LEHIGH COUNTY.

CHAPTER I.

THE RED RACE SUPPLANTED BY THE WHITE.

Treaties and Settlement—Condition of the Country prior to the Revolution.

The Delaware or Lenni Lenape Indians.—When the emissaries of civilization—the explorers and pioneers—first entered upon those noble rivers, the Hudson and the Delaware, the great wilderness region now comprised in the wealthy States of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York was occupied by Indian tribes comprehensively called the Algonquins. This great division embraced two groups of nations, the Iroquois and the Delawares. The language of both was the Algonquin, but it was spoken in various dialects.

Very little friendship existed between the Iroquois and the Delawares. The latter, who called themselves the Lenni Lenape, or "the original people," indeed, held themselves as superior to any other tribe or nation. They claimed to have existed from the beginning of time, and it is certain the Miamis, Wyandots, Shawanese, and more than twenty other tribes admitted their great antiquity and applied to them the title of "grandfathers." One of their traditions was that, ages before their occupancy of what became Pennsylvania and its northern and eastern neighbors, their ancestors had dwelt in a far-away country beyond the Father of Waters, and near the wide sea in which the sun sank. They believed that for many moons they had traveled eastward, seeking a fairer country of which their prophets had told them, and as they neared the western shores of the great Mississippi they had met another great nation of men, the very existence of which they had been in ignorance. These people, they say, were the Mengwe or the Iroquois, and this was the first meeting of those two nations, destined to remain for centuries rivals and enemies. They journeyed on together, neither in warfare nor friendship, but they presently found that they must unite their forces against a common enemy. East of the Father of Waters they discovered a race called the Allegwi, occupying a vast domain, and not only stronger in number than themselves, but equally brave and more skilled in war. They had, indeed, fortified towns and numerous strongholds.[1] The Allegwi permitted a part of the emigrating nations to pass the border of their country, and having thus caused a division of their antagonists, fell upon them with great fury to annihilate them. But the main body of the allied Mengwe and Lenape rallying from the first shock, made resistance with such desperate energy that they defeated the Allegwi, and sweeping them forward as the wind does the dry leaves of the forest, they invaded the country, and during a long and bloody war won victory after victory, until they had not only entirely vanquished, but wellnigh exterminated them. Their country, in which their earth fortifications remained the only reminder of the dispersed nation, was occupied by the victors. After this both the Mengwe and the Lenape ranged eastward, the former keeping to the northward, and the latter to the southward, until they reached respectively the Hudson and the Delaware, which they called the Lenape Wihittuck. Upon its banks, and in the wild region watered by its tributaries, they found the land they had journeyed in quest of from the setting sun.

Whether or not we believe as a whole this legend, it is a fact that the two nations were located as described when the first accurate knowledge of them was obtained by the whites. The country of the Mengwe or Iroquois extended from the Hudson and Lake Champlain to the shores of Lake Erie, and from the head-waters of the Alleghany, Susquehanna, and Delaware to the shores of Lake Ontario, and even across the St. Lawrence, thus embracing the whole of the State of New York and a portion of Canada. The Iroquois—usually called the Five Nations, because consisting of the confederated tribes of the Mohawks, Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, and

[1] By many this tradition of the emigration of the Lenni Lenape is believed to have a solid foundation in fact, and the Allegwi are regarded as being the Mound-Builders, whose vast works are numerous along the Mississippi, the Ohio, and their tributaries.