

the inhabitants think it only wants the railway to bloom forth into a Chicago. Here we waited, took out the horses, rested them, baited them (not forgetting ourselves), then on towards the three forks. To reach this point we had to cross several mud holes, some covered with sheets of water, others apparently dry, but with a thin coating of treacherous mud. In one of the former we were firmly fixed. In vain the driver shouted his most persuasive shout to encourage the horses. They pulled until exhausted, and then lay down. Out jumped the Jehu, up to his waist in water and liquid mud, unfastened the traces, took the horses out, and led them ashore, and the whole company had to plunge in, put their shoulders to the wheels, and at length out rolled wagon No. 1; but in the meantime wagon No. 2 had charged the mud, and likewise was stuck fast, so we had the delight of repeating the performance with as much celerity and despatch as we could muster. The greater portion of the land from Rapid City to the Three Forks is good, although some alkali exists. This is easily recognisable, as the deposits of alkali lie white and glistening on the surface of the soil, and should always be avoided as land unfit to settle on. About 4 p.m. we reached the Three Forks, which is a solitary house standing on the prairie, from which point three trails strike out in various directions. Up to this time we had made about fifty miles. Another rest of two hours. Then we resume our journey. The scene improves. Bluffs of timber crown the little eminences, large lakes flash in the setting sun, myriads of gulls float in the air around us. These birds are quite safe from the farmers, perfectly harmless to the crops, for they will not touch grain, yet they devour the grasshopper and all insects injurious to the growth of the plant, so it is not to be wondered at that the gull should be regarded as a friend to be encouraged. About six we pass a beautiful lake called Salt Lake from its briny water. On the far side of this lake,