Harry Klein

My Bygone Home

Częstochowa, my home, town and dream.
For you, I long for and, of you, I think.
You were once my home,
With radiance and glory enchanted.

A thousand threads have
Bound me to you forever.
A yearning for my childhood
Has in my heart been ignited.

Your uniqueness and virtues
In me have you planted
And I consider it an honour
To be yours a townsman.

Like a bastion of Torah
Was the bygone Jewish Częstochowa.
It is there that my youth was forged,
In that City and Mother in Israel.

Of my town there is no trace,
Yet still one wishes of her to hear.
When in my yearning I immerse myself,
From my eyes the tears do stream.

As a treasure do I cherish
This book about you written.
A reminder of my bygone home,
Which in writing has remained.

I am proud of you, my hometown,
Which in my youth there sustained me.
The love has in me remained,
Into my heart deeply engraved.

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1 [TN: This poem was originally published on p. 259 of the book “Czenstochover Landsmanshaft of Montreal”.

2 [TN: In Heb. in the original, quote from 2 Samuel 20:19: “I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?”]