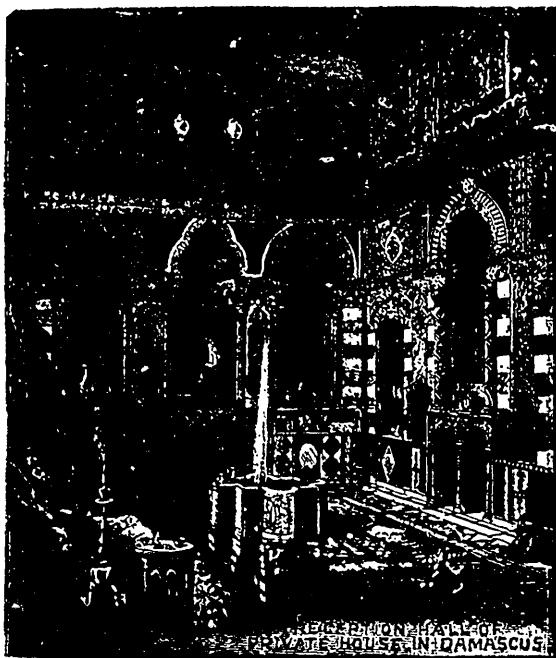




external appearance of these houses. The front towards the street has few openings—a door and, perhaps, a small grated window on the ground floor, and sometimes in the upper stories an overhanging latticed chamber. Hence the narrow streets are dull and gloomy, the blank walls having an exceedingly inhospitable look.

The courtyard is often exceedingly beautiful with ornamental colonnades, galleries, plants and trees, and a fountain or pool in the centre. 2 Sam. xvii. 18. It was in the courtyard of the high priest's house that Peter stood and watched from afar the trial of his Lord. Here was held the feast of Ahasuerus, "in the court of the garden of the king's palace." Esther i. 5. Large chambers, often with arched openings, open into this court. These *lewans* are employed as reception

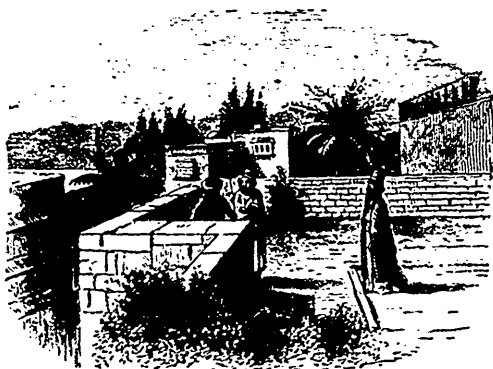
chambers, and have on three sides divans or couches with cushions and pillows.

On the opposite side are the women's apartments, from which all, save members of the household, are jealously excluded. The sleeping chambers are for the most part small and ill-ventilated. Hence the flat roof is a favourite sleeping-place in fine weather, and here the family meets to enjoy the cool of the day.

The courtyard is often sheltered from the burning sun by an awning or curtain which could be easily drawn aside, or on

the sunny side by a more permanent structure of tiles. It was this which was removed to let the palsied man down "into the midst," *i.e.*, into the court where the people were assembled. Luke v. 19.

The rooms of the second story often project over the street in hanging balconies which admit the cool breeze and with their latticed windows enable the occupants,



HOUSE-TOP IN PALESTINE WITH PARAPET.