

RAILWAYS IN BOLIVIA

BY DANIEL P. WILES



FREIGHT STATION AT PULACAYO, BOLIVIA

A RESULT of having lost its Pacific seaboard province of Antofagasta, following the war with Chile in 1879, Bolivia found itself shut off from the sea and dependent upon its neighbors for an outlet to the great world.

Great as was the blow to national pride, for the Bolivians felt the loss of Antofagasta more keenly than even the French that of the Rhine provinces, and serious as was the loss to the national treasury of the revenues derived from the rich nitrate fields of the lost province, yet the blow was perhaps less heavy than the Bolivians themselves then thought.

It changed entirely the country's economic outlook and pushed it forward into lines of development which in all probability would otherwise have been delayed for many years. Even prior to 1879 the nitrate fields were for the most part owned by foreigners, the Bolivians themselves being engaged in gold and silver mining. But the taxes from nitrate production paid in a large measure the expenses of government and with the loss of this revenue the state was forced into consideration of the economic development of the country in other lines than gold and silver production alone.

The settled part of Bolivia was then and is to a large extent yet, that high table-land, one of the most spacious and elevated plateaux to be found on the globe, which lies between the western and the eastern Andes. This table-land extends from about the Argentine border in the south into Peru on the northwest, and is from 60 to 150 miles in width.

On the Chilean border the western Cordillera is in reality less a mountain range than a line of huge cliffs. The table-land is itself 12,000 to 13,000 feet above sea level and slopes gradually 2,000 or 3,000 feet up to the crest of the western hills and then falls away abruptly nearly three miles down, 35,000 feet, to the desert land lying between the foot of this immense line of cliffs and the Pacific ocean. To the east of the table-land lies the high Andes, the Cordillera Real, rising in Illampu, Illimani, Ancochuma and Sajama over 21,000 feet. North, east and south from the Cordillera Real the land falls away to the great Amazon and Parana plains. This country, three-fourths of Bolivia in area, is but little settled, but is in natural resources and soil one of the richest parts of the world.

It could easily sustain an agricultural population greater than the whole present population of South America.

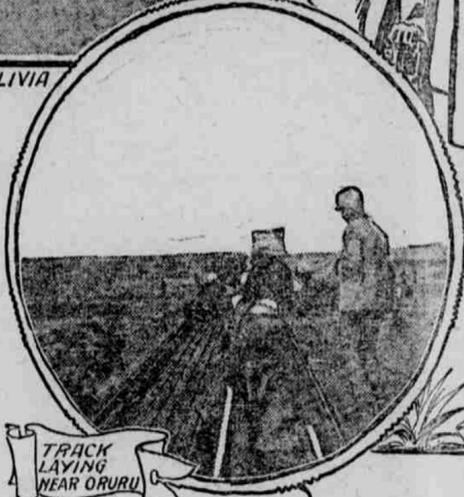
The first and most pressing need to Bolivia is railways. This need was recognized to a certain extent prior to the war with Chile. As far back as June, 1863, the national assembly authorized the president to enter into contracts for the building of railways, and in 1868 a concession was granted to a citizen of the United States to build a railway from Cobija to Potosi with a government guaranty of seven per cent. on the capital invested. In addition, the concession carried a grant of land one league on each side of the line. A number of other concessions were made in 1869, 1873, 1874, 1877, 1878 and 1879.

In 1904 the Bolivian national office of immigration and statistics issued a volume of nearly 400 pages containing the acts, decrees and concessions in aid of railways, covering the years 1850 to 1904. Every effort was made by the government during this period to induce capital to invest in railway construction in the country. Perhaps nowhere else in the world were such inducements held out by any country to secure the end sought as by Bolivia, following the termination of the war with Chile. These inducements were offers of land, mines, exemption from taxation and customs duties, government guarantees, financial aid and exclusive privileges. But unfortunately for Bolivia the offers were not made in the right quarter. In its eagerness to secure results, concessions were granted to and contracts made with the most irresponsible parties, in many cases mere adventurers without capital or influence. The net result was naturally to retard rather than to help railroad construction.

In 1904 all that Bolivia had to show in railways as a result of 40 years' legislation and innumerable contracts were the Guasqui and the Antofagasta roads. The former gave an outlet from La Paz to Lake Titicaca, whence passengers and freight were transported across the lake by boat to the Peruvian port of Puno and thence by the Peruvian railway to Nolleendo on the Pacific. The total length of the road from Alto de La Paz to Guasqui on Lake Titicaca was 87 kilometers (54 miles). The gauge was one meter (39.37 inches) and the rails weighed 18 kilograms per meter—about 12 pounds per foot.

