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## IN THE HEART OF THE ANDES.

Puno, Peru, May 30, 1898.—I write this letter in the attic of the South American continent. I am in the heart of the Andes mountains, on what, with the exception of Thibet, is the loftiest table land of the globe. At my feet is the western shore of Lake Titicaca, the highest water of the earth upon which steamboats sail, and looking down upon me is the snowy peak of Illampu, which, next to Aconcagu, in Chile, is the highest of the Andes. During the past week I have been traveling among the most wonderful mountains of South America, and I am now in a region which has not its counterpart upon the planet. Here and in other parts of the mountains of Peru are the highest places where people live. During my trip up the Oroya railroad I found a village of about 200 souls at an altitude of more than three miles above the sea. There is a mining camp in the Peruvian Andes which is more than 16,000 feet high, and in crossing the desolate plain known as the Pampa de Arrieros I stopped some time at Vincocya, where there is a locomotive round house higher up in the air than the top of Pike's Peak. In coming here I traveled for two days over one of the steepest railroads of the world, and now, at a distance of more than 300 miles from the Pacific, I am on the great plateau which lies between the two ranges of the Andes, varying in altitude from 12,000 to 13,000 feet above the sea. I am hundreds of miles south of the point where I crossed the great mountains from Lima, and in a region where the Andes are more grand than at any point in the 4,000 miles of their length. Think of a mountain which towers up into the skies so that its ragged, snowy summit is four miles above the level of the ocean. Imagine if you can others which are over 20,000 feet high. Make a wall of such mighty hills and paint them in the wonderful colors, shades and tints of the Andean skies and you can get a faint idea of my surroundings. I have with me many books upon South America, but I fail to find in them any descriptions of the scenic effects of these mountains. This is the region of all others for the artist, and as yet no great artist has attempted to transfer these wonderful pictures to canvas.

My trip over the Andes was a continuous panorama. Let me give you my notes of the scenes along the route as I jotted them down on the way. I began at Mollendo on the Pacific ocean. It is a ragged town on the ragged coast of the Peruvian desert. The ship lies out in the harbor and the surf rolls in with great force, striking the rocks and sending its diamond spray fifty feet upward into the air. The harbor is rougher than that of Jaffa, and my baggage is lowered into a bounding boat over the side of the steamer. I have to jump into the boat when it is on the crest of the waves, and I feel my stomach rise as I sink down into the deep. The landing is so bad that men

and baggage are often thrown into the water, and I am told that the insurance companies always charge one-eighth of a per cent more on all goods shipped to Mollendo. I am rowed to the shore by brawny, coffee-colored boatmen through huge rocks. Now we run into a lighter which is bringing out cargo for the steamer and are nearly capsized. Now we graze a great boulder and at the wharf I have to jump when the boat is on the crest of the wave to get a footing on the steps. My baggage cannot be landed except by means of a crane, and I pay four men two dollars to carry my heavy trunks up the hills to the custom house. A little later on I am seated on a car on my way to Arequipa, which, though only about 100 miles from the coast, is higher up in the air than the top of Mount Washington. Our train first skirts the coast, and then shoots off into the bare hills of the desert. There is not a shrub, not a vestige of green. We climb up a four per cent grade, winding about in horseshoe curves. At places we see the tracks over which we have passed running parallel with, but far below us. Now we are on the side of the mountain facing the ocean. The sky-blue Pacific, hazy and smoky, stretches out towards the west until its delicate blue fades into that of the sky. A patch of reddish gray skirts the foot of the brown velvet hills, and this is divided from the sky-blue water by the silvery strip of surf which is dashing its waves on the shore. The scenery changes at almost every turn of the wheel. There is no place where nature clothes the earth in such royal garments as here. At times the Andes are great masses of blue and brown. The clouds of the sky, though of a fleecy whiteness, paint velvet spots of many colors on the hoary hills, and at times it seems as though all the ink bottles of the heavens had been scattered over the mountains with the most delicate blues, which fade into lighter tints of blues in the distance till the whole horizon seems a billowy, waving sea of blue, dusted with silver, which meets and loses itself in a silver-blue sky. Winding in and out among such hills, we rise to a great desert known as the Pampa de Islay. Here everything is gray and dazzling white. There are hundreds of huge mounds of moving sands which are traveling slowly but surely over the bones of animals which have died in trying to cross the desert waste, and the only apparently living things are the mirages, which now and then deceive the traveler with the idea that they are cool lakes, inverted cities or oases of vegetation near at hand. At the little town of Victor, a mile above the ocean, we reach the end of the Pampa and again begin to ascend. We are again in ragged hills, and soon are traveling among the clouds. We pass through deep cuttings in the mountains and end the first day's travel at Arequipa, 7,500 feet above the sea.

This road is said to have greater excavations than any other line of similar length. It is one of the most expensive roads ever built, having cost \$44,000,000

for a line of 327 miles or an average of \$135,000 a mile. The road reaches an altitude of 14,666 feet in crossing the Andes to the plateau of Lake Titicaca, and here where it ends the altitude is higher than the top of Fujiyama, the sacred snow-capped peak of Japan. It has a branch line of 122 miles going over the plateau to within two days of Cuzco, the famed capital of the Incas. This railroad was built when Peru was rich and when she was squandering fortunes on such things. It is the work of the American engineer, Melggs, and is one of the great engineering feats of the world. There is talk of extending it into Bolivia, and it may sometime be a part of a transcontinental line reaching to Paraguay and the Argentine. At present it belongs to the Peruvian corporation, the English syndicate which took Peru's railroads in consideration of relieving the country of its foreign debt, but it is managed by who keeps it in almost as good condition as any road you will find in the United States. All of the rolling stock is American in pattern, though of late the cars and engines have been made by Peruvians in the company's shops at Arequipa. Arequipa is the half-way station on the road to Lake Titicaca, and it is there that the general offices of the road are situated. I visited the railroad shops and found 400 Peruvians engaged in all kinds of car construction. They make engines as good as any used in our country, and have some which are specially adapted to the heavy grades of the Andes. The shops are in charge of an American, a Mr. Beaumont of New Jersey, but all of the men are Peruvians. Mr. Beaumont told me that of the 1,000 hands employed in one capacity or another on the road there were not more than ten foreigners. It may interest our railroad men to know the wages which their kind receive down here. I give them in American gold values and not in the silver in which they are paid. Trackmen receive 75 cents a day, and brakemen a similar amount. Engineers get \$100 a month, and conductors are paid from \$30 to \$65 a month, according to position and length of service. Men employed in the shops get from 75 cents and upwards per day. There are no trades unions and the men never strike. They work nine hours a day, and with those who are out on the road the day lasts without extra pay until the cars come in.

Arequipa is the second city of Peru. It has about 35,000 people, and is still lighted by coal oil, though an electric lighting plant is now being put in. The town lies in the little valley of the Chile river, which makes an oasis of green in the midst of the desert, and gives Arequipa about fifty odd square miles of irrigable land. Arequipa is the commercial capital of the southern part of the country, and a great part of the trade of Bolivia passes through it. Most of the business is done by the Germans and English, and there is not an American house in the city. It is the neatest, prettiest and brightest town I have yet seen in South Amer-