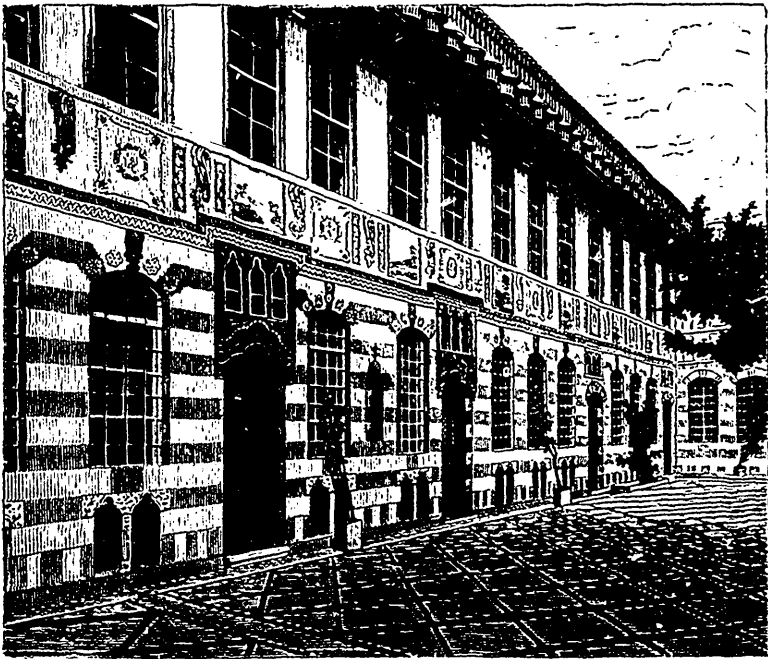


made of cement or stone, the stairways are mostly stone or iron. The hills round about Jerusalem are entirely without trees suitable for building purposes. The olive wood is kept for making fine cabinet-ware and trinkets for travellers.

There is not, we believe, a saw-mill in Palestine, for the reason that there is nothing to saw. When the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem was burned, six hundred years ago,

this is constructed as follows: beams of wood, often unhewn trunks of trees, perhaps the trunk of a palm split in two, are laid across the walls. Crossing these are smaller pieces of wood, close together over which are laid closely matted furze, rushes or brush. Upon this flat surface is laid a coating of clay, about a foot in depth, beaten into a hard and compact mass. In the dry season this is apt to crack, and during protracted



PART OF INTERIOR COURTYARD IN A DAMASCUS HOUSE.

the timber for the new roof, which is still in position, was brought from England to Jaffa and was carried on the backs of camels to Bethlehem. The great and goodly timber for Solomon's Temple, it will be remembered, was brought from the forests of Lebanon by the merchants of Tyre. So almost everything is built of stone.

Timber from its scarcity was seldom used in building except for supporting the roof. Most frequently

rains to leak, hence on almost every roof is seen a stone roller, which is employed when it rains to fill up the cracks.

The majority of the houses of the poor consist of but two rooms, sometimes of only one divided by a screen. The larger dwellings consist of a suite of rooms surrounding a central court open to the sky, and containing often a fountain, or well, or pool of water. The domestic exclusiveness of the Oriental is seen in the