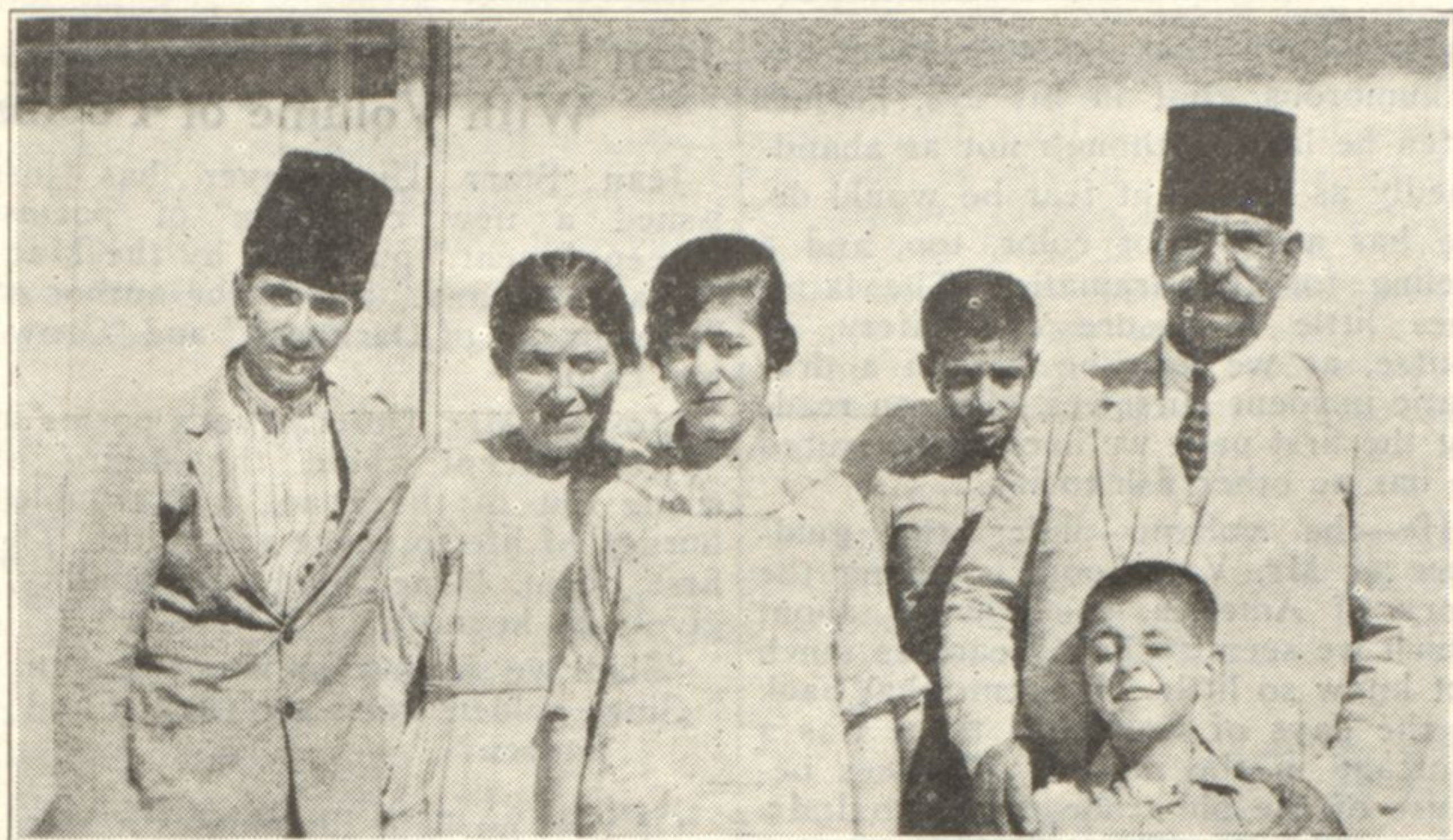


**"From Jerusalem to Nazareth", By Rev. Stifler**



(Continued from Page 56)

difference between the massive Roman building stones and the more modest crude blocks of Omri and Ahab—and all the time we were struggling to recall the history of this city's thousand years of glory we could see a little narrow-gauge freight train winding its way among the hills and tooting its little toy whistle. What would Ahab, Herod or Augustus have thought of that? Or of the ragged, sad-faced Arabs who dogged our steps to sell us little copper Roman coins that were found in great abundance in the ruins.

