

The Blue Ridge Division of Maryland.

This division of Maryland includes all that part of the State between the tide-water Division on the east and the Mountain or Alleghany Division on the west, and extends entirely through the State from the Pennsylvania line, (Mason's and Dixon's,) on the north to the Potomac which separates it from the State of Virginia on the south. Commencing at the head of tide-water of the streams which flow into the Chesapeake Bay, it extends in a broad belt to the foot of the Alleghany mountains, and is generally known as a part of the "Alleghany Range."

Though the whole of this division does not belong to the same Geological period, yet the nature of the soil as to its improvement and production, is sufficiently similar as to be included in the same general description in a work whose chief aim is a correct general exposition of the industrial resources of the State. It is formed for the most part of gently elevated parallel ridges, with fertile valleys lying between them. Through these ridges at nearly right angles, large rivers and streams run to the Chesapeake, which effectually drain this whole country, and afford to an almost infinite extent water-power for all the various departments of manufactures; these ridges generally parallel to the ocean culminate first in a well-defined ridge known as "Parr's Ridge," in the western part of Montgomery, Howard and in Carrol counties, whence to these is a gradual slope to Monocacy River in Frederick county, thence the Monocacy Valley extends westerly to the foot of Catoctin Mountain, between which and the South Mountain are the beautiful valleys known as the Middletown Valley and Harbaugh's Valley.

Between the Blue Ridge and the foot of the Alleghanies at Sideling Hill in the western part of Washington county, is the famous Hagerstown Valley. This division, it will be seen, is naturally divided into three chief sections, first, that part extending from tide-water to the summit of Parr's Ridge. Second, that part between Parr's Ridge and South Mountain or Blue Ridge and that part between the Blue Ridge and the foot of the Alleghanies in the western part of Washington county. There is a small valley as I have before said, between the Catoctin and Blue Ridge, no less distinguished for its beautiful scenery than for its remarkable fertility and the skill and care with which it has been cultivated.