

Apart from its great age and Biblical memories, it is still a city of fascinating interest. More purely Oriental than Cairo or Constantinople, it is like a chapter out of the "Arabian Nights." After our arduous ride over the shoulder of Hermon, when the mountain so literally turned its cold shoulder on us, it was a thrilling moment when, from a rise in the road, we first saw in the distance the white minarets of Damascus, gleaming through its gardens of embowering trees. We indulged in a glorious gallop on the first good road we had met in Syria, bordered by familiar telegraph poles and wires which seemed like electric nerves reaching to our far-off homes beyond the sea. Soon we skirted rows of mud-walled houses and mud-brick fences protecting the orchards of apricots, citrons, and pomegranates. Then we rode beside the rushing, sparkling clear waters of the Barada, the ancient Abana,* confined between straight



DAMASCUS—ROOF VIEW.

stone walls, then on through shaded streets till we at length dismounted before the iron-studded gateway of the Hotel Demetri. Mrs. Carman has described with such graphic pen the fascinations of the bazaars and other features of Damascene life, that little remains but to describe our visit to the famous mosque and some other places of historic interest.

We made quite an imposing cavalcade as we started out, escorted by Abdallah in his most sumptuous array, by a local

* As we beheld the bright, flashing streams which flow in many branches through the city, so different from the turbid stream of the Jordan, we could not wonder at the haughty question of Naaman the Syrian, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?"