The Antofagasta, Bolivia's first railway, had a total mileage of 325 kilometers (573 miles), a gauge of 75 centimeters (29.53 inches) and rails weighing 17.40 kilograms per meter, or about 11 pounds per foot.

It was not until 25 years after the outbreak of the war with Chile and 20 years after the signing of the agreement of April 4, 1884, which marked the close of that war, although it did not



TRACK LAYING NEAR ORURO

clusively settle all the questions arising therefrom, that on October 20, 1904, at Santiago, plenipotentiaries of the two countries signed the treaty of peace and friendship which put a final end to all disputes between Bolivia and Chile and secured in addition concessions to the former.

In the preceding year, 1903, was signed the treaty of Rio de Janeiro with Brazil. Under this treaty an exchange of territories between the two countries was effected. Bolivia acquired on the southeast the strip of

territory lying between its boundary and the Paraguay river, and Brazil acquired Bolivia's claim to the Acre region on the northeast. The latter territory being considered the more valuable, Brazil stipulated to pay a cash indemnity of £2,000,000 sterling.

These two treaties were of immense consequence to Bolivia: first, in relieving her from the old railway and mining entanglements; second, in securing the construction of the Arica-La Paz railway; third, through the loan of Chilean credit in internal railway construction; and, fourth, in providing a cash fund of £2,300,000 with which to guarantee or to begin the actual construction of the trunk lines.

Following the ratification of the treaties negotiations were opened with prominent European and American capitalists and on May 19, 1906, a contract was signed with the National City Bank and Speyer & Co., of New York. The contract was signed in La Paz by a representative of the concessionaires and additional stipulations were made on May 22.

Under article III of the contract the concessionaires oblige themselves within a period of 10 years to construct the following railway systems:

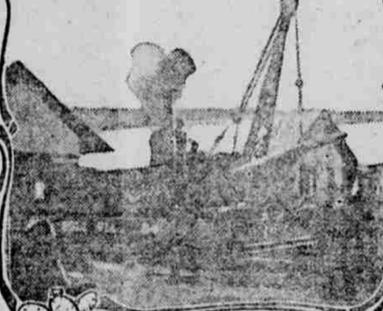
- (a) From Oruro to Viacha, with a branch to the river Desaguadero, connecting with the Arica line.
- (b) From Oruro to Cochabamba.
- (c) From Oruro to Potosi.
- (d) From Potosi to Tupiza, by Calsa and Cata-galta.
- (e) From Uyuni to Potosi.
- (f) From La Paz to Puerto Pando.

All of these roads are to be one-meter gauge except the last two mentioned, which, in the discretion of the concessionaires, may be of 75 centimeters gauge.

The cost of the railways is estimated at £5,500,000 sterling, including £1,200,000 allowed for the La Paz-Puerto Pando line.

The concessionaires are authorized to issue two classes of bonds—first mortgage and second mortgage, or income bonds. The first mortgage bonds, which are a first lien, are authorized to the amount of £3,700,000 sterling, bear five per cent. interest and are payable in 20 years. The interest for 20 years is guaranteed by the government of Bolivia.

A further issue of additional first mortgage bonds to the amount of £2,000,000 sterling is authorized in case the sum of £5,500,000 proves insufficient to build the lines. These bonds will



UNLOADING RAILS AT GUAQUI, BOLIVIA

bear six per cent. interest and the interest will not be guaranteed by the government. The second mortgage or income bonds run for 25 years, bear five per cent. interest and are a second lien on the roads.

Under an agreement made in London in 1907 by the Antofagasta and Bolivia Railway Company, which is a British corporation, and Speyer & Co., the Antofagasta Railway Company agreed to guarantee the interest on the line from Oruro to Viacha and in addition to make a payment to the concessionaires for a majority of the line's stock. This agreement made necessary the law, mentioned above, signed by President Montes on December 1, 1908. The purpose of this agreement is to make the new lines serve as feeders to the Antofagasta line instead of playing the part of competing lines, as would have been the case had the original program of construction been carried out.

The Oruro to Potosi line of the original plan would partly parallel the Antofagasta line. It is very probable that a complete merger of the interests of the Antofagasta and Bolivia Railway Company and the American concessionaires will be made.

A STOUT THING

Miss Burden was not devoid of good sense, but she had brooded over her neighbor's treatment of her until it seemed both intolerable and lawless. It involved a question of shares in the privileges of a certain spring of water and of rights in a certain path, and disagreement over these had led to other differences, small and large, until the main issue seemed hopelessly confused.

