

Treasure Vaults of Andes at 'Frisco Show

LA PAZ, Bolivia.—The San Francisco exposition will have a wonderful exhibit showing the treasure vaults of the Andes. For months Bolivia has been collecting specimens to show its mineral resources, and it will undoubtedly have the finest mineral collection abroad at the fair. Exhibits already prepared fill a room seventy feet long and twenty feet wide, and Dr. Manuel Yungate Bolivian, who is to take the collection to San Francisco, tells me that when complete it will be three times this size. I examined the specimens already collected. They embrace every sort of metal from blamuth and tungsten to gold, silver, copper and tin. Bolivia has the richest tin mines of the world, and it now supplies about one-fourth of the world's production. One block of tin ore to be sent to the fair weighs 500 pounds, and of that 70 per cent is pure tin. This is in striking contrast to the less than 5 per cent ore of other parts of the world. Another sample weighs 2,000 pounds, and it contains more than 1,300 pounds of pure tin. It comes from the mines of Simon Patiso, who is now the tin king of the world. He has an income of about \$100,000 a month from his tin mines at Nacti, which seem inexhaustible.

Exhibit of Copper.
Another large exhibit consists of specimens of copper. These come from various parts of the country, and especially from the mines of Corcora and Carananga, where the ore lies in layers of sandstone, nine or ten feet in thickness. The copper runs through the sandstone in grains, and all that is necessary is to pulverize the stone and wash out the sand. You have then the pure grains of copper, ready to be put up in barrels and shipped off to Europe. Other copper specimens are ingots or charcoal, some of which weigh several pounds, and others are pure copper in the shape of seams, or in great sheets or plates covering many square feet. I saw one such plate that would cover a dining table. The exhibit will also have copper water bottles, basins and utensils made by the Indians.

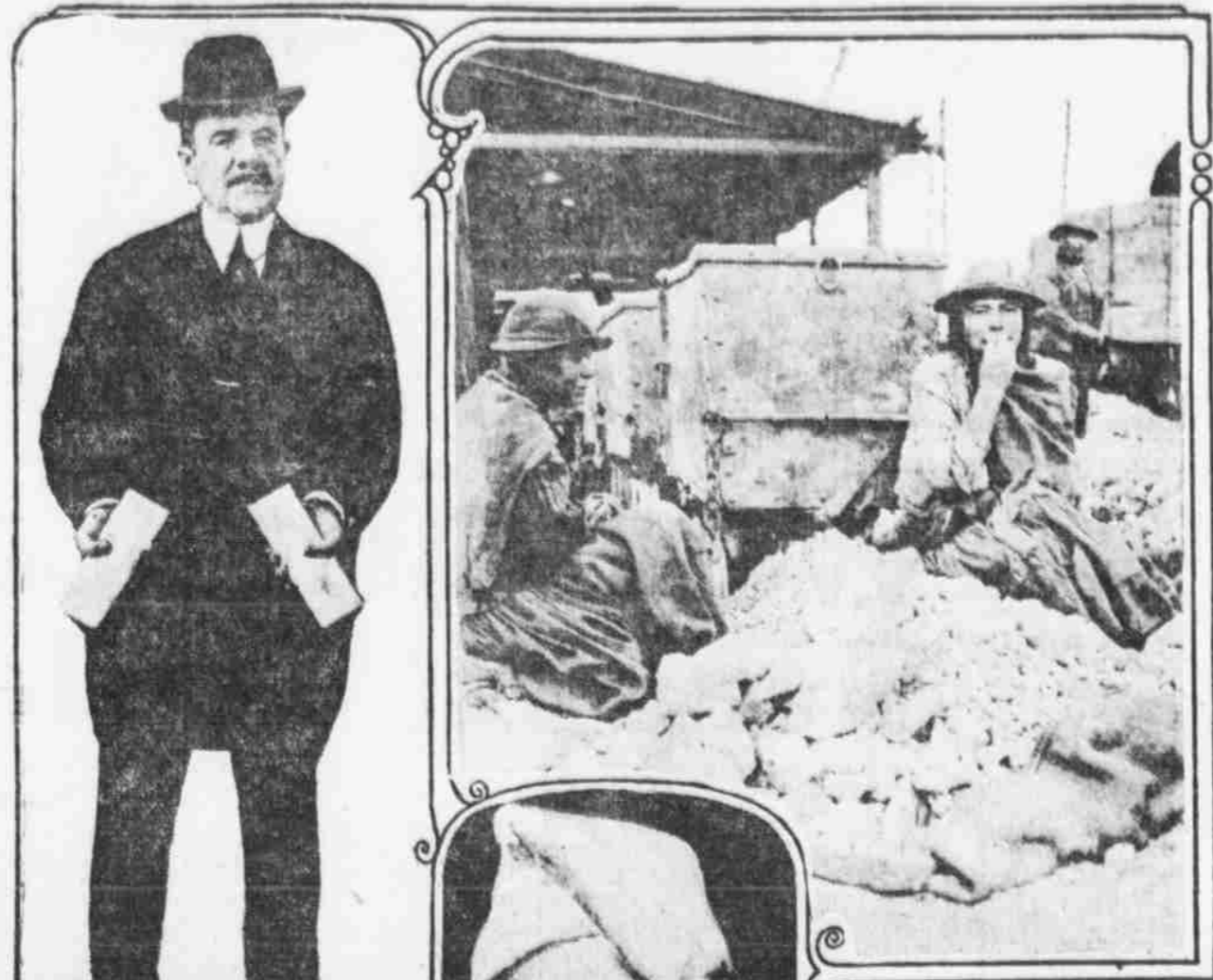
Another mineral that will be shown in great variety is tungsten, used so largely in our modern electric lighting. The tungsten comes from the department of Potosi, which now supplies the most of this metal used in the world. The owners of the mines are known as the tungsten kings. They control the world's output and fix the prices. The exhibit will contain also many samples of silver and gold, lead mixed with silver, and copper and tin. The gold is in coarse grains and nuggets, washed out by the Indians. Just outside La Paz the Spaniards picked up a nugget that weighed thirty-three pounds and was worth \$3,000. Last year a nugget as big as the palm of a man's hand was found near the same place.

