a majority of all votes cast thereon in a nation-wide referendum. No such con-

stitutional amendment has been passed, but certainly it is our privilege, nay, our duty, as citizens in a democracy to "vote" on the question of war and peace at this critical time, even though we do not go to the polls to do so. We can "vote" by writing to our respective Senators and Congressmen. If we want our nation to stay out of this war and are convinced that President Roosevelt's plan for all possible aid to Britain is the best way to keep us out, then we should so inform our representatives. If we are convinced that to do everything possible "short of war" is in itself undeclared war and dangerously likely to get us into total war, we should make that very plain in letters to our representatives. If, as Christian citizens, we think about these matters, pray about them, and honestly and earnestly desire to do God's will and to make our influence felt on the side that will best promote the good estate of all men, we need not be ashamed to let our voice be heard. Rather let us be ashamed if we fail to let our voice be heard. Perhaps we shall not all think and speak alike. Let us think and speak nevertheless; for there are powerful forces, selfish forces, unscrupulous forces, that are only too glad to do our thinking and our speaking for us—and then let us and our children bear the awful consequences of their selfishness and our apathy. Well did Senator Wheeler declare in his radio address:

"I do not believe that the great majority of our people are eager to be embraced by war—and I call upon them not to be afraid to say so."

Some of our districts and conferences have already gone on record on the matter of neutrality and peace. It is well at this time to recall resolutions which were passed when the danger of war was not as imminent as it is today and to echo such resolutions in our letters to Washington today. Here, for example, are some paragraphs from the resolutions adopted by our Texas District last April:

"WHEREAS, The United States is being flooded with propaganda intended to draw it into this impending holocaust of destruction; and

"WHEREAS, Internal subversive elements are at this time endangering our democratic principles and with them the freedom of religion, of speech, and of the press and are thereby undermining our American form of government with all its precious institutions; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Texas District of the A. L. C. . . . is of the conviction that the cause of democracy, of freedom, and of justice can best be served by the United States of America:

"1. If the United States remain strictly neutral in this present war, conscientiously observing the advice of George Washington concerning 'foreign entanglements,' lest, by being drawn into the war, the United States sacrifice its own liberty and, in consequence, lose its opportunity to give sane directives for the rebuilding of a devastated, impoverished, and despairing Europe when the war is ended.

"2. If every honest effort be made to uncover any and all subversive activities in our land.

"3. If we firmly stand by the principle of religious freedom as well as the principle of separation of Church and State and oppose any movement that militates against these principles.

"4. If we bear in mind that all peace efforts and social or economic

cures will fail until the people of the United States again return to faith in God and to His moral order.

"Therefore we call upon

"1. The churches and their people to proclaim with renewed emphasis such return to faith in God and His moral order.

"2. The Government of the United States that it do all within its power to keep our beloved country out of the European conflict.

"3. The press of the land to counteract the evil results of foreign propaganda by presenting facts in their true light.

"4. Pastors of churches fearlessly to testify against sin, setting forth its destructive consequences, and energetically to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only remedy for the individual and society in these dark days."

Brethren, we pleaded with you to vote at the last national election. That was important. Here is something still more important: to speak, to write to your Senators and Congressmen on the subject of America's neutrality and her contributions to world peace. Now is the time to speak. Soon it may be too late.—

This concludes the editorial. Whether, when the readers get to see these words, we shall still be enjoying the blessings of peace, we of course do not know. Our fervent prayer is that God preserve this great blessing to us and our country. With respect to the editorial we merely submit a few brief comments.

1) It is the duty of every citizen to oppose every unjustified war and work for peace as long as that can be legitimately done.

2) Inasmuch as what has just been said is a moral duty resting on declarations of the Scriptures and the voice of conscience, it is the duty of the Church to preach it.

