

of despair. For a year they had not even dared to hope, but in a moment a new prospect had been opened to them. The magic of gold in a locality not difficult of access, in a section possessing every element attractive to the emigrant, was heralded throughout the despairing homes of the east and everywhere active preparations were made to at once, by hook or crook, reach the Eldorado. Two lines of access were at once presented, one by way of the Union Pacific railroad to Sidney, Nebraska, thence overland to the Hills; the other by the Missouri River to Fort Pierre and thence overland. The news of the gold discovery reached Yankton on the evening of the 13th, and the enterprising citizens of that place, recognizing the great advantage of that city as an outfitting depot and entreport to the Black Hills, assembled a great mass meeting on that very evening and began an elaborate propaganda to advertise the Dakota gold fields, and Yankton as the gateway, to the world. / ⁴¹⁵ Flaming posters were printed, setting forth the advantages of the route by which "Yankton could be reached in parlor cars, thence on palatial steamers over the Missouri River to Fort Pierre, and thence a three days' drive in sumptuous stage coaches over a beautiful prairie directly into the heart of the diggings." This Yankton movement was far in advance of any other and attracted the attention of all the gold-fevered world. A party was immediately assembled at Yankton and outfitted to hasten over the route to the Hills to thoroughly spy out the land, establish stage stations, and secure the choicest locations. Excitement everywhere was intense, and little less in the cities of the east than upon the frontiers of Dakota. But, if the hopes of the despondent people had been suddenly aroused, so were they to be as promptly dashed to the ground again. Not more than four days had elapsed after the first announcement of the gold find had reached the people and the story of the activity of the Yanktonians had been telegraphed out to the waiting world, than General Sheridan from his headquarters in Chicago, wired to General Terry, in command of the department of Dakota, absolutely prohibiting all white persons from attempting to enter the Black Hills, and instructing General Terry to set his forces along the Missouri river and