By middle afternoon we reached the great plain of Esdraelon. For sheer beauty it is unsurpassed. For historical significance it tells its story into volumes. I grew impatient as we left the pass between the Samaritan hills and were out on the plain. "Is that Mt. Carmel over there, George?" I asked the dragoman. The poor fellow was by this time almost exhausted telling five preachers about all the things that they were passing, and listening, incidentally to a Calvinistic interpretation of many of them from our beloved elderly member from out in Kansas.

"Just wait a while and I'll stop the car and tell you everything," he said with a bit of weariness and a pinch of impatience in his tone. Soon we were in the middle of the plain and the car stopped. George had us get out of the car, stand in its shadow and then began his lecture. Over there on the right was the spring where Gideon's three hundred lapped the water and began that movement that has put a Bible in every American Hotel. Beside it was a trim little Zionist settlement which looked more like Nebraska than Palestine. There nearby was Mt. Gilboa where Saul and Jonathan died. There was the Village of Shunem where Elijah used to lodge. Rising out of the midst of the plain with almost unnatural regularity was Mt. Tabor where the Transfiguration is believed to have taken place. A five million dollar Roman Church crowns its summit now. Nestling at Tabor's base was Nain where Jesus brought a widow's son to life. Then sweeping our vision to the left we saw the impressive length of old Mt. Carmel jutting into the Mediterranean Sea.

**Story of Famed Battles**

Then began George's story of the battles of this plain. Here the stars in their courses as the allies of Deborah and Barak fought against Sisera; Saul met the Philistines here. Later the Syrian armies swept across this plain. Here the enormous camp of Holofermes spread. Antiochus, Cleopatra, Pompey, Mark Anthony, and Titus, each in their turn brought war to Esdraelon. Then Arabs, Crusaders, Napoleon and World War fighters and just to make the story real we saw everywhere along the road the wreck-

age of old camp-kitchens from the British expedition of 1918. The author of the Book of Revelation called the plain Armageddon in token of its many conflicts and Teddy Roosevelt enlarged the word again to make it typify the great decisive victory for freedom and for justice in our modern world.

As we climbed into the car again, George directed our attention to a little cluster of glistening white buildings on the mountain side before us. It was Nazareth and after an hour of turning hair-pin curves on the Galilean mountains we were there.

Nazareth is a town of about 15,000 people. With Bethlehem it is a predominantly Christian community. That these two sacred spots should be Christian is an everlasting satisfaction to the followers of Jesus. To be

"Christian" over there means that it is clean, prosperous, with unveiled happy women, children playing about their homes, and a general air of hopefulness.

**Nazareth Is Overchurched**

Nazareth is overchurched, which is quite natural. Every sect of Christians everywhere wants to be established there. The last building to be erected was the Baptist Mission, the money coming from my ardent southern brothers. Although it is to be regretted that American sectarianism is reflected in the name, the facts are that this is the only protestant church except an English High Church there. And Pastor Mosa is doing a magnificent job.

It is really refreshing to see a church over there that is not in the hands of ignorant leadership and following the path of cold formalism. This little Protestant mission is really making Christians out of people, especially young men and women. I attended the evening service there. Everything was done in Arabic of course, but I knew the hymn tunes and can read real inner joy in people's faces. I know, too, that a crowded house spells helpful ministry in such a church.

I made a little visit to Pastor Mosa's home. His wife is the daughter of a Presbyterian minister in those parts. She is beautiful and every whit a mother. The four children are charming and well-trained. The parents are struggling to provide an education for them. A few weeks ago I wrote this little Baptist church up in our Nation's Denominational Organ suggesting in a closing paragraph that it would be fitting if a group of friends would chip together to give Pastor Mosa a Christmas gift of one hundred dollars so that the daughter could continue her schooling.