3) After the Church has set forth what the Bible states with reference to the attitude of God's children toward war and peace, it has done what it can do. It cannot go beyond the Scriptures. Its authority to speak ends where Scripture teaching ends. Whether a certain war is justified or not must be decided by the government and the citizens of a certain country and is not a matter that is subject to the judgment of the Church. This is one reason why the Church can remain united even though the opinions of its members differ as to the course to be pursued with respect to any particular war.

4) We hope of course that all our Christians, all the members of our Church, will seek earnestly and conscientiously to apply the teachings of the Holy Scriptures with respect to the crisis which confronts us.

A.

The Word and the Sacraments

"In *Christian Dogmatics* you write that 'the divine Law is rightly excluded from the means of grace.' (Cf. Dr. Pieper: '*Gnadenmittel ist . . . das Wort von der Versöhnung oder das Wort des Evangeliums.*' *Christl. Dog.*, III:124.) As the divinely ordained means of grace you acknowledge only the Gospel and the Sacraments. (Cf. p. 441 f.) But could not

also the Law be called a means of grace inasmuch as through it the Holy Ghost works in the sinner the necessary knowledge of sin, excites contrition, and so prepares him for the saving work of the Gospel? After all, is it not in agreement with our Confessions to say that the *Word and the Sacraments* are the divinely ordained means of salvation? Does not the term 'Word' there include also the Law?"

In answering these questions, let us begin by stressing the fact that the term "means of grace" is not a Scripture (*vox Evangelii*) but a Church term (*vox ecclesiae*), so that, since it is not contained in the Word of God, its right meaning and use must be determined (on the basis of Scripture, of course) by those who teach doctrinal theology and, in this case, by *Lutheran* dogmaticians, since, properly speaking, Calvinists do not avow any means of grace. Again, regarding the expression "means of grace," as also many others of similar import and function, such orthodox teachers should not be hereticated as do not employ it in precisely the same manner as do the more cautious and accurate theologians, provided, of course, that they teach the true Scripture doctrine which is stressed by it. Quenstedt, for example, does not wish the divine Law to be excluded entirely from the term "means of grace," though he rightly distinguishes between the Law and the Gospel and ascribes to each its proper Scriptural domain and function. He writes: "When we attribute to the Word a divine power and efficacy to produce spiritual effects, we wish not to be understood as speaking of the Gospel only but also of the Law; for, although the Law does not produce these gracious results directly and *per se*, that is, does not kindle faith in Christ and effect conversion, since this is rather to be ascribed to the Gospel, still the letter is not on this account dead but is efficacious after its kind; for it killeth, 2 Cor. 3:6; it worketh wrath, Rom. 4:15, etc." (Cf. *Doctrinal Theology*, by H. Schmid, translated by Hay-Jacobs, p. 504.) If from this peculiar point of view any one wishes to call the entire Word of God, Law and Gospel, a means of grace, no charge of teaching false doctrine should be preferred against him, since no unscriptural doctrine is involved, and Law and Gospel remain rightly divided.

Quenstedt's words, however, may be cited to show just why more exact dogmaticians recognize only the Gospel and the Sacraments as the divinely ordained means of grace, and not the Law. Hollaz defines the *media salutis* as "external means ordained by God by which God offers to men the grace acquired by Christ and engenders and preserves the necessary faith to accept such grace." (Cf. *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 441; *Kompendium der Dogmatik*, Luthardt-Jelke, p. 330; *Christliche Dogmatik*, Pieper, III, p. 121 ff.) The Law simply does not do these things; it does not offer grace to men, nor does it produce and preserve faith in their hearts. All it does is to point out to man his sin and by severe threats to condemn and terrify him because of his original and actual guilt. The effects of the Law are the *terrores conscientiae*, which do not bring a contrite person a step nearer to God than he was before the Law had aroused in him fear and despair. (Cf. the case of Judas.) The Law works wrath, Rom. 4:15; not salvation, Rom. 7:10. Of course, this preparatory work to conversion is both divine and necessary, since only the

convicted and contrite sinner, through the work of the Holy Ghost accomplished by the Gospel, will accept the proffered grace and forgiveness of sins. The Law, so to speak, only *prepares the way* for the Gospel, yet does not render the sinner disposed to accept the Gospel. Nevertheless it remains true that the Law cannot be classed among the *media communicationis remissionis peccatorum sive iustificationis ex parte Dei*, because by its very nature it is opposed to such remission of sins; it condemns but does not forgive.

