Most of the rocks now at the surface in Lehigh County are of sedimentary origin and were laid down as loose sediments—pebbles, sand, mud, and calcareous ooze—in a great inland sea that extended over the eastern States for several million years. Streams flowing from a great land mass, known as Appalachia, that lay to the southeast, brought these sediments, either in suspension or in solution, into this sea. Here they were deposited in beds aggregating several thousand feet in thickness. By the compressive force of overlying sediments, by lateral compression at different times, and also by the deposition of mineral matter by circulating underground waters, the pebbles have been compacted and consolidated to form conglomerates, the sands have become sandstones, the clays are shales or slates, and the calcareous ooze constitute the limestones. Over a part of the county there is a thin mantle of glacial débris, left by the melting of a great ice sheet that invaded the region during a recent geologic period.

These extensive sedimentary rocks were deposited in the sea in horizontal beds. At least twice since their accumulation they have been folded by intense compressive earth forces coming from the southeast. These movements threw the rocks into great longitudinal folds trending in a northeast-southwest direction.

The processes of degradation, grouped under the general term of erosion, have for ages been at work carving these rocks as the sculptor removes particles of rock to produce his work of art. We see in our existing hills and valleys the result of this erosion, which is still in progress.

On this background the later history of Lehigh County has been built. Without some knowledge of the past it is frequently difficult properly to interpret and evaluate some of the activities of the present.

**CULTURE**

*Use.*—With the exception of the most rugged portions of Kittatinny (Blue) Mountain and the South Mountains, all of Lehigh County is inhabited, and the soil or underlying rocks have been utilized for the growing of crops, the mining or quarrying of useful mineral products, or for the sites of structures of various kinds. The cultivated portions of the county are used for growing wheat, corn, hay, oats, barley, and potatoes and for grazing. Dairying is an important industry. Proximity to the great commercial communities of New York and Philadelphia on one hand and to anthracite mines on the other, as well as excellent transportation facilities, have gradually developed the region more and more along industrial lines. A great variety of manufactured products originates in the numerous villages and cities. Machinery, cement, textiles, and scores of minor articles are produced in the region.

The higher and rougher mountains are too rocky to be cultivated, but they have furnished much timber to the residents. The best lumber, even in the early settlement of the region, came from the adjoining counties north of Kittatinny (Blue) Mountain, but the forests of the county did supply the settlers with logs and lumber, with fuel, and with charcoal for the iron furnaces. Even yet the forested portions of the county contribute to the welfare of the residents.