

Forsythe at one of our halting places plucked seventeen beautiful flowers belonging to different varieties, and within a space twenty feet square. The same evening, while seated at the mess table, one of the officers called attention to the carpet of flowers strewn under our feet and it was suggested that it be determined how many different flowers could be plucked without leaving our seat at dinner table. Seven beautiful varieties were thus gathered. Professor Donaldson, the botanist of the expedition, estimated the number of flowers in bloom in Floral Valley at fifty, while an equal number had bloomed or were yet to bloom. The number of trees, shrubs and grasses was estimated at twenty-five, making the total flora of the valley embrace one hundred and twenty-five species. Through this beautiful valley meanders a stream of crystal water so cold as to render ice undesirable even at noonday. The temperature of two of the streams found flowing into it was taken and ascertained to be 44° and $44\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ respectively. The next morning, although loath to leave so enchanting a locality, we continued to ascend this valley until gradually, almost imperceptibly, we discovered that we were on the western crest of the ridge of the Black Hills, and instead of being among barren peaks, as might be supposed, we found ourselves wending our way through a little park, whose natural beauty may well bear comparison with the fairest portions of Central Park. Favored as we had been to have a floral valley as our roadway to the crest of the hills, we were scarcely less fortunate in the valley, which seemed to rise to meet us in the interior slope. The rippling stream of clear, cold water, the / ⁴¹⁰ counterpart of that we had ascended the day before, flowed at our feet and pointed out the way before us, while along its banks grew beautiful flowers, surpassed but little in beauty and profusion by their sisters which had greeted us in Floral Valley. After advancing down this valley about fourteen miles, our course being almost southeast, we encamped in the midst of grazing whose only fault, if any, was the great luxuriance." It is needless to suggest that in view of this report it was scarcely necessary for General Custer to add that he had discovered gold, to induce white men to determine that the Black Hills was too good a country for the Indians to possess.