In the friendly letter addressed to us it was suggested that in this matter even our Confessions do not speak distinctly, since they use the terms "Law" and "Gospel" in a narrow and in a wide sense. In their wide sense the terms stand for the entire Christian doctrine; in the narrow sense they are used in those specific meanings in which they are more than contradictory, to speak with Luther (*plus quam contradictoria*). We admit that especially the Apology at times is using terms in a different sense. Melancthon, for instance, writes thus: "For the Gospel convicts all men that they are under sin, that they all are subject to eternal wrath and death, and offers, for Christ's sake, remission of sin and justification, which is received by faith." (Cf. Art. IV:62; *Triglot*, p.139.) Here the term "Gospel" is used in the sense of the *entire doctrine of the Bible*, or of *God's Word*; and, so understood, that which Melancthon here writes is indeed correct. However, when the same Melancthon speaks more accurately, he clearly distinguishes between the Law and the Gospel and ascribes to each a distinct and special use and function. Melancthon thus writes: "Sin terrifies consciences; *this occurs through the Law, which shows the wrath of God against sin*; but we gain the victory through Christ. How? By faith, when we comfort ourselves by confidence in the mercy promised for Christ's sake." (Cf. Art. IV:79; *Triglot*, p.143.) Again: "They nevertheless do not find in these works peace of conscience, but, in true terrors, heaping up works upon works, they at length despair because they find no work sufficiently pure. . . . *The Law always accuses and produces wrath.*" (Cf. Art. III:83; *Triglot*, p.177.) And: "For, since the promise cannot be received except by faith, the Gospel, which is properly the promise of the remission of sins and of justification for Christ's sake, proclaims the righteousness of faith in Christ, *which the Law does not teach.*" (Art. IV:43; *Triglot*, p.133.) Also: "Thus the adversaries, while they require in the remission of sins and justification confidence in one's own love, altogether abolish the *Gospel concerning the free remission of sins.*" (Art. IV:110; *Triglot*, p.153.) Or: "For the two chief works of God in men are these, to terrify, and to justify and quicken those who have been terrified. Into these two works all Scripture has been distributed. The one part is the *Law, which shows, reproves, and condemns sins.* The other part is the *Gospel, i. e., the promise of grace bestowed in Christ*; and this promise is constantly repeated in the whole of Scripture." (Art. XII:55; *Triglot*, p.265.)

Melancthon, then, had a clear knowledge of the basic and thorough distinction between the Law and the Gospel, and he never considered the Law, in its proper sense, to be a means of grace. In the light of the accurate statements of Melancthon, quoted above, we must understand also Article V of the Augsburg Confession, in which he writes: "That

we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits but for Christ's sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake." (Triglot, p. 45.) Melancthon here states that the instruments, or means, of grace are the Word and the Sacraments; but to him the "Word" in this sense is not the entire doctrine of the Bible, in particular, not the Law, but the Gospel alone, namely, the joyful message that "God for Christ's sake justifies those who believe." For this reason it is in full agreement with our Confessions to say: "The means of grace are the Gospel and the Sacraments," excluding from these means the divine Law.