Big Blocks of Ore.
To these specimens will be added more of blocks of ore, weighing three or more tons, which Bolivia has been showing at Ghent, and the whole collection will form one of the finest mineral exhibits ever seen at any exposition. It will give a fair idea of the wonderful possibilities of the Andes. These mountains are highly mineralized throughout their whole length from the Gulf of Darien to the Strait of Magellan. The republic of Colombia at the north has added hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of silver and gold to the wealth of the world. Ecuador and Peru have produced vast sums, and also Bolivia and Chile. They are now washing gold from the sands at the Strait of Magellan. I have already written of the wonderful copper mines of Cerro de Pasco, that produced many millions in silver before the silver ore ran into copper. Between the years of 1830 and 1851 these mines yielded more than \$4,000,000 worth of pure silver, and for many years they turned out 1,000,000 ounces of silver per annum. Indeed, it is said that \$80,000,000 worth of silver has been taken from under the very ground on which the town of Cerro de Pasco now stands. I doubt not that an equal value in copper will be produced from the mines now being worked below where the silver lay.

The greatest of the silver mines of Bolivia have been those of Potosi. There is a mountain there that has produced more of that metal than any other place in the whole world. The mines were found about fifty-two years after Columbus discovered this hemisphere, and from then on until the nineteenth century the average product was more than \$12,000,000 a year, or \$1,000,000 a month, for 234 years. The total sum amounted to over three billions of dollars, and it is estimated that almost four billions have been taken out to this day. The mountain of Potosi is now honey combed with mines, and the silver ore is largely exhausted; but the British seem to have run into tin, and a British company is working the mines for tin with the silver as a byproduct. In Cerro de Pasco, the silver and gold mixed with the copper pay all the expenses of the mining, and the copper is pure gain. It will probably be so with the tin of Potosi. The mines have always shown great value in tin, but the ignorant miners threw the tin away. They separated it from the silver, allowing vast quantities of the cheaper metal to be washed off by the streams. Potosi mountain has now something like 7,000 abandoned silver mines scattered over it, and there are hundreds of these that will soon be worked for silver and tin. I am told that the mountain also contains copper.

Nineteenth Century Discovery.
The Huanchaca silver mine has produced more than 8,000,000 pounds of pure silver, and the mileage of its underground workings is said to be longer than that of any other silver mine in the world. The mine has recently been equipped with modern machinery, and a long railroad has been built to connect them with the smelter at Antofagasta. Those mines were discovered in the nineteenth century by a poor Spaniard, who for twenty years had hunted for silver and gold and had found none. As the story goes, he was considered especially unlucky, and was laughed and sneered at by all, but the Indians, to whom he was kind, the Huanchaca mine was shown him by an Indian woman as a reward for his kindness during her illness, and as a result she died a rich man. Her silver was taken out after his death, and the total product has now equaled about \$125,000,000. The mines are still yielding. They employ altogether about 200 workmen, including 100 women, who are engaged in sorting the ore.

