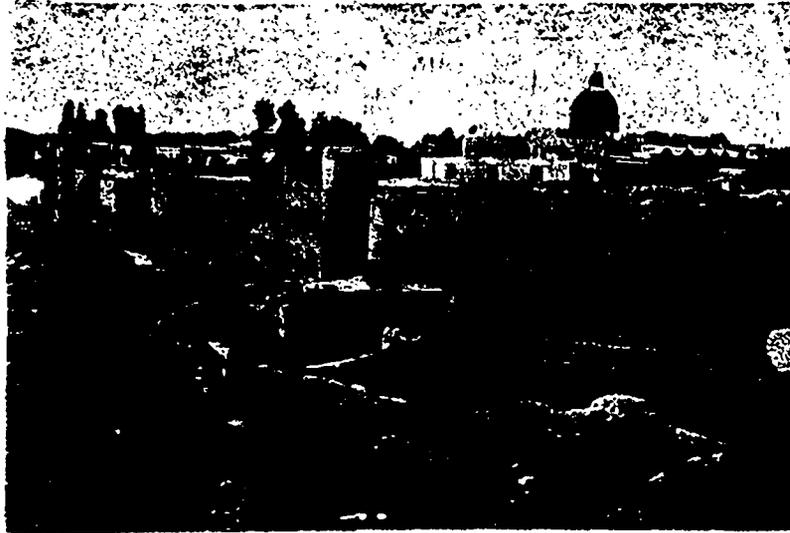# Young People's Department.

DAMASCUS.

DAMASCUS.

THE oldest city in the world, perhaps, is Damascus. We read of it in fifteen different books of the Bible. How many children can tell the names of those fifteen books? One of them we will mention. It is the first of all the books. It is Genesis. Damascus is mentioned twice there—once in the fourteenth chapter and once in the fifteenth; but we are not told in the Bible who founded or built it. Yet the builder of it seems to have been known. You have heard of Josephus. He was a Jew who wrote a history of his own people, and a good deal of what he wrote is the same as what we read in the Bible. Well, he says that Damascus was founded by a man named Uz, and his name is mentioned in the Book of Genesis. You will find it in the tenth chapter and the 23rd verse. He was the grandson of Shem, and Shem, you know, was one of the sons of Noah. Noah had three sons. Can you tell their names? Every Christian child ought to know the names of the sons of Noah, for " of them was the whole earth overspread." They were called Shem, Ham, and Japheth— and one of the sons of Shem was Aram, and one of his sons was Uz; and Uz, Josephus says, founded the city of Damascus.

Think of all the hundreds and hundreds of years that have gone over Damascus, and yet it is standing now, with its old wall about it as you see in the picture.

It was just as Saul of Tarsus, a bold, strong man, who wanted to kill all the men and women that believed in Jesus—it was just as he came in sight of Damascus that Jesus spoke to him in the midst of a great light that threw him down to the ground. Then he was blind. He could not see to enter the city. Men had to lead him in through the gates into the city. But after that he became a believer in Jesus, although a little while before he was ready to kill all those who did believe in Him. God touched his heart and changed his mind. For all the rest of his life he preached for Jesus and worked for Him. You know he was always afterwards called Paul, not Saul, and we speak of him as St. Paul, or " the holy Paul."

Once bad men were angry with him for believing in Jesus, and they were going to kill him; but his friends put him in a large basket and let him down outside the wall, and so he got away safely, that he might go to all parts of the world and preach about the Saviour. A short time after this a Christian bishop lived at Damascus, but it was conquered by the Turks, and is now a Mohammedan city. Let us hope that some day a holy missionary like St. Paul will yet be able to make this ancient city what it once was—a city of God and a city of Christ.