There is a definite reason why we should exclude from the means of grace the Law of God, no matter how necessary and useful in its proper sphere it may be. Romanism and Calvinism so egregiously mingle the Law and the Gospel that from this nothing but work-righteousness must result. Rome, of course, does this purposely, since the foundation of its entire religious set-up is justification by good works. Calvinism does it in consequence of its unscriptural doctrine of the eternal reprobation of the lost and its equally unscriptural doctrine of a limited atonement and a limited *voluntas Dei gratiae*. The believer, therefore, unable to find assurance of salvation in the Gospel's universal promises of grace (which are applied by Calvinists only to the elect), is forced to base the certainty of his salvation on something good within himself, in other words, on the Holy Spirit's sanctifying operation in his heart (*gratia infusa*). But to intermingle the Law and the Gospel means to weaken both in their essence and function: "The Law is not so severe in its demands and condemnations as some alarmist theologians picture it, and the *sola fide* (*sola gratia*) must not be taken as gloriously as extreme rightists suggest." In other words, "if a contrite sinner feels sorry for his sins, even if he should not yet believe in Christ as his Savior, he thereby performs a good work, which merits for him God's favor or, to use papistic terms, some *prima gratia* or even *meritum condigni*." Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism (and in practice even pure Calvinism becomes Arminianistic), and synergism all commingle Law and Gospel, and all, though from different viewpoints and in different degrees, finally land in the same camp of Pelagianism. It is to avoid this tragic consequence that our orthodox teachers, together with our Confessions, so sharply distinguish between Law and Gospel and ascribe to the Law no saving or redeeming power at all, declaring that only the Gospel and the Sacraments are the *media salutis, per quae Deus acquisitam a Mediatore Christo salutem omnibus hominibus ex gratia offert veramque fidem donat et conservat*. And in the end orthodox Lutheranism must insist upon this *modus loquendi*, since otherwise confusion of concepts and terms is bound to result and the Scriptural doctrines of the fundamental distinction of Law and Gospel will be endangered, and with it the *sola fide*. Antinomianism has no place in sound Lutheranism, but sound Lutheranism demands also that the Law and Gospel be taught "by the side of each other but in a definite order and with a proper distinction."

(*Triglot*, p.957; Art. V:15; Thor.Decl.) With what has just been said regarding the means of grace (the Gospel and the Sacraments) agrees also what Luther writes in his great sermon on the pericope of St. Peter and Paul's Day (Matt. 16:13-19): "This treasure [forgiveness of sins] the Church possesses, that is, the communion, or congregation, of those who confess with St. Peter that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. But this treasure the Christian Church distributes *not merely through the Word*, absolution and public preaching, *but also through Baptism and the Holy Supper* of the Lord Christ; for 'he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' Hence, if you believe that the body of Christ is given into death for you and His blood is shed for your sins and you receive the most blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood in this faith, then you have forgiveness of sins. Since, then, the Church has the command to distribute forgiveness of sins in this manner, let no one despise *such means of grace*, but use them gladly and often; for Christ instituted them not without a cause. He knew well that we require this remedy. . . . Nowhere else should we go than to the *congregation, which Christ has commanded to forgive sins through the Word, Baptism, and the Holy Supper.*" (St. L. Ed., XIII:1179.) From Luther's words it is clear that whenever he speaks of the "Word" as a means of grace, he means that Word which offers, conveys, and seals forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, just as do Baptism and the Lord's Supper, that is, the Gospel alone and not the Law.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

On the Study of Systematic Theology

An editorial in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct.-Dec., 1940, says: ". . . The query rises in the mind of one whose ideals conform somewhat to those of the seminaries of two generations ago as to whether theology—the queen of all the sciences and more extensive in its comprehensiveness than all other sciences combined—has ceased to be what it has been or whether it must now totter about, leaning on two crutches, sociology, and philosophy. . . . If physicians were to give up the study of anatomy, they would commit no greater crime against their profession than the minister is committing against his calling by the present neglect of systematic theology. The situation may be estimated somewhat by the fact that slightly over five per cent. of the standard works on systematic theology are in print today, that a work on theology in a minister's library is hardly to be found, and that the theological seminaries are slackening their emphasis on this discipline by shortened courses and by intruding substitutes. It is no small indication as well that practically all the theological quarterlies have forsaken the field. Is the situation to be explained on the hypothesis that the modern scholar has discovered that systematic theology is unworthy of its former consideration or on the hypothesis that there is something wrong with the modern scholar?" The statement concerning works of theology in the ministers' libraries does not describe the condition in our circles. Nor has our theological journal forsaken the field of pure theology. But the leading thought in the editorial is worth pondering: there is something wrong with the minister who neglects systematic theology.

