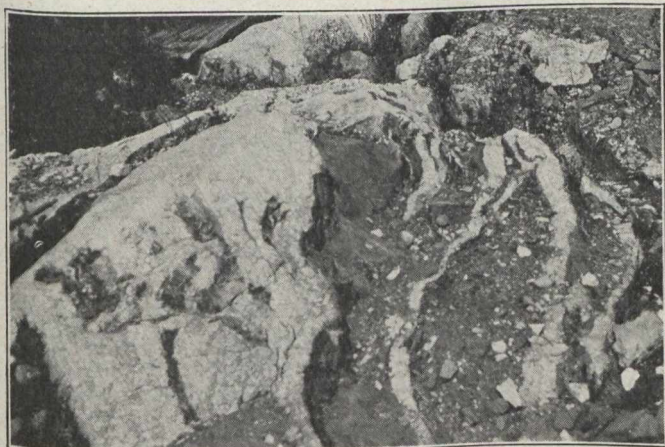


GOLD

Gold is king. The nations of the world are unanimous in giving to the yellow metal a certain value, making it the standard for purposes of exchange. "It embodies and concentrates in the most convenient form," says M. De Launay, of the Ecole Supérieure des Mines, Paris, "the product and the apparent end of human labor, the synthesis of effort, which is destined the next moment to be dispersed in the satisfaction of desires, in enjoyments and pleasures, every one of which will be expressible in terms of more or fewer of its particles. Once it has issued from the mine, from the works where it has been extracted and treated, gold runs all over the world playing with complacency, suppleness and

"The deserts of South Africa and West Australia are supplied with water; the foggy steppes of the Arctic Ocean temper their severity; the tropic forests and marshes lose their pestilence; man takes possession of the frozen plains, of the Alpine crest, of the coast desolated by malaria or yellow fever; he brings there, first the most indispensable necessities, then the conveniences and, finally, the luxuries of existence. Gold may afterwards disappear from the mines, the deposits may be exhausted in a few years, but the beneficent and creative influence remains.

"No other means, no despotic will, would have attained the same end so quickly or so surely. Thanks to gold civilization has brought its resources, its ingenuity,



Gold Quartz, Hollinger Mine, Porcupine, Ont.

the centuries almost untouched by wear. As generations pass, a giddy flight carries it from one hand to another; it goes, sowing joy and prosperity on its way, simply because it is there, because it intervenes like a god without losing any virtue of its own. Not only is gold destined to irradiate human life and to transfigure it by its spell; but it seems as if its discovery in the earth transforms Nature herself and throws down the impassable barriers by which she thinks to arrest the invasion of men and to keep her solitudes for ever untrodden. No sooner has gold been found in a savage, docility the part which is expected of it. It passes down barbarous and uncultivated country, hostile to life itself, than that country is transformed.

and its machines to the desert; there it has settled itself, constructed towns, cleared fields and traced roads, and there it remains. Long after the source of gold has been dried up and forgotten, the plain, which it once made fruitful, still prospers. Towns may suffer for a while, and populations grow thinner when the lodes disappear; but the useful work, which the discovery of gold was alone, or almost alone, capable of accomplishing with such promptitude, none the less subsists. Where modern man has planted the sole of his foot and hoisted his flag he remains. Owing to the necessity of feeding the miners, the mining centre becomes an agricultural centre; it remains agricultural after the miners have disappeared."