

is believed to be the highest line of railway in the world, for its rails reach to the great height of 15,809 feet above sea level, and by those whose respiratory organs do not suffer from the altitude it is well worth a visit, not only on this account but also because of the truly magnificent panorama of snow-clad mountains to be seen on the way up or down—amongst them the giant "Ollague," said to be upwards of 20,000 feet high. This is the one part of the Antofagasta Railway where snow storms are troublesome, the line having been completely blocked for about four days in July, 1908.

Shortly after leaving Ollague Station the frontier line between Chile and Bolivia is crossed at kilometre 442—275 miles from Antofagasta, and from this point to Uyuni (kilometre 610) the line runs at almost a uniform level of 12,000 feet above the sea.

Uyuni is a town of some 5,000 inhabitants, many of whom are Indians, and its market is worthy of a visit. Here for the first time we make the acquaintance of the llama as a beast of burden, as these animals are largely employed in the transport of tin and silver over the mountains from Potosi, some 125 miles distant. They go in troops of 100 or more and take 15 days on the journey. Each animal carries 100 lbs. in weight and it is said that they will not move if this weight is exceeded in the smallest degree. From Uyuni runs a private railway some 33 kilometres long to the famous Huanchaca silver mines, which are situated in the mountains at 13,600 feet above the sea, and at the end of the line is the mining town of Pulacayo, consisting of some 8,000 inhabitants. These mines are owned and worked by an enterprising Franco-Chilian Company, and are well worth a visit.

We now leave Uyuni for Oruro, and at Huari—kilometre 801—come in sight on our left of the mysterious fresh water

lake Poopo, which receives 212,000 cubic feet of water per minute and only 2,000 cubic feet flow out of it. At 924 kilometres, or 574 miles from Antofagasta we reach the town of Oruro, which is the terminus of the Antofagasta Railway.

Oruro is a town of 8,000 inhabitants situated at 12,000 feet above the sea. The houses are mostly built of unburnt bricks, plastered on the outside and painted different colours, which gives a very picturesque appearance to the streets; here, also, most of the windows are decorated with boxes of flowers, a rather uncommon feature in South American towns.

For some distance after leaving Oruro the country is swampy and uninteresting but soon this changes for rough stony ground on which grows a short scrub affording food for llamas and donkeys which are seen in large numbers, and later on, this again changes for rough grass and we reach the grazing ground which from time immemorial has supported the flocks of the Incas and their descendants. As the train approaches Viacha, the junction with the railway connecting La Paz with Lake Titicaca, we obtain our first sight of the famous Illimani towering above the plains, 21,828 feet high, and capped with the grandest mass of snow.

A short run brings us to the Alto station and with but little delay the descent to the City of La Paz de Ayacucho is begun, the railway coaches being headed by an electric motor. Of the panorama which unfolds itself of the beautiful fertile valley in which the city nestles we can attempt no description. The traveller having seen it will never forget. The charms of the old world city with its many churches, its wonderful architectural features and endless peculiarities must be seen to be appreciated. From La Paz to Lake Titicaca is an easy journey and many of the most famous Inca remains are within easy reach.