E.

Evangelistic Services in Nagercoil, India

In the minutes of the conference of our missionaries held in Nagercoil, India, last summer an interesting report of special Lenten services appeared which our readers, we are sure, will peruse with joy and thanksgiving. Without further words of introduction or comment we submit the report:

Since this was the first venture of this kind that we have attempted, it would probably be best that we give a somewhat fuller report than otherwise.

The Pioneer Picture Palace was rented for Good Friday, Saturday, and Easter Sunday afternoon, 4:30 to 5:30. 5:30 to 6:30 might have been a better hour, but we could have the hall only till 5:30.

A month before Holy Week 2,000 copies of the Gospel according to St. Mark in Tamil were distributed to non-Christian homes by seminary and catechist-class students. In each copy was pasted a printed page telling of the nature and purpose of the booklet which the Lutheran mission was glad to give them and announcing our public services, to which they were cordially invited. The territory covered was charted, so that, if we continue the distribution of gospels, we can begin where we left off.

8,000 hand-bills on varicolored paper were distributed in the streets Monday to Thursday of Holy Week with approximately this legend in Tamil: "This week. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 4:30 P.M. In the Pioneer Picture Palace. Special meetings. Rev. Rittmann, Rev. Peckmann, and Dr. Lutz of the Lutheran mission will speak in Tamil. You are cordially invited." 8,000 more hand-bills were distributed on the days of the services, reading somewhat like this: "Today. 4:30 P.M. In the Pioneer Picture Palace. You are invited to come in and sit down." Posters with about the same wording were attractively painted by Mr. V. Isaac, drawing-master, now studying in our catechist class.

On hand-bills and posters the services were called "special meetings" and not "Christian services" or "Lenten services." No mention was made of the subject. It was feared that otherwise, since the idea of such services in a public place was new, the reaction of the non-Christian might be: "The Christians are letting us know that they are having a big convention, and we may come if we care to." The main purpose of our services, on the contrary, was to reach the non-Christians, whom we could not ordinarily persuade to come to our regular church services, and the idea which we wanted to put across to them in our hand-bills and posters was that these services were being arranged just for them. The "For your benefit" and "No ticket required" were made prominent. However, lest the omission of any reference to Christianity be misconstrued as concealment or deception, the wording on every poster and hand-bill was surmounted by a cross, and the first set of hand-bills specifically mentioned the speakers as Lutheran missionaries. Also, the *Gramma Thoothan*, local Tamil four-page daily, announced that Lutheran missionaries would preach in Tamil on the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For half an hour before each service Tamil Christian lyrics were

played from records over a loud-speaker placed in front of the cinema. This served the double purpose of broadcasting the Christian contents of the records and of drawing a crowd to the place of the services. The people filled the street in front of the cinema, "listening to the radio." In our poster and hand-bill for those days we made it a point not to omit the "Come in."

Good Friday's service began with a flute solo by Mr. J. Samraj. This was for the purpose of getting the people quiet and in a mood for the service. Then two boys of our Nagercoil Middle School sang a Lenten lyric. A Scripture-reading was followed by "O Darkest Woe! Ye Tears, Forth flow!" In the Tamil translation the first, third, and seventh stanzas bring out the Lenten message most distinctly. A young boy with a sweet, clear voice sang these stanzas as a solo, eight schoolmates joining in alternately with stanzas 2, 4, and 8. Brother Rittmann then preached on 1 John 1:7: "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The service was closed with a prayer, followed by the necessary announcements. Saturday's service followed the same order, with Brother Peckmann preaching on Matt. 7:13: "Enter ye in at the strait gate." On Sunday Dr. Lutz preached on the Easter Gospel, Mark 16:1-8.

