

Harry Klein

My Bygone Home¹

*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 Israel².*

*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.*

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?"]