

God for a revelation of that which no human being could know, and God answered by showing him in a dream the very picture that had startled Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel first offered a prayer of thanksgiving and then went before the King and told him of the dream that he could not recall. The King at once recognized the dream, and the fact that Daniel had described to him the terrible image with head of gold, breast and arms of silver, middle parts of brass, legs of iron and feet of iron and clay gave him confidence in the truth of the interpretation.

It is the most notable dream that history records, and Daniel explained to the astonished ruler that "the great God hath made known to the King what shall come to pass hereafter."

According to the interpretation God had given unto Nebuchadnezzar kingdom, power, strength and glory. It was easy for the King to understand this tribute to his supremacy. He had built Babylon, regarded as in some respects the greatest city the world has seen. In a lifetime he had lifted it in splendor above the cities of the past and put it where the cities of the future would find it difficult to become rivals.

After him there was to be another kingdom inferior to his, a kingdom represented by the silver breast and arms; then a third kingdom would arise, inferior to the second—this was represented by the middle parts of brass. The fourth kingdom was to be a strong one, represented by the iron legs of the image; then was to follow a kingdom in which there would be both the strength of iron and the weakness of clay—lack of unity, represented by the impossibility of mixing iron and clay.

"A STONE CUT OUT WITHOUT HANDS"

Then comes the most important part of the dream—"a stone cut out of the mountain without hands" was to break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold. When the fullness of time had come the God of heaven was to set up a kingdom which should never be destroyed, a kingdom whose sovereignty would never be given into the hands of another people, a kingdom which would break in pieces and consume the kingdoms previously described, and stand forever.

Bible authorities have differed as to the nations described, which brings us to a very important matter connected with the interpretation of prophecy. Prophecies are divine, but care must be taken not to invest human interpretations with the sanctity that attaches to divine prophecies. Many have attempted to apply prophecies to their own day and to the kingdoms with which they were acquainted. The interpretations have failed, but the failure of human interpretation brings no reflection upon a divine prophecy.

To estimate the unreliability of human interpretations one has only to recall the numerous efforts that have been made to fix the time of the second coming of Christ or the time of the coming of the end of the world. Many honest people, both men and women, have felt so sure of their interpretations as to set the day. The expected changes have not come, but no one should lose faith in the fact of divine prophecy, or in the certainty of its fulfillment, merely because human beings have erred in their interpretations.

But whatever differences there may have been in the designation of the kingdoms that made up the image which appeared to Nebuchadnezzar, there is unanimity as to the power that was at last to destroy these kingdoms and set up a kingdom that should stand forever. Christ is the stone cut out of the mountain; his kingdom is to be the final one, it shall stand forever.

This is the kingdom that Isaiah foretold when he said, "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." It is to be stronger than iron, more useful than brass, more pure than silver and more precious than gold. The stone was to be cut out of the mountain "without hands;" not a human government framed by finite man or relying for its perpetuity on man's puny strength.

Those who spurn the prophecies may attempt to explain how Daniel could foretell the decline of ancient kingdoms, but they cannot explain his revelation of the coming of an invisible power that surpasses the might of man, defies decay and grows throughout the world.

The skeptic may seek to evade the force of arguments based upon prophecies fulfilled in former times, but he cannot ignore a prophecy that is being fulfilled today when the world, brought to the brink of ruin by worldly wisdom, can only be saved by the application to life and to government of the principles of Christ.

The truth of prophecy is established in the Saviour.

Nebraskan Ends Coal Profiteering

(By H. T. Dobbins, in Henry Ford's Dearborn Independent.)

The home fires in the city of Lincoln, Nebraska were kept burning during all the past winter at cost. The reason was that on October 1, 1921, the city itself entered the local field as a retailer of bituminous coal after Commissioner Charles W. Bryan had found no disposition on the part of the 21 dealers to readjust prices.

During the winter the municipal yard sold 6,907 separate orders totaling 8,484 tons at a price averaging a little more than \$10 a ton. It did a cash business in six months of \$85,440, and not only saved to the people who patronized it approximately \$34,000, but it saved for those who patronized the local dealers, who were forced by city competition to shave their prices to leave little or no profit.

This has not been the first time that a municipality in America has sought to use a publicly operated yard as a regulator of competitive prices of fuel, but this experiment was attended by so many spectacular features that it constitutes a tale worth telling. Commissioner Bryan is a brother of William Jennings Bryan. In all the years of the latter's political activity it has been "Brother Charley" who has plotted all his political strategy, who has been his confidential agent and who has planned many of his campaigns. He lacks the readiness of speech that characterizes his brother when it comes to making public addresses, but the fertility of his mind and the activity of his brain are evident in even the most casual conversation.

From 1915 to 1917 Charles W. Bryan served as mayor of Lincoln. He entered the contest to put across a number of municipal government reforms. During his campaign he announced that he proposed to give the city dollar gas. Nine years before the city had passed an ordinance fixing the price at a dollar, but the company, one of the Henry L. Doherty syndicate properties, had held it up by injunction process in the Federal courts. Mr. Bryan proposed to put in a city plant. Before the election the company capitulated and put in dollar gas. Five months after Mr. Bryan's term expired it put the price back to the old figure. Only a few months ago, following a Federal Supreme Court decision upholding the ordinance, the company paid several hundred thousand dollars of overcharges back to its patrons.

