

## GOLD MINING ON THE SASKATCHEWAN.

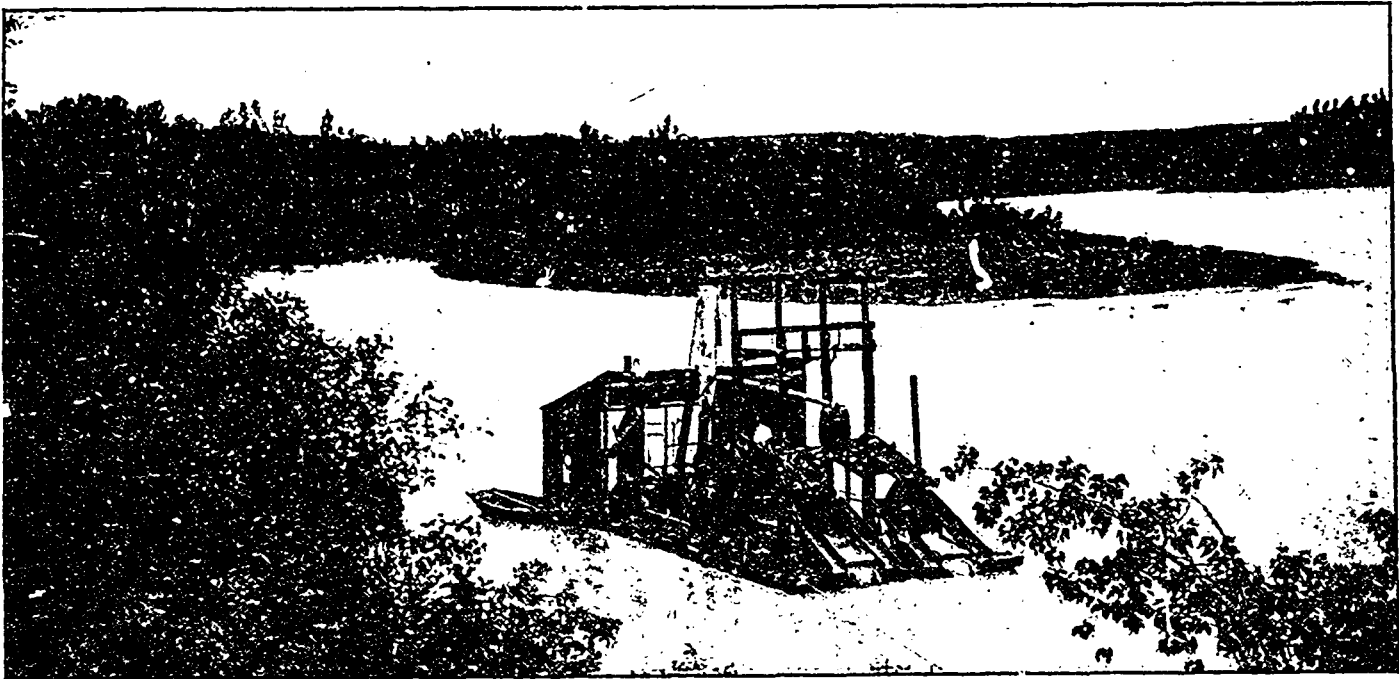
The gold washings on the North Saskatchewan river at Edmonton are among the resources of Northern Alberta which attract the attention of the visitor. He sees the solitary miner, or perhaps two or three together, working with the hand "grizzly," a laborious method of taking the precious dust from the gravel and black sand. This method has been in vogue for many years, washing having been done there in the early sixties, some of the original miners still residing at Edmonton. One of these, Mr. James Gibbons, came to Edmonton, overland from the south, and not over the prairie either, but up through the mountains. He spent some time in the country near Fort Steele.

have been worked also. Each succeeding spring freshet and summer high water have exposed new surfaces or made new deposits of black sand, which have renewed the possibility of making at least wages. Many a poor man has made enough to tide him over, and not a few have made some money and are even yet doing so with the hand grizzly.

During the last two or three years a revolution in the method of washing in the Saskatchewan has been instituted. The pioneer was practically Judge Roueau, of Calgary, whose dredge was the first of any proportions put on the river. Some smaller dredges with hand power, but very little better than the grizzly had been tried before. The commencement has been followed up with some half dozen or more steam dredges some of

vented work for a long time, and possibly prevented paying returns.

Judge Roueau's location is some 75 miles up the river from Edmonton. This summer a grant of 80 miles was made to Seigneur Drolet, an eastern gentleman. His grant is what is known as a subaqueous claim, taking in that part of the bed of the river comprised between points taken at two feet below low water mark. This leaves shore and bar claims held previously by others not interfered with. At least that is the proposition but some of the others interested hardly agree. The amount of capital invested is proof of what the opinion of the richness of the sands is, in the mind of experts. The gold is all what is known as flour and float gold, being very fine, no coarse gold having been found. The



STEAM GOLD DREDGE ON THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER

When he first washed the sands of the Saskatchewan, as high as \$24 had been made in some days, and their average was \$15 to \$20 per day. There were some of the bars of the river known to be good and these were the only ones worked. When the washing got down as low as \$6 to \$8 per day Mr. Gibbons left off washing, as it did not pay owing to the very high expenses at that time. In exploring the river up and down, Mr. Gibbons and others discovered that it is possible to get above and below the gold bearing reaches of the river, some 100 or 125 miles above and less than that below Edmonton covering the territory very nearly.

Since the days of the best paying work on the river, successive sets of miners have turned the same bars over and over, and the poorer bars

them being very complete in their appointments. During the past season several Omaha gentlemen representing different companies have had dredges built and various styles of machinery have been put in, some even having a small dynamo and electric plant. Just what results these have made is known only to the proprietors, but it is the general opinion that the investments have not yet paid very well on these more expensive machines.

The one in the accompanying illustration is the property of Dr. Braithwaite, of Edmonton. It is shown working on a bar at Big Island, some 15 or 16 miles above the town. This is a steam dredge worked by three men and two boys and has been giving very satisfactory returns since low water. The unprecedented high water during the past summer pre-

form in which it occurs makes it very difficult to save and it is thought that even the dredges wash over quite a percentage. The method of saving has hitherto been by the quicksilver amalgam process. Each of the American firms is supposed to have a special process of their own, which, if known, is probably the cyanide process. One gentleman has established himself in the business of buying the black sand either before or after the quicksilver process has been used on it. The gold washed from the Saskatchewan yearly is about \$50,000. The origin or source of the gold deposits is a question for scientists. It is generally accepted that it has not been brought from the mountains by the river. All the gravels which underlie the country show colors when washed, even miles away from the river.