Finally Miss Burden resolved to consult a lawyer, to ascertain if there might not be comforting relief for her feelings in a lawsuit. When a woman's exasperation reaches the point where she is ready to resort to the law, she is to be dreaded, and Miss Burden went to Lawyer Fairman's office with a long and spirited story of her wrongs.

Unfortunately for her plan, these wrongs were rather of word than of deed, and rather of fancy than of record. What the neighbor wanted to do and talked about doing, and even what he meant to do at some future time, did not greatly impress Mr. Fairman. He gently suggested to the angry client that her mood was unjustified by what had actually happened and concluded his advice with some words which she never forgot.

"Don't go to law, my dear lady, until you have some facts to take with you. Law by itself is a poor friend; but a fact's a stout thing—a fact's a stout thing!"

The country lawyer's wisdom is sound philosophy for every day in the year. Fancy gives birth to a long train of children, good and bad, and they all have legs and arms of characteristic slenderness and a grasp on life too gentle to be controlling. Set them in line of battle and Master Fact will scatter them all like dry leaves—for in deed and in truth a fact is a stout thing!—Youth's Companion.

He Is Risen

By CHARLES EDWARD HEWITT

(Copyright, by W. G. Chapman.)

An impending stillness brooded—it was Good Friday morning and Mary Deyo the elder viciously manipulated ingredients for a batch of hot-cross-buns from the sheer habit of a custom handed down from her New England forefathers. Mary, her niece, was tremulously awaiting the words that would next come from her guardian's tight-drawn lips. There was a marked resemblance between the two women, the one's angular thinness and hard-showing features symbolizing a main stem that has run to seed, whose well-pruned offshoot takes upon itself the comeliness of youthful fragility.

"I low ye shan't marry a preacher; there's nough said on't," came the rasping sentence at last.

The flush of excitement that had previously suffused the young girl's delicate cheeks now gave place to a pallor which drew unto itself even the ironical glance of the maker of buns. "Aunt Mary," she said slowly, "You would have married a preacher long ago, and now you are punishing John and me for that other's sin."

"Land to goodness!" ejaculated the spinster as her niece stalked from the kitchen. "It's a blessed thing I sot my foot down now else I'd be'n clean run from the house. That John Wilson's a high steppin' critter," she continued to herself. "See what he's fisted into that gal already. Marry a preacher, indeed! hypocrites the hull passell of 'em. And there's Deekin Sims; and every psalm-singin' sister in the Meetin' house. What do

hymn, as was his wont in perplexing moments. "See here, little girl!" he spoke after a bit. "The trouble lies in that your aunt has lost faith both in God and man; those sanctimonious hypocrites at the Meeting house are greatly to blame for it too. Now this is Easter Tide, when all people should rejoice together, so I shall write on this slip of paper the most cherished knowledge of my soul; and will you give her it this night and say: 'John Wilson wants that you should partake of his joy even though he may not share yours.'"

"But John! that will not bring our marriage any nearer," whispered the girl, turning aside lest he should catch the quaver in her voice.

A strong arm drew her close, "You ask her again about me, Girlie, in the morning; there is a miracle in my joy." And pressing the folded slip to her bosom Mary Deyo prayed for the showing of the miracle.

"Is Jesus Christ in Heaven truly?" over and over again did a seducing voice inquire, and mock and disclaim, to a meagre stern faced little woman who strove vainly to elude it. "Wrote ter me did he?" she snapped, as the note was timidly given her. "For two pins I'd pitch it into the hearth!" But late that night the crumpled slip was still held in trembling grasp.

Twenty years the old family Bible had lain unused in the spare closet. "We'll see if it backs up this note o' 'hat triflin' preacher," muttered Mary the elder at near on to midnight. Her eyes showed cold and glinting as she opened the Great Book; but soon the hardness melted before that which has ransomed the guilt of eternity. "Could a man pray for them that nail Him to a tree?" she marveled. "And the Story sure reads likely; Ef He did, hadn't I oughter pray for Deekin Sims and the rest of 'em?—and—mebby for him that deserted me? Oh You Preacher! You that prayed for them that nailed Ye! Ask the Almighty Father to forgive a sinful woman."