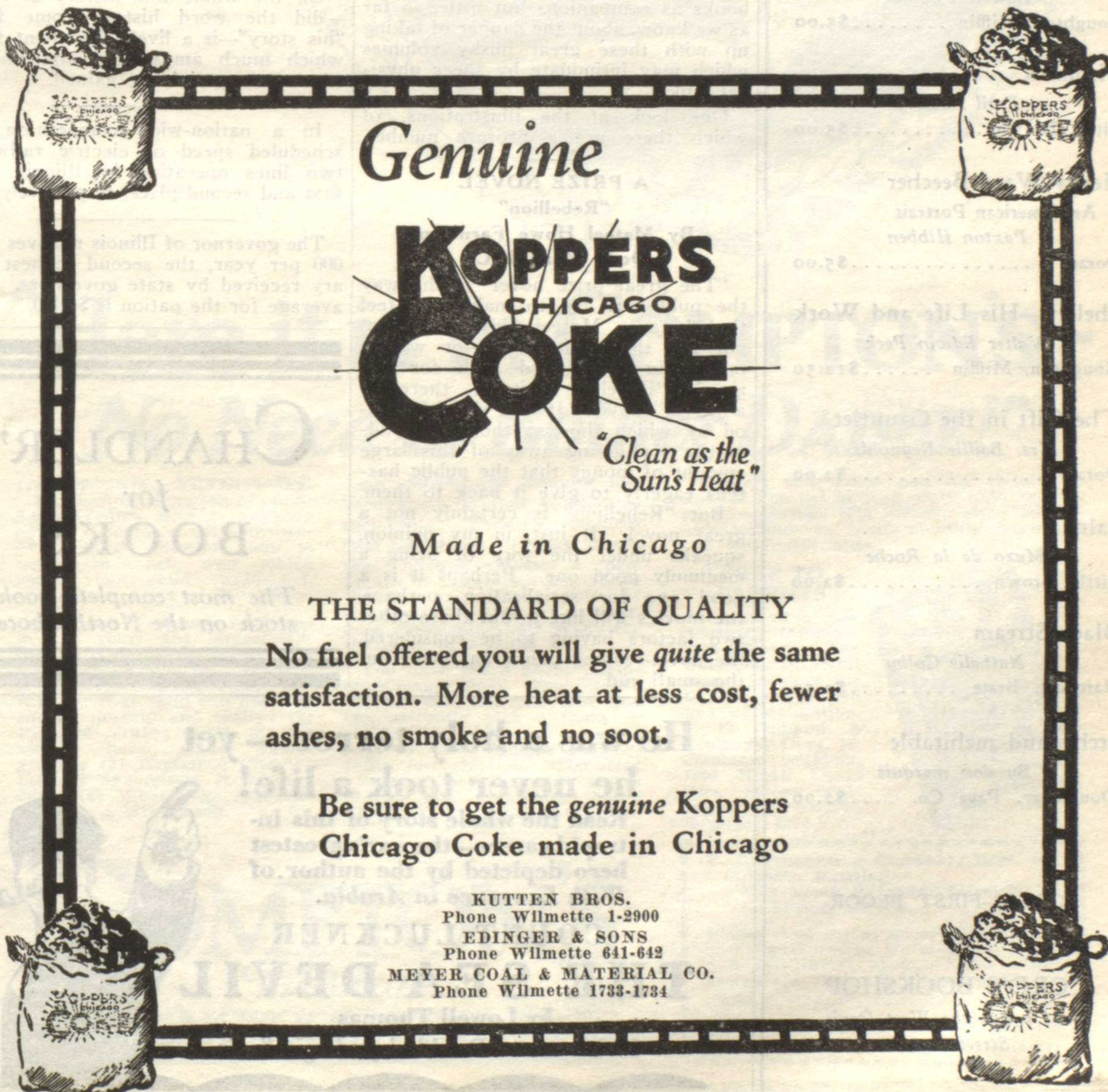
I was confident the editor would blue

pencil the paragraph for I knew it to be bad newspaper manners. He didn't and in three weeks I had \$109 for Hilda. It may be that the editor of this paper will not blue pencil this and some more good souls will swell the fund. At any rate, the readiness of this response is one with the constant flow of money from the wealthy Christian West toward Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth.

When I slipped in the back pew of the little Baptist Church, I realized that I was sitting next to one who was not an Arab. He proved to be a Scotchman, Dr. Bathgate, surgeon in charge of the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society's Hospital in the city. Of course he was a Presbyterian. He was also a lay-reader in the English church there. But he told me as we walked back through the moonlight to my hotel that he felt most at home there in Pastor Mosa's church.

Next morning at 6 I had breakfast with him at his home. On the way to the hospital after breakfast, he showed me where they baked their bread. It was in a cave. A large earthen covered jar was buried in limestone gravel into which a servant at stated intervals mixed a bucket full of shavings of ripe olives. A slow combustion was thus set up that kept an even temperature with no fire nor cost. The bread was excellent.

The hospital was modern in every way and doing a simply marvelous service, especially for trachoma (the prevalent eye disease of Palestine) and malaria. Christianity is at its best in Medical Missions. No one can question either its power or its sincerity. It was one of the richest moments of my life to spend a while with a doctor in his hospital in the very town where the Great Physician lived.



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