

## Student Handout 1-Iron Mill

*"I discovered that there is always a fine dust in the air of a steel mill. It was not very noticeable at first, but after being in a mill or around the furnaces for a time, I always found my coat covered with minute, shining grains. A visitor experiences no ill effect after a few hours in a mill, but the steel workers notice it and they declare that it gives rise to throat trouble. There is ore dust around the blast furnaces, and wherever saws are used for cutting the finished product into lengths there is steel dust. Many a workman justifies his daily glass of whiskey on the grounds that it "takes the dust out of my throat." The irritation of the throat and air passages caused by this mineral dust may lead to catarrh or even to tuberculosis."*

[Note: "catarrh" is an inflammation of the mucous membranes in the nasal passage.]

Source: *The Pittsburgh Survey, Chapter VII: Health and Accidents in Steel Making, pp.57-58.*



**Iron Mill Showing Crews at Hammer and Furnace**

**Credit:** Fitch, John A. *The Steel Workers: The Pittsburgh Survey findings in six volumes*, ed. P.U. Kellogg  
New York: Charities Publications Committee, 1910.

**Photography by Lewis Hine**