The hours passed by unnoted by the elder Mary, and as gilded waves swelled upwards from the east, she glanced from her chamber window and saw a girlish figure steal from the house and start ascending a hill which overlooked the village. "Land to gracious! It's Mary a-goin' to git a look at where he's a-stoppin'," she ejaculated, and then the Wondrous Story that her eyes had but read in the Book unfolded to her soul in the mightiness of its Truth. "It must have be'n sech a mornin' when that Other Mary went to see His Grave," she whispered. "And then She found THIS:—and the crumpled slip of paper was smoothed in the lamp's fast fading light. 'I see it! My poor old eyes see it,' cried the woman, now on her knees. 'And I must set the gal a seer'n of it too.'"

Down stairs shuffled the little woman, near falling in her feverish haste. "There! That plagued door ain't shet," she gasped. "Never mind, with the Lord's help this old hand o'mine 'll stay to the plow and I won't turn back."

It was a steep ascent and the panting pursuer called wildly to the other. "Wait fer me, gal, I want to tell yer about the note." But the object of her beseechings thought enemy was in the motive and quickened the pace to a run. A mighty wonder had meanwhile gathered in the east, whose translucent halo glowed and deepened with the sublime travelling of the morn, and lo! There was born to the quickening earth a ball of molten gold; by whose splendor night's sorrow sweat was changed to iridescent glory. For some reason the glowing radiance dazzled the feeling girl, and her foot caught upon a stone.

"Let me help yer Mary, child," panted the other woman, in a voice surprising even herself in its gentleness. "I only wanted to show ye what that there preacher of your'n wrote ter me. I've be'n a miserable crittur all these years, but now I thank the Almighty that He has One Good Son, and that mebby ye have found one that takes after Him some."

The younger Mary read the crumpled note, and then glanced at the shining east. "The words are true," she murmured. "God also has said in yonder sky, 'HE IS RISEN.'"

Stolen Picture Found.

There is much joy over the return of Vandyck's celebrated canvas, "Lifting of the Cross," to the church of Notre Dame, in the ancient city of Courtrai, Belgium. Two years ago the picture was stolen and only recovered recently. It was so roughly handled by the thieves that it was necessary to send it to Antwerp for restoration. This week it was carried back to Courtrai in triumph. A long procession of prominent citizens and local societies followed it reverently through the streets, and it was installed in its former place to the accompaniment of choral masses.

Something New.

"Seems to me your play runs too much to epigram. 'I'm leading up to a new form of thrill. Instead of dodging destruction by locomotive, buzzsaw or pliedriver, my hero narrowly escapes being talked to death.'"



But His Dancing Eyes Sobered at the Motion of Her Head.

they loer of I go to perdition, or just turn into a hopper-load as some idlers claims dead people becomes?" The irritated woman here slammed down a freshly baked pan of delicacies to emphasize her thoughts. Her mind was afloat on a theme with which it had wrestled for many a dreary year; and being over bold from long familiarity it drew to depths that have held to destruction many an unsuspecting bark.

"Bah! with such religion," it whispered. "It pears ter me, Mary Deyo, ef God had ever been flesh and blood, and was truly gone back to Heaven, he wouldn't have let you git fisted and people act that-a-way in His house."

Something happened at this point; the mighty heredity bestowed by a line of God-fearing forebears clutched for the spirit that was aloft on the balances; and in the act of forming a sugar cross, the wrinkled hand started a-trembling as from an ague. "May the Almighty forgive me," moaned the woman, and swept the buns unsugared into the closet.

Mary, the younger, passed a miserable existence through the following hours. The young minister who had but recently come to the village was expected that evening to sue for her hand, and unless the proverbial worm should turn and take matters to itself, his outlook was anything but bright. The elder Mary's demeanor was more morose than combative during the day; her termagant tongue giving utterance to no admonitions or rebukes, which circumstance would have called from the girl great wonderment at any other time. Spring had already breathed over the village lowlands, and the air was primed with that fragrant aroma which tells so surely to man that he was not meant to live alone. But the chirping peepers in the distant swamp seemed a melancholy chorus to Mary Deyo as she awaited in the fast-deepening twilight her lover's coming. On the morrow he was to lead the Easter service at the old Meeting house; and how joyously she had anticipated this as the fit occasion to publish her happiness. "If we can not marry I will stop going to meeting," she unconsciously resolved, the delicate lines taking to themselves something of the other Mary's hardness; but they quickly softened as rapid steps could be heard approaching.

"Hello, Girl! Is it good news you have to tell this wonderful eve of Easter?" cheerily greeted John Wilson. But his dancing eyes sobered at the notion of her head. "Come, stop a bit and talk it over," he said gently; and as the depth of the spinster's jubilation was made clear to him the man hummed a few notes of a favorite