

Island, named after an island two miles distant—the largest in the river Platte, about 80 miles long by four wide. Here, where we stop for tea, is a station for two companies of cavalry and two of infantry, who yesterday moved off 30 miles to fight Sioux Indians, who are troubling the builders of the Northern Pacific Railway.

Next morning farms have been left behind, and the graceful and pretty antelope, and the funny-looking little prairie dog—the latter not unlike a rat, but not so repulsive—are by no means scarce. At seven, we stop at Sidney for breakfast, and among other luxuries are served with elk steak. This is a station for a company of infantry; and a lady on horseback, accompanied by an officer, is at the station to have a look at the westward bound passengers. The elevation here is about 4,000 feet. "They claim for it" about a hundred inhabitants; but perhaps they, too, "lie a little." History may hereafter teach us that some "claims" have been made even by nations which were never expected to be recognized. Why, then, may towns and cities not make similarly unfounded "claims"? Later—Prairie Dog City, the homes of numbers of the above mentioned little animals, which consist of holes in the ground; in each of which, it is said, along with the prairie dog, dwell a snake and an owl. Then Pine Bluffs, the boundary between Nebraska and Wyoming, and a cavalry company. The bluffs are on the left. Shortly after noon, in the distance to our right, the Black Hills of the Rocky Mountains make their appearance. Some of their peaks are white with snow. Although 175 miles off, the air is to-day so clear that they are plainly seen. We only get a glimpse of them, for we soon pass under the first snow shed. Then stop at Cheyenne for dinner, where there are soldiers, and fine carriages drawn by pairs of horses and occupied by well-dressed ladies. This is the largest town between Omaha and Ogden. It makes a "claim" for a population of 3,000. We are now up pretty high (6,041 feet), but have to ascend still higher. Therefore an additional engine is required until we commence to descend. Should you wish to visit Denver City, you can do so by taking the Denver Pacific

Railway cars for that place, which is at a distance from Cheyenne of 110 miles.

Pushing on, we are soon mounting the Black Hills. At Granite Canon (a canon is a rift or ravine), there are rock-cuttings in the road. Here the scene is very grand and varied. The grass is green in the valleys, and by the road side, here and there, grow the mountain pine; and not far off, high granite rocks project their rugged sides. The Rocky Mountains surround us,—their white peaks glistening in the sun. The clouds and the snow seem to meet each other, the one not distinguishable from the other.

Sherman is the highest point of the road, being 8,242 feet above sea level. It is named after the fattest General in the American Army. It seems to be a land of moss agates, which are displayed for sale on the railway platform by a little boy and girl. They are perfectly independent of each other. "She gets hers and I get mine," is his answer when questioned as to a partnership existing between them. After Sherman, we descend and cross by a "trestle work" bridge, a deep ravine, across which, at a short distance, are some settlers' cabins. That was Dale Creek Bridge, I discover, that has just been crossed. The above mentioned Guide Book says of it, that it is "the grandest feature of the road"—"650 feet long and 126 feet high, spanning Dale Creek from Bluff to Bluff."

Laramie is a beautiful plateau—a fine grazing country, where numbers of cattle and sheep feed. Towards evening, in a valley, in which some settler had reared a comfortable home with a neat enclosure, might have been seen where the melted snows had left both his dwelling and its enclosure in the middle of a lake. Now the whole face of nature is made more beautifully grand by the glories which the setting sun brings out. The sky and the clouds, perhaps, are now the picture which most fascinates; but those "everlasting hills" of solid rock, blue in the distance, which rear their lofty tops far into the sky, and mingle their shining white covering with the clouds, seem not inappropriate emblems of an enduring Power which placed them there.

Next morning the soil of the "rolling prairie country" is alkaline—the herbage,