

He who knows the history of Damascus knows very largely the history of the world. It has been well said:

“Leave the matters written of it in the first eleven chapters of the Old Testament out, and no recorded event has occurred in the world but Damascus was in existence to receive the news of it. Go back as far as you will into the vague past, there was always a Damascus. In the writings of every century, for more than four thousand years, its name has been mentioned and its praises sung.



DAMASCUS—“STREET CALLED STRAIGHT.”

“To Damascus years are only moments, decades are only fitting trifles of time. She measures time, not by days or months or years, but by the empires she has seen rise and prosper, and crumble to ruins. She is a type of immortality. She saw the foundations of Baalbec and Thebes and Ephesus laid. She saw these villages grow into mighty cities and amaze the world with their grandeur. And she has lived to see them desolate, deserted, and given over to the owls and the bats. She saw the Israelitish empire exalted, and she saw it annihilated. She saw Greece rise and flourish two thousand years, and die. In her old age she saw Rome built; she saw it overshadow the world with its power; she saw it perish. The few hundred years of Genoese and Venetian might and splendour were, to grave old Damascus, only a trifling scintillation hardly worth remembering. Damascus has seen all that ever occurred on earth, and yet she lives. Though another claims the name, old Damascus is by right the Eternal City.”