

tomers. One of the strangest of them all, is the silversmiths' bazaar, where the beautiful silver filagree, for which Damascus is famed, is manufactured. It is a huge square-roofed enclosure, tumble-down and dilapidated in appearance, its sides and roof begrimed with the ascending smoke of scores of little furnaces. Here sit the silversmiths, furnace and anvil and safe and shop close together, and all compressed into small space. There is no splendid display of jewellery; but get them to unlock their safes, and show you their wares, and you are charmed at the beauty and delicacy of design and workmanship.

Another feature of Damascus business life is the Khans or wholesale warehouses, great, gloomy, cavernous-looking interiors, entered by lofty portals, some of which are exquisite in architectural design and execution. Here the great, wealthy, wholesale merchants have their offices, and here are piled in immense value and variety, goods from many lands—silks from India, cottons from Manchester, manufactured goods from Germany, kerosene oil from America. One of the most curious sights to me was seeing a string of solemn-faced camels, driven by some swarthy son of the desert, marching along with a case or two of kerosene oil, on each side of their broad, humped backs. It was so incongruous to see the trim, neat Yankee cases marked, say, "Pratts' Astral Oil" and the archaic and utterly old-world surroundings of an Eastern caravan.

Apropos of the oil-boxes, I was told that they are very useful to Easterns after having served their legitimate purpose. The tin cans are used for holding water, or cut up by the native artificers for smaller articles of tin work; and, the country being so denuded of wood, the soft pine of the cases is used for all sorts of purposes. Tables, chairs, boxes of various sorts, are made from them, and sometimes coffins, though, as my informant told me, the remark was once wittily made by some one who heard of the last strange use of kerosene cases, that it was "making light of a grave subject!"

One of the most interesting sights in Damascus is the Great Mosque, a few years ago open to none but Moslems, but now open to Christians, by consular order, in parties of not more than twenty. It is larger than the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, and shows in its architecture the three great epochs of its history. The site is most probably that of the temple of Rimmon, spoken of by Naaman; and the massive stones and beautiful arches and entrances show the Grecian or Roman epoch which marked its existence as a heathen temple. Under Constantine the temple of Jupiter was dedicated to the worship of Jesus, and the building became the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.