During my stay in Cerro de Pasco I heard much about the Paradise deposits that lie on the tops of the Andes, only a few miles from the American smelter, known as La Fundicion. The mines belong to the Vanadium Trust company



Former U.S. Minister Horace G. Knowles and his golden bricks

which, I am told here, is a branch of the United States Steel company. It controls the product and uses it for making vanadium steel. The chief mine was originally owned by an Italian, named Ferrandini, who still holds a large interest. It has made Ferrandini rich, and he is now buying haciendas here and there in the Andes and breeding fine stock.

This vanadium occurs in a carbonaceous deposit, interstratified with sandstone. The lower portion of the stone contains 2 or 3 per cent of vanadium. The ore is roasted before it is brought down to the smelter, and the metal is shipped to Pittsburgh. It is not sold in bulk, but is kept by the company for the making of steel. Only so much is mined, the output being regulated by the demand.

Peppered with Gold.
The Andes are peppered with gold from one end to the other. Pizarro carried away from them \$100,000,000 worth of metal and there were other millions which he failed to get. Among the latter were the lost treasures of the Incas I have already described, including the gold plates that they love from their temples in Cuzco and the mighty gold chain they threw into Lake Uroca. It is said that there is gold mixed with the sands of Lake Titicaca. It is still being washed from the sands near La Paz, and it is found in greater or less quantities along almost all the tributaries of the Amazon. A prospector tells me that the whole mountain range, running from Mount Sorati to Mount Illimani, a distance of 150 miles, shows gold, and that some places have undoubtedly veins of gold.

A large part of the Bolivian plateau consists of sedimentary deposits of gravel and clay, and in many places upon it coarse gold has been found. The most of this is in small nuggets and very little in dust.

There are extensive quartz mines on the Amazonian side of the Andes. One of these belongs to the Inca Mining company, a Pennsylvania combination, which has taken out about \$7,000,000, and another is the Santo Domingo mine, that has produced half as much. During my stay in Arequipa I met Mr. B. H. Collins, the manager of the Inca company, and had a chat with him about his mines and the difficulties with which the company had to contend before they could make them profitable. The mines are situated on the Madre de Dios river, not very far from the headwaters of the Amazon. They are on the Atlantic slope of the Andes about 550 miles east of the Pacific ocean. To reach them, one has to go by the railroad across the coast range, through a pass higher than the top of Pike's Peak, and then up the branch line which leads from Juliaca to Cuzco. At Tiraque the miners leave the railroad and go across the country by a wagon road and mule trail for a distance of about 142 miles. The company had to build the road themselves, and that across a pass over 15,000 feet high. The road has sixteen bridges and it goes through gorges 600 feet tall. A mule trail that forms the end of the route winds its way for thirty-eight miles up and down and along the sides of the cliffs. It cost \$400,000, and the total expense of the entire route was enormous. The mining company got a concession of something like 1,000,000 acres of land for building the road, and has been exploiting this for rubber.

Machinery from United States.
The Inca Mining company has imported from the United States and carried over this route stamps and mills and also a reduction plant to take care of 100 tons of ore daily. Among its other machinery is a steamer, made in Chicago, that was brought down to the coast of the Pacific and carried over the mountains in pieces, 700 miles being required for the transport. Entirely separate and apart from this Inca company is the Incauro mining company. The former mine is in Peru;

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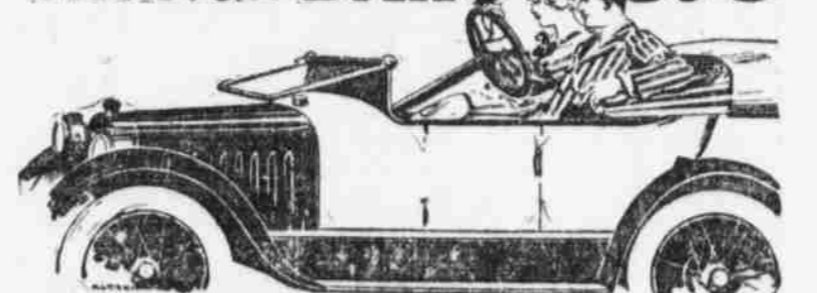


