

# An Epitaph of Egypt

BY ETHEL M. HEWITT

*"Within the tomb of a young girl, probably a daughter of Mena, the founder of Memphis, was found the simple inscription that she was 'Sweet of heart.'"*

HERE, in this weltering, western world,  
The veil of sixty centuries lifts,  
And strews a crowded London floor  
With trove of Egypt's sandy drifts.  
Here, among goblets kings have quaffed,  
Love laughs to scorn the goldsmith's art,  
Where one small stone in brief attests  
Mena's young daughter "Sweet of heart."

Oh, surely, crowned with praise like this,  
She found the gods' dread judgment kind;  
The Secret Faces at the Gate  
Smiled like the ones she left behind.  
So long it has been well with thee,  
Since love and sorrow sealed thy sleep,  
That even Egypt fails to stir  
Thy memory in its shrouded sleep.

So long upon thy happy brows  
The Overcomers' Crown has pressed,  
It cannot hurt that strangers' eyes  
Break in upon thy quiet rest.  
No space within the Fields of Peace,  
Nor any earth-strayed winds recall  
How the last lotus on life's brink  
Flung the first whiteness on thy pall.

Yet well through all the changeful years  
Thy tomb has kept its ancient trust!  
The love that left thee with the stars  
Still proves thee peerless in the dust;  
More splendid than these gems which light  
Death's way for kings with quenchless flame,  
A chisel steeped in tears has traced  
The legend of thy fragrant fame.

De Paul University  
LIBRARY

136498

# Home Life of the Silk-Mill Workers

THE CONSERVATION OF OUR YOUNG WOMANHOOD

BY FLORENCE LUCAS SANVILLE

Executive Secretary of the Consumers' League of Philadelphia

THE town straggled into existence at a point marked by a towering coal-breaker, and broke off where the single street disappeared behind a hill of black culm. The houses sat in dejected and irregular rows, where they had been thrown up close to the dust of the unpaved road. For every dozen houses there appeared a dingy yellow "hotel," its invitation expressed on the ground-glass windows—sometimes in English, sometimes in Hungarian. Over all things—houses, yards, and roads—had settled a coat of fine black coal-dust.

We entered the town at noon, just as the chorus of whistles from the factory and the coal-breakers was subsiding; and by the time the trolley-car had disappeared in its own cloud of dust, the road was dotted with hurrying black-faced boys, girls with tattered colored aprons, and an occasional man with coal-smudged face.

We had a double object to attain—to secure work at the factory and to find board in the town. We had reserved this town for a prolonged stay, as a former visit had indicated that it possessed typical features of some of the worst of the mining settlements in the anthracite coal-fields of Pennsylvania, and therefore offered valuable opportunities in our effort to realize some of the more pressing needs of industrial betterment.

The little settlement lay about five miles from one of the larger towns of Pennsylvania, connected with it by a trolley line and two coal-carrying railroads which passed through it on the way to more important communities farther north. Its three thousand inhabitants—American and Hungarian, with a scattering of Welsh and Polish Jews—lived in the houses between the saloons and coal-breakers on the main street, or along half-defined streets that

ran part way up the hillside. The three collieries provided work for the men and boys. The silk-mill employed a large number of the girls both day and night—another mill in a near-by community inviting, through its better conditions, a still greater number, in spite of the intervening two miles.

While Miss Cochran crossed the railroad track to ask for work at the factory, I stopped at a candy store to inquire about board, and waited for my friend's return. She came back shortly, proclaiming success, and we proceeded together to a recommended address. We found the house with some difficulty, tracing it to the rear court, into which it was crowded with four others of its kind. It was not an inviting home. There was little space between its front door and the rear door of the front house, and the intervening hard-trodden dirt blazed in the hot sun. The back yard extended to the railroad tracks, an ash and refuse heap and a row of unsightly outhouses marking its progress. A hydrant in the foreground supplied the needs of the four families. These disadvantages were offset, however, by the fact that the daughter of the house worked in the silk-mill, and offered a ready channel for introductions to our other fellow workers.

We finally agreed to come for supper that evening, arranging to board here with Mrs. Wilson, but to occupy a room at her mother's house across the street. We had chosen this plan when we found that the room offered us here was, for practical purposes, a hallway, opening directly from the stair, with no intervening wall to screen it. In view of the necessity of writing up our nightly notes, and discussing the day's doings, not to mention the ordinary disadvantages of