

samples, and has them copied by his own workmen, with his own materials. As the sample sets are of the most expensive order, this branch of the trade is a very profitable one, in spite of the limits set to its proportions. But private buyers frequently deal with the diamond drummer, too. Well known drummers, on arriving at a place where they propose operating, generally get a personal in the local papers, stating that so and so, the well known and popular diamond dealer, etc., is in town, at such and such a hotel, and private custom soon finds him out. There is in Baltimore an old man, who presents the appearance of a veritable vagrant, who is a regular buyer of diamonds for investment. He is a heavy speculator in grain, and turns every dollar he wins into diamonds. Where he hides them no one knows, but several attempts to rob him have failed to discover their whereabouts. He is popularly reputed to bury them, but where their grave is will probably remain a mystery till he goes to his own, if, indeed, it is discovered then.

*Apr*opos of robbery, that of a diamond drummer is very rare, though it does occur now and then. He travels heavily though not obtrusively armed, does not go to bed in his hotel with the door unlatched, and never carries his stock with him in strange places at night. By observing such simple, common-sense rules of precaution, he preserves himself from most of the perils that menace a man known to be travelling with a store of wealth about him, and generally lives to a good and opulent old age. When he is robbed his loss is generally irredeemable, for even the cleverest diamond drummer could not swear to his own jewels with the settings removed or a facet or two recut. He would recognize them to his own satisfaction, but it would require a jury of diamond experts to convict a thief on the slender evidence he could adduce.—*Exchange*.

ROMANCE OF OLD GOLD.

There has always been more or less reverence attached to old and venerable specimens of wrought gold, and poets and novelists have dealt lovingly with the theme. As a matter of fact, however, from a business standpoint, old samples of wrought gold are usually worth just what their value is after emerging from the melting pot. But

associations and pleasant memories have, with many a value that money cannot buy, and in the hands of this class of persons, old samples of wrought gold, that have been heirlooms in families for ages, become inestimable treasures. There is, however, much exaggeration relative to gold workers that the public lends a ready ear to. For instance we have heard the story frequently repeated that an enterprising man once gathered the dirt in John Street, including the sweepings from many jewelers' shops, and on assaying the dirt, recovered over \$10,000 worth of old gold waste. The craft must indeed be wealthy when it can throw such a bonanza into the street. Of course the story is absurd, but there are many such in existence to which a credulous ear is lent. A reporter of a daily paper recently published the result of his investigations upon the subject of old gold, and below we give the substance of what he says on the subject :

Passing through John street, the other day, a glare of a brilliant light blazed blindingly in the reporter's eyes. It was the reflection of the rays of the noonday sun from an eccentric mass of white metal in the dirty little window in a dirty little shop which was sandwiched between two of the handsome silversmiths' stores, like some skulking tramp being taken care of by a brace of stalwart guardians of the peace. How the solar shaft overpierced the grimed panes with sufficient power to create such a responsive radiance is a mystery. It was as much as the reporter could do to make out that the white metal was a mass of crucible silver, of the most fantastic and charming filagree structure, its surface fretted like the frosting on a winter morning window in designs which might have been made in fairy-land. In trays and heaps all around it was a confused mass of the most heterogeneous articles of ornaments and utility, or rather of bygone ornaments, whatever their present utility might be, of both antique and modern pattern, but all of one of the two precious metals, and all run to one common character of seed. There were long chains festooned all about and coiling in heaps like sleeping serpents, battered bracelets and rings varying in style from the plain wedding circlet to the aristocratic seal strung like dried apples on long wires. A golden sword hilt and a gold arabesqued scabbard,

several daggers with tarnished silver grips, ornamental scrolls wrenched from gun stocks and revolver butts with the rivets still sticking in them, brooches without pins, earrings without hooks, watch cases, old coins, medals and badges of every description. A couple of crucibles were crammed with settings from which the jewels had been torn, and there was a bushel or so of the same spoiled jewelers' work in two battered black silver pitchers, whose dented but portly corporosities bore an engraved crest with a graceful monogram and the date of 1742. These heirlooms come to a common level with their frivolous companions, and waiting, like them, for the melting-pot, had the air of dignity about them of two gentlemen of the old school, dropped by misfortune among the proletarian paupers of an almshouse. The flaunting sign in the window, "Old gold and silver bought at the best prices," seemed a wanton insult to them, a fling at their hapless deteriorated age.

The shop inside was, if that is possible, more in want of a purification than the exterior. In its gloomiest corner a red-eyed furnace glowed through a veil of blue charcoal smoke. The ceiling was black and festooned with cobwebs, which made hammocks for the soot and dust to repose in. The walls were black—a weary, unwholesome black, like the complexion of one of those toilers in a Siberian Lead mine who have forgotten the light of day. There were some cards and price lists gummed to them, but their inscriptions had long since been smudged into illegibility. Over a board counter a bent old man was testing some chains and bracelets with acid, while their vendor stood by and awaited the decision of the dumb detective as to the worthiness of his stock. A florid gentleman was tumbling over the chaotic contents of a boxfull of seals, monograms and the like, which had been deprived of their settings. "It's no use," he observed; "it isn't here, that's certain. I must try another place."

"He has been here every day for a month now," explained the man behind the counter. "His house was robbed lately, and among the articles stolen was a seal ring which had belonged to his family for unnumbered generations. He had hoped that he might come across it here, but I guess his chance is a slim