

tion possible. In San Francisco I was waited upon by a Mr. Riddell, a gentleman connected with one of the banks, and a Mr. Dodge. Both these gentlemen held land in the Slate Range, and they asked me to go down and see if borax existed there as in Nevada. I dressed up as a poor miner and got down to Los Angeles, mixed up with miners, teamsters, scallywags, banditti, and others, and led a rough life. My expedition involved considerable trouble, and I had to walk many miles, and live with the friends referred to above, sleeping frequently on the sand, under waggons, in stables, &c., for small shanties only exist about every 12 miles, and there are no other houses, for the country produces nothing but sage-brush for miles. No grass, no trees, a perfect wild, howling wilderness, and in some parts no water for miles. This refers to the road that runs from Los Angeles to Cerro Gordo. You have to strike off this road a distance of 42 miles, and you get to the borax lake. On my first visit there was no house or shanty all the way; now there is one small place, where they keep corn for the mules, named after me, called Robotom's Springs.

"At the lake I met two men, an old Californian miner and a bear hunter, with whom I stopped some time. I found borax to my heart's content. Before going down I had made arrangements to have some of the land transferred to me, and a deed was drawn up to this effect in San Francisco. After taking a good survey of the place I thought I should be worth at least a million or more, for I at once saw that borax could at some future period be got from this lake and put on board a sailing vessel, either in the port of Wilmington, Los Angeles, or at San Francisco, cheaper than from any other known deposit. The crude borate of soda on the surface in some places is 3 feet thick. Then at other parts there is a foot of blue mud just under the crude borate of soda, filled with very peculiar crystals; then below this there is a solid mass of pure borax combined with sulphate of soda. This is the most extraordinary deposit in the whole world, for there are lumps of pure borax from 1 to 4 lbs. each. (I brought a lot home with me). The sulphate of soda, with the borax, was put into warm water, which dissolved the former, and the pure borax remained. I had about a ton of this deposit sent up to San Francisco and on to England, and I have since had a good many shipments.

"The most curious thing in the lake is a reef of carbonate of soda, and near to the reef there are a lot of pyramids of the same product, about 4 feet high and 1 to 2 feet thick. In the centre of the lake there is a ridge of common salt. Between the common salt and the borate of soda there are a few hundred acres of shallow water, very warm, filled with crystals, pink, rather green, and light brown. The water has the appearance of a peacock's tail in some places, and in others it has a pink appearance. I brought some of the water home, and it has, this last week, been handed over to G.