Pictures of Travel.—No. I.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

SCENERY—THE LEHIGH VALLEY AND LEHIGH RIVER—THE RIVER AND ITS SCENERY—BETHLEHEM, AND THE MORAVIANS—THEIR SCHOOLS, FARMS, &c., &c.—THE LEHIGH VALLEY ROAD AND ITS CONSTRUCTION—EXCAVATIONS, TUNNELS, &c.—SCENERY ALONG THE WALNUTAT—OPENING OF THE NEW PENNSYLVANIA ROAD—NEW ROUTE FROM NEW YORK TO THE WEST AND SOUTH—DESCRIPTION OF ALLENTOWN—COMMERCE, COLORE—ALLENTOWN AND ALLENTOWNERS—NORRISTOWN AND ITS ENVIRONS, &c., &c.

To the Press:

Nothing is calculated to attract the notice of the traveller more than Philadelphia and Quakertown. Here we found very pretty farm buildings, and a most rich diversity of field and forest, but the scenery became and the country almost a perfect level—nothing to inspire the mind with lofty thoughts and a sense of the beautiful and sublime. After leaving Quakertown the country becomes rough and hilly—at some points a striking diversity of hill and dale—the scenery beautiful and picturesque. But Quakertown deserves a passing notice. That name was given the settlement or village before the American Revolution, by the German settlers of the neighborhood, because of the large number of Quakers or Friends residing there at the time. It is situated on the North Pennsylvania Railroad, fourteen miles from Bethlehem. The village contains about one thousand five hundred inhabitants, and is rapidly increasing in population and trade; contains an academy, several large stores, a newspaper printed in the English and German langua, has been most excellent school which is under the charge of Mr. A. H. Horne, a worthy gentleman and true scholar. It is also the residence of the Hon. Mr. Bredshaw, who a few years ago represented this (26th) Congressional district at Washington. Within a few miles of Bethlehem there opened before us a most delightful valley, hemmed in by gently receding hills, with indications of a good limestone soil and promising crops in prospect—land are high we came in sight of the placid and charming Lehigh. The hills along the river are called the Lehigh hills or mountains; they form no continuous chain, being interrupted by ridges and heights, which bear down on each other, or stand isolated in a fine east and west, falling in with others and together constituting a struggling mountain chain, stretching far away in the direction due northeast and southwest. The higher hills, in some places, present on their surface an abundance of gray and blue limestone rock, and also a foliated gneissoid rock, and the valley is underlaid with blue and gray limestone, the latter predominating. It must not be supposed, however, that these hills and mountain ranges are predominantly sterile and unproductive. On the contrary, some of these ridges are cultivated to the very summit. All along, so far as the eye can see, white cottages and neat farm houses are scattered along these mountains, and, occasionally, as in the vicinity of Bethlehem, instead of the farm house and cottage, we see the stately mansion, with its palisades and other distinctive features, which, surrounded by the thick foliage of stately trees, and isolated peaks or ridges in the distance, present a beautiful contrast to the eye. And when we turn from this scene to the banks of the Lehigh, around which gather, in bewitching beauty, all the fascinations of a truly delightful region, we feel that the eye has lost nothing by the change. Here are seen, growing together, a number of the most beautiful North American shrubs and trees, which, with their shadowy and boughs overhanging the banks far into the stream, impart to the picture a truly beautiful scene. The Lehigh, at this place, does not exceed 150 yards in breadth—a gentle, clear and sparkling stream. Like all mountain streams, however, it often changes, from a placid and gentle river, to a rushing and roaring torrent. We soon discovered Bethlehem in the distance. Our first view of the town, even from afar, made a most favorable impression. Its situation is commanding, and the style of buildings regular and orderly. The town is situated on the north side of the Lehigh, on a hill sloping towards the river. It is in the county of Northampton, nearly on the line which divides Lehigh and Northampton counties—in fact, part of the town is in Lehigh—is fifty-two miles north of Philadelphia, twelve west of Easton, and six miles east of Allentown. In the centre of the village is the Moravian town school-house—a large and stately building. On the hill-side, commanding a view of the river and hills and mountains in the distance, stand the seminary buildings. In front or opposite the seminary we perceive the large Moravian Church. In close proximity is the old church, the Sisters' House and the Widows' House, and a little farther on the Moravian College or Theological Institute. Still farther on and we come to Nisky Hill, a beautiful and romantic retreat, among whose cooling shades and romantic walks citizens and strangers while away the tedious hours on a hot summer day, dreaming of elysian fields, until the shrill whistle of the steam engine in the distance reminds them that they are still of earth. But earth has many a beautiful spot, and Nisky Hill is one of them. Both stranger and citizen are indebted to the good taste of the old Moravian brethren for these romantic walks and beautiful shady groves. But to return to the educational institutions. The town school is under the superintendence of Rev. Ambrose Rondthaler, and contains several hundred scholars. The female seminary is under the care of Rev. Sylvester Wollo, who is called the "Inspector," and contains nearly 300 scholars; and the college, or theological institute, under the superintendence of Rev. L. Kampmann. All these are appointed by the church, and the proceeds or profits of the schools go to the "Church fund." The congregation, numbers about 1,800 members, the majority of whom are of German origin, but every individual is conversant with both the English and German languages. The purest and most correct German of which America can boast is spoken here in Bethlehem and the other Moravian villages or settlements. The Sisters' House is a retreat, provided for single sisters, and is under the care of a spiritual superintendent. The Widows' House is the abode, as its name imports, of poor widows belonging to the congregation. Years ago there was a house dedicated to the reception of single brothers, but is no longer in existence. These were formerly called "Choir houses." It must not be supposed, however, that the entire population of the town is composed exclusively of Moravians. In former years the population was exclusively Moravian, but since the abolition of the "lease system," the town has been rapidly filling up with those of other denominations, until, at the present day, the population is about equally divided, the Moravians constituting about one half the inhabitants. Besides the Moravian, there are two Methodist churches, one Lutheran and German Reformed, and one Catholic.

