

Dr. Hayden, I had been provided with letters of introduction from the authorities at Washington to the commandants of posts in the West. I found my arrival expected at Fort Ellis, and the quartermaster happened himself to have come down to Boseman. Before the end of the afternoon we were once more in comfort under his friendly roof. And here I am reminded of an incident at Boseman which brought out one of the characteristics of travel in America, and particularly in the West. It may be supposed that after so long and so dusty a journey our boots were not without the need of being blacked. Having had luncheon at the hotel, I inquired of the waiter where I should go to get this done. He directed me to the clerk in the office. This formidable personage, seated at his ledger, quietly remarked to me, without raising his eyes off his pen, that he guessed I could find the materials in the corner. And there, true enough, were blacking-pot and brush, with which every guest might essay to polish his boots or not, as he pleased. In journeying westward we had sometimes seen a placard stuck up in the bedrooms of the hotels to the effect that ladies and gentlemen putting their boots outside their doors must be understood to do so at their own risk. In the larger hotels a shoe-black is one of the recognised functionaries, with his room and chair of state for those who think it needful to employ him.

Of Fort Ellis and the officers' mess there, we shall ever keep the pleasantest memories. No Indians had now to be kept in order. There was indeed nothing to do at the Fort save the daily routine of military duty. A very small incident in such circumstances is enough to furnish amusement and conversation for an evening. We made an excursion into the hills to the south, and had the satisfaction of starting a black bear from a cover of thick herbage