Two mining girls at Huanchaca

States, and one of the chief owners and president of the company is Mr. Horace G. Knowles, who was formerly United States minister to Bolivia. The vice president and manager is David G. Bricker, a well known American miner, who discovered the famous Olla de Oro mine, and the treasurer is Thomas K. Miller, the secretary of state of Delaware. Mr. Knowles tells me that this mine promises to pay beyond the hopes of its owners. He showed me four gold bricks that had been turned out last month, and allowed me to photograph him with two of the bricks in his hands. Each of the bricks weighs, I should judge, about thirty pounds, and is worth in the neighborhood of \$4,000. Mr. Knowles says the mine is rapidly developing, and that he believes it will within a short while produce 100 pounds of fine gold per month. It is equipped with an American plant, and has one of the most modern and efficient mining installations of all South America.

Great Unopened Treasure.
In addition to his work for this mine, Mr. Knowles has organized a company for the general development of the mineral resources of this part of the Andes. He thinks that Bolivia is the great unopened treasure vault of the world, and rightly says it has never been prospected.

The company, of which he is the president, is known as the Bolivian Development and Exploitation company, and its capital stock is held both here in Bolivia and in the United States. The list of stockholders includes President Samuel M. Monteforte, ex-President Villazon, the president of the Bolivian senate, most of the members of the cabinet, as well as several other leading statesmen and commercial men of this country. He tells me that



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A great deal of the stock is held in the United States. Its investors being scattered from Boston to Los Angeles. The plan of this company is to send out engineers and prospectors over this vast mineral territory, and to investigate what they find through a corps of competent engineers, headed by Prof. Francis Church Lincoln of Boston, a well known geologist and metallurgist. If the mines stand the test of this examination they are then to be submitted to the American stockholders, who will purchase or sell them at such prices that the parent company will get back about four times what it puts in, and at the same time retain 25 per cent of the stock of the operating company.

This method of development and speculation is well known in the United States, but it is new in Bolivia and is popular. I understand that the company has already on its lists either examined or to be examined properties a number of gold, silver, tin, tungsten and copper prospects and mines. It is also investigating certain quarries of marble and alabaster that Mr. Knowles says are so fine that the stone should find a market at high prices all over the world.

The plan, as far as I can see, is an excellent one, and especially so considering its connection with Bolivian statesmen and capitalists. The great danger, how-

ever, is as to the securing of mining titles that cannot be disputed. This has been a very serious matter in the past as to all valuable Bolivian properties, although President Montes is now attempting to have enacted new mining laws and regulations that will remedy these dangers and materially aid in the opening up of the country in a mineral way.

Theories Relative to Gold.
I have been much interested in hearing Mr. Knowles express his great faith in the mineral possibilities of Bolivia. He says that this country was the original source of the gold of the Incas, and that it is bound to become a second Transvaal. He has curious theories regarding gold discoveries and gold booms, concerning the reliability of which I am not well enough posted on the history of such matters to judge. He says the great gold discoveries of the world come in cycles, and that the same number of years elapsed between the great finds in California, Australia, Colorado, South Africa, Alaska and Nevada. For instance, in 1849 the time for one of these periods came, and we had the gold of California. There was a rush from all over the world to San Francisco, and a flood of yellow metal was poured into the markets. After that a fixed number of years passed and we had the gold discoveries of Australia, with a rush to that island continent.

Then the wheels of time turned round just so many revolutions and gold was found in Colorado. Another twist of the wheel of time turned round and up came the gold of the Transvaal, and so it was for Alaska and so for Nevada. Now the requisite number of years has again gone by, and this time Mr. Knowles says the gold is to come out of Bolivia. A little investigation as to the actual dates of these events will demonstrate whether this theory is based upon fact, and if so, the judgment of the would be miner or investor must decide for him whether the same rule will hold good in the future. At any rate, the theory is an interesting one.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

At Seven O'clock.
The case had reached a critical stage. Even the judge seemed to awaken to a live interest in the proceeding, for the most important witness was about to be cross-examined.
"So you dare the lady's maid?" began the relentless barrister.
"Yes, sir."
"And where were you at 7 o'clock on the evening in question?"
"In my lady's room, sir."
"For what purpose?"
"I was dressing my lady's hair, sir."
The barrister leaned forward and spoke slowly and impressively.
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