

which was so impregnated with soda as to be very unpleasant to drink. On account of its disagreeable taste, the water of this lake is described on my map as "drinkable," but only very thirsty people will swallow much of it.

For travellers on land, observation of the stars is far more accurate and more convenient in every way than that of the sun, and I never took solar observations unless compelled to do so. But in the high winds of this region such nocturnal operations were trying for the temper. Partial protection could be arranged for the lantern by which Leno recorded for me in the open air, but no sufficient shelter could be devised for that which was employed to illuminate the wires of the theodolite. On several nights it was repeatedly blown out at the most important instants. At first I sheltered the flame by tying rags round a portion of the ventilator. These, however, excluded the wind too effectually, for, owing to the small amount of oxygen in the atmosphere at these altitudes, it is necessary to have ample space for the ingress and egress of the air. The re-lighting of the candle in such circumstances required patience, and involved the expenditure of many of the wax vestas which had been put up into special tins for us by Bryant and May. The candles, necessary for the work of computation, were not too plentiful; we knew not when our supply could be renewed, and we had no means of burning oil in the lanterns. I therefore practised economy by invariably putting out the lanterns the moment the instruments were packed away and the chronometer watches compared, and then going to bed in the dark.

Soon after leaving "Fever Camp," Pike and I had numerous discussions as to the best direction to take. Owing to an extensive snow-range in the line we wished