

## GOLD IN PLACER

If your gold is fine when you are panning, you will also have trouble sloughing the black sand and keeping the small colors from going with it. It is sometimes better to let the real fine gold go than to waste the time separating it. Because of the black background, a small speck of gold shows up large when it is on top of the black sand. There could be a hundred colors seen with the naked eye when on wet black sand, but if they were weighed their value wouldn't equal one cent. Fifteen or twenty minutes could be wasted trying to recover them.

Time is money when you are placering, and the grub bill goes on regardless of whether you are getting any gold. You should think of this when trying to save those fine colors.

On your prospecting trips you will hear many stories about the values in the black sand. I heard one mining engineer make the remark that placer miners throw more gold away in the black sand than what they put into the bottle. No doubt it is true that there are more or less values in the black sand, but I do not believe it would pay the average placer miner to spend any time with it.

When you are working in a place where the take is not very heavy, I have found it a good idea not to be too particular. If you work slow you will save all the fine gold, but if the fine gold is only fifteen or twenty per cent of the take, you can afford to lose that much if, by speeding up, you run twice as much yardage. You will not lose the larger gold by working fast. If the pay dirt runs two dollars a yard, you lose forty cents a yard, but because you run twice as much in the same time you make a dollar and twenty cents more. It takes nearly as much work to run one yard slowly, as it does two yards fast, and your expenses are the same. So tip your riffle board on the dry washer a little more, or your squaw sluice a little more, or run more water through your sluice box.