Besides the churches and school buildings, Bethlehem can boast of many costly private residences, and some fine buildings of note. Among the private residences that attract the notice of the stranger are those of Samuel Wetherill, Capt. Dutch, Col. Glover, Mr. Abbott, and others, and on the opposite side of the river those of Robert H. Sayre, (Superintendent of the Lehigh Valley Railroad), Col. Wheeler, District Attorney for Carbon county, and Fontainbleau farm, the residence of Mr. Fiot. Near the residence of Mr. Fiot is the celebrated "Lehigh Mountain Water Cure for Hydropathy) Institute, at present in the care of Dr. Oppel. The manufacturing establishments which claim attention are the large foundry of Messrs. Abbott & Coxbright, the woollen mills of Mr. Dexter, the zinc works or furnace for the manufacture of paint, &c., and the metal saw works, under the direction of Samuel Wetherill, Esq., who has just commenced the manufacture of metallic saws. The zinc ore is obtained four miles from the works, beyond the mountain, in what is called the Saucon Valley. Bethlehem has half a dozen first-class hotels, which are sometimes filled to overflowing by strangers who visit the town during the summer months. The most attractive and commodious institution of this kind are the "Eagle" kept by Capt. Yoke, and the "Sun," by Col. Leibert. There are also two weekly papers published here—the *Moravian*, the organ of the Moravians in America, and a local newspaper. But let me bid adieu to this pleasant little town for the present, and leave "Bethlehem and the Moravians" until we return from a visit to Mauch Chunk, the principal coal town of the Valley of the Lehigh. Bethlehem is the terminus of the North Pennsylvania Railroad, where it connects with the Lehigh Valley road. The Lehigh Valley road extends from Easton (where it connects with the New Jersey Central) to Mauch Chunk, a distance of 18 miles. Having entered the cars, in seven minutes we were landed at Allentown, six miles distant from Bethlehem. All along the road we found men at work, grading and preparing for putting down a double track. The completion of the East Pennsylvania or Reading and Allentown Railroad renders this step absolutely necessary on the part of the Lehigh Valley road. The double track is to extend from Allentown to Easton, a distance of eighteen miles. The Reading and Allentown road is now completed—the last rail laid—as I have been informed, having been put down a few days since. The completion of this road, with its connection, will form another new route from New York to the West, and also to Baltimore and the South. The roads that form this continuous link are the New Jersey Central, the Lehigh Valley, the East Pennsylvania, and Reading and Harrisburg, or Lebanon Valley Railroad, connecting at Harrisburg with the Pennsylvania Central for the West and the Northern Central for Baltimore and the South. Allentown is the most populous and important town in the Valley. Its population is estimated at 11,000, and I think is rather above the mark. There are ten churches, two seminaries, and a large number of private schools for fitting young men for business. Here are also two weekly newspapers, two semi-weeklies, and a monthly—all except three are published in the German language. Every mechanical business imaginable is carried on here. There are also, several large foundries, flouring mills, &c., all of which appear to be in a flourishing condition. Allentown is also the seat of justice for Lehigh county, and there, again, such as Mauch Chunk, is connected with it by a railroad. Allentown is also the seat of the Lehigh Agricultural Society, which holds its annual fair here. The society is in a flourishing condition, and its fairs are well attended