

The Origin of Gold Nuggets.

The mode in which the large masses of gold called "nuggets" were formed has long puzzled geologists. They are found in the loose earth and gravel of alluvial deposits, and it is the general opinion that these deposits are formed by the wearing away of mountains containing veins of the metal. They are in fact solid ore ground up to sand and gravel by natural agencies. But it is a noticeable fact that large nuggets have never been found in veins. Much as the latter have been explored, uncovering many thousands of miles of their length, they have never yielded masses of gold which approached in size the largest yielded by the "placers." The true origin of these nuggets has attracted more attention in Australia and New Zealand than in our own country, and within a few years a series of experiments have been pursued which afford good reason for believing that a more correct theory of the origin of nuggets has been found. The first point established was the solubility of the sulphide of gold in alkaline solutions. A subterranean vein which contains both the sulphuretted hydrogen necessary for the formation of the sulphide and the alkali necessary for its solution, we have in the thermal veins, the necessary material for the solution of the metal. This part of the discovery was convincing, sustained by Sonstadt's discovery, that the water of the ocean contains gold to the amount of somewhat less than one grain to the ton. Trifling as this proportion is, we have only to assume a uniform strength for the waters of all the oceans, to have a reservoir of bullion containing more metal than all which man has extracted from the earth. There is little doubt that even this weak solution will some day be utilized as a source of gold. The immensity of the quantity thus dissolved in sea water is a proof that the work of solution has gone on for an inconceivable length of time.

Deseret News.

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Train arrive

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