

**THE FATHERS FOR
ENGLISH READERS: ST.
JOHN OF DAMASCUS**

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The Fathers for English Readers: St. John of Damascus by J. H. Lupton

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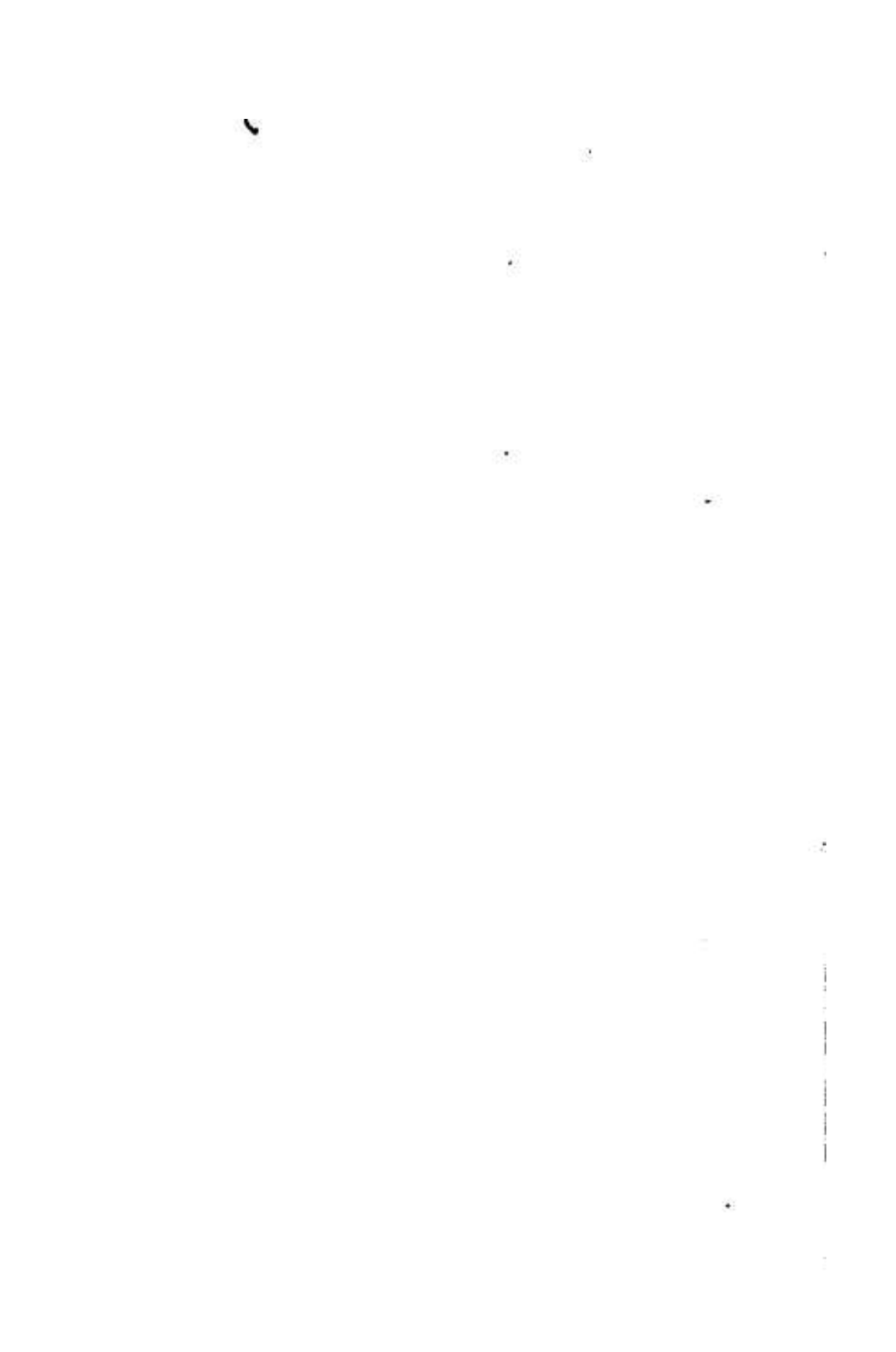
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J. H. LUPTON

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ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS.



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The Fathers for English Readers.

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ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS.

BY THE
Joseph Hirst
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P R E F A C E.

THE fact that this little volume is one of a series on a settled plan, and with well-defined limits, may obviate in some measure the charge of presumption to which the author would otherwise have been liable. For to portray, in anything like due proportion, such an historical character as John of Damascus, would require a far larger canvas and a hand of more varied powers. It is not indeed too much to say that, for any adequate representation of such a character, a threefold ability would be needful. For besides his position as a theologian of the Eastern Church, we have to regard him as closely connected with the rise of Mahometanism; and, further still, as a Christian poet, whose hymns are sung by myriads at this very day. But while feeling how incomplete, on that account, such an essay as the present one must of necessity be, the author has endeavoured to make it of some little value, as the result of an attentive study of the writings of St. John Damascene.

In the spelling of Arabic or Mahometan names, no attempt at uniformity has been made. Hardly any two writers agree in this respect; and hence, when a quotation has been made from any authority on the

subject, the form there found has been retained. This may explain some apparent inconsistencies.

Besides the special acknowledgments recorded in the notes, mention should here be made of the advantage gained from two works, the *Hymns of the Eastern Church*, by the late Dr. Neale, and the articles in *La Belgique* (1861) on S. Jean Damascène, by M. Félix Nève. The excellent monograph of Dr. Joseph Langen, *Johannes von Damaskus* (1879), did not come into the author's hands till the greater part of his own work was completed; but a few remarks or corrections due to it have been inserted. It was only at the last moment also that he learnt that the Funeral Hymn of St. John of Damascus, of which a rendering is given at p. 150, had been already translated by Dr. Littledale, and published in the *People's Hymnal*. Had he been aware of this in time, he would gladly have availed himself of the abler version.

ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL,
November 25th, 1881.

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