Several of our Tamil publications were placed on sale after each service. None were sold until Sunday, when a total of Rs. 3 worth were sold.

The attendance exceeded our fondest hopes. The hall was filled on Easter, almost filled on the other days, with people standing at the doors. The acting manager of the theater estimated Easter's attendance at 1,500. Though his estimate is no doubt a couple hundred too high, it is perhaps safe to say that the attendance averaged about 1,000.

Though we cannot judge the composition of the crowd very accurately, we believe that the majority were Hindus. Many L. M. S. people and many of our own mission attended. There were also quite a few from the Salvation Army.

The attention was very good. On the last day the children seated and lying around down at the front were kept more quiet than on the previous two days by tactful members of our mission who were seated here and there among them to admonish them in a subdued tone of voice when they got a little restless. A Brahmin later remarked that he was particularly surprised at two things: that missionaries could speak such good Tamil and that a public meeting could be held in these days without the least disturbance. We had no policeman inside or outside the hall. That the attention was good and the sermons were understood is indicated by the remarks heard afterwards. These were not merely general remarks but referred also to specific points made in each of the three sermons.

Brother Schroeder gave very able assistance in taking care of the staging and seating arrangements, etc. Mr. Samraj took charge of the music. Brother Miller had general charge of the arrangements and also served as chaplain at the three services. Brother Strasen served as head usher. One of the most hopeful results of the services was the reaction on the part of a number of our Indian coworkers.

The following is an account of the expenses, which were met, by conference resolution, from Monday service collections:

2,000 copies of Mark's gospel (VP 0-6-0) _____	33-14-0
Rail and forwarding agent on do. _____	5-13-0
Notices printed and pasted in do. _____	4- 2-0
8,000 hand-bills No. 1 printed _____	5-14-0
8,000 hand-bills No. 2 printed _____	5-14-0
5 posters _____	5- 0-0
Rent of cinema three days _____	15- 0-0
Rent of loud-speaker three days _____	15- 0-0

Conference, after hearing the report, urged the Gospel Work Committee to make arrangements for similar services during the Advent season. A.

W. C. Bryant on Immortality

Writing, some time ago, in the *Watchman-Examiner* on the subject "Our Reasonable Faith in the Future Life," the Rev. Horace E. Hewitt of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, England, submits a section from a poem and a letter by Bryant, the American poet, which shows that the latter's position with respect to death does not find full expression in his famous poem *Thanatopsis*. Mr. Hewitt writes: "In Bryant's poem *The Flood of the Years* the following lines occur:

"So they pass
From stage to stage along the shining course
Of that fair river, broadening like a sea.
As its smooth eddies curl along their way,
They bring old friends together; hands are clasped
In joy unspeakable. The mother's arms
Again are folded round the child she loved
And lost. Old sorrows are forgotten now
Or but remembered to make sweet the hour
That overpays them. Wounded hearts that bled
Or broke are healed forever."

"A man who had been sorely bereaved was so struck by the unquestionable faith in immortality expressed in these lines that he wrote the poet, asking if the lines were to be understood as a statement of his own belief. Mr. Bryant instantly replied in the note:

"DEAR SIR:

"Certainly I believe all that is said in the lines you have quoted. If I had not, I could not have written them. I believe in the everlasting life of the soul; and it seems to me that immortality would be but an imperfect gift without the recognition in the life to come of those who are dear to us here. Yours truly, W. C. Bryant."

Of course, even so the Christian faith is not set forth by Bryant. What he states does not go beyond the sentiments voiced by Cicero in his celebrated essay *De Senectute* or *Cato Maior*. A.