During January of 1921, Mr. Bryan, after an investigation of the cost and selling prices of coal in Lincoln, recommended to the city council that it establish a municipal yard. He said he was convinced that a first-class bituminous coal could be sold for \$4 a ton less than the current figures. The members of the council backed and filled on the proposition but finally refused to embark in the business.

Thereupon Mr. Bryan announced his candidacy for mayor on a platform that provided for a municipal coal yard, a municipal public market and a municipal ice plant, after he had been unable to induce several well-known business men to make the race. Immediately he became the center of a very active fight, financed largely by the coal dealers, he says, and backed rather solidly by the business interests. Half-page advertisements in the city newspapers warned the other business men that if Mr. Bryan were successful they might expect to see municipal groceries, municipal dry goods stores and so on down the business list.

At the election in May, Mr. Bryan received 652 more votes than did his opponent for mayor, but the council seated the latter as mayor and gave him the position of commissioner of streets, the object being, as Mr. Bryan firmly believes, that this would retard or make impossible his municipal ownership program. This arbitrary sidetracking of Mr. Bryan was made possible by the fact that Lincoln operates under the commissioner system, by which five men are elected as commissioners and from their number the five choose a mayor. Mr. Zehrung, who ran against Mr. Bryan in the popular contest for mayor, was made chief executive because he also was elected as one of the five and the other three did not want Mr. Bryan to be at the head of affairs. The matter aroused great indignation among Mr. Bryan's supporters, but while they could have ordered a recall election upon Mr. Zehrung, they were unable to obtain a desirable candidate to make this race.

"As the city commission stood four to one

against the municipal ownership program," says Mr. Bryan, "it was deemed necessary to organize public sentiment to bring pressure to bear on the members to induce them to give to the people what they had declared for in the election. Before introducing the municipal coal yard ordinance in the council, petitions were put in circulation under the initiative and referendum to establish such a yard by direct vote. At the same time petitions were drafted to recall two of the city commissioners and replace them with men pledged to my municipal program that it might have the backing of a majority.

"While these were being presented to the voters the ordinance was introduced, and after being voted down one week was brought forth again at the next meeting. Public sentiment had been aroused by the first defeat, and manifested itself so plainly that at the second meeting all five members voted for it. The four that opposed it but who yielded to the public demand placed it in my department and made me responsible for its success or failure."

The coal dealers at once applied to the district court for a writ of injunction. They denied the legal right of the city to compel them to pay taxes for establishing a yard created for their undoing, and attacked its power under the charter to engage in such an enterprise. The district court denied the injunction, and held that the city had the right to buy and sell coal. The dealers appealed to the Supreme Court, and there the case rests at the present time.

Meanwhile, Mr. Bryan organized his buying and selling forces. He found himself hampered at the beginning in securing the supplies necessary. The private dealers sought by various means, he says, to prevent his buying coal from any of the mines or from the big jobbers, but he soon found a wholesaler who, in consideration of the big trade promised by a city yard, agreed to furnish him the kind of coal he wanted, and did so during the entire six months of its operation.

Mr. Bryan established a price of \$10.50 a ton delivered for Franklin County, Illinois, coal. Immediately the dealers began a campaign against it. They attacked its quality, declaring that it was not as represented, and that they were offering just as good coal for the same or less money. Mr. Bryan, while refusing to disclose where he was buying his coal, declared that it was exactly the same kind of coal that before he began operations was being sold by the dealers at \$14.50 a ton. He said that at that time, a month after he began, the dealers had already reduced their price on the same coal \$2 a ton, although the price at the mines had been advanced from 50 to 75 cents a ton since the February, or spring, quotations.

The city council had appropriated, at the beginning, a revolving fund of \$15,000, but this was never used, the price at which the coal was sold yielding a profit that enabled the city to finance its own operations. The first of January, finding that this profit was larger than was necessary, he reduced the delivered cost from \$10.50 a ton to \$9.90, and continued it until the winter season ended.

The municipal yard handled but the one grade of coal, although during the winter there was a big demand for it to sell semi-anthracite, and later steam coal. Mr. Bryan says that the dealers made this unnecessary by reducing the price of the semi-anthracite, a large amount of which is used in home furnaces.

Mr. Bryan was too busy with the municipal coal yard to embark upon either the municipal ice plant or the public market. Indeed, the ice company—there is but one in the city—did not wait for him to turn his competitive business batteries upon it. Before his coal yard had been fairly started a meeting of business men was held at the chamber of commerce, and acting upon the advice of those who were in attendance, the company announced a schedule of prices that met in every respect the figures at which the Omaha municipal ice plant was selling, and which were low enough to make city competition inadvisable.

A conservative estimate of the saving to Lincoln people during the past season on their coal bills would be \$150,000, says Mr. Bryan. It will be reopened October next unless the Supreme Court forbids.

Since the yard has closed, the dealers, by an attorney, have made a demand for the inspection of the city's list of customers. Mr. Bryan has refused this. The dealers declare it is a public document, and intimate that if he does not produce it they will resort to court proceedings. He says he will not comply with the request because he fears that it will be used as a weapon of boycott against patrons should there be a shortage following the coal strike.