

# JERUSALEM SCENES

Early Jewish settlements outside the walls



The visitor to Jerusalem today, seeing a large city of over half a million people spread over a large area, must find it difficult to imagine the time when, only 150 years ago, the city was virtually confined to the area within the city walls, with the Jews confined to approximately a quarter of that area. It was in the mid-nineteenth century that new housing first began to be built to accommodate the growing numbers of Jews moving to Jerusalem. The earliest such building took place on the western side of the upper Hinnom Valley, opposite the area now called Mount Zion, though not the Zion of the Old Testament. Here, crossing the Hinnom Valley at the bottom end of the Sultan's Pool, now dry and an open-air theatre, we ascend a stepped street through housing leading up to a windmill on the edge of a park.

The man responsible for the initial development of this area was Sir Moses Montefiore, a wealthy British Jew of Italian origin who lived to the remarkable age for those times of 101. He bought a plot of land here from the pasha of Jerusalem for the extortionate sum in those days of £1,000, and in 1860 built some simple two-room dwellings in which Jews from the old city were settled. The new settlement was called *Mishkenot Sha'ananim*, the name being derived from Isaiah 32:18: "And My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings (*mishkenot*), and in quiet (*sha'ananim*) resting places". The mill at the top of the steps was built at the same time but was not apparently much used, and is now a small museum about Montefiore. On the other side of the stepped street is another area of housing, *Yemin Moshe*, named in commemoration of Sir Moses (Moshe), and built in the 1890s after his death, using money from his testimonial fund. Our picture shows one of the quiet streets of this area, which in recent times has ceased to be the homes of the poor, the houses having been modernised into homes much prized by the wealthy.—*T.B.*