

## GOLD IN THE ASSAY OFFICE.

The statement which was made by George E. Roberts, director of the Mint, at the local assay office last month, shows that the yield of gold from the Klondyke region amounts to about \$11,000,000 this year, and that it will probably reach \$18,000,000 by the end of the year.

Only a small amount of this product reaches the New York assay office, the greater part going to Seattle and San Francisco. At Seattle the yellow dust goes to the assay office, and the San Francisco consignments go to private refineries and to the United States Mint. The odd lots, which come to New York, reach the assay office in Wall street in buckskin bags, in bottles, in tin cans and in boxes, and there goes through the processes to which all gold and silver sent there from the various sources is subjected.

In the receiving room it is unpacked and weighed and receipted for, and is treated by the people who handle it like ordinary merchandise. The receiving room is an interesting place to the layman. In the course of the business day one may see fortunes unpacked and handled there with less fuss and excitement than one would find at the ordinary bargain counter. Cases containing old jewelry, bags of coin and flasks of dust are brought to the place daily, and these are converted into bars and finally become coins.

A box received there one day recently from a pawnbroker's establishment was filled with gold watch cases of all styles, classes and ages. There were tiny cases which in their day enclosed pretty ladies' watches, and large, heavy cases which suggested the race-track or the railway service; there were cases of the pattern of long ago, which had been worn smooth in the pockets of men who were finally compelled to part with them, and a number showed by handsomely engraved in-

scriptions that the watches were presents, and prizes and rewards for bravery and faithful service.

"They will all go into the same melting pot," the receiving clerk said, "and the bar will look just like the one which is made of coin or dust."

Next to the box full of watch cases was a much smaller box, from which the cover had just been ripped off. This contained a thick bar of dull, yellow metal, about ten inches long, which, when placed on the scales, was found to weigh 1,254 ounces. "That's about \$20,000 worth of gold," said the man at the scales, "and we get them here twice as large. Some of them are not as good as this, though," and he pointed to three big chunks of metal which are kept in the office as a warning to men with money to avoid the tempting gold brick. The show pieces were bought by rich tourists in the Far West from Indians, who had "obtained the gold in a clandestine way," and were willing to dispose of it at a sacrifice provided the purchaser would not inform on them. The bars show where a fake test had been made. A bit which had been "fixed" for the purpose had been applied, and the pieces taken out of the bar remained in the tool, and for this a piece of pure metal was shown to the man of the speculative mind. Convinced that he had a fortune, he took his gold bar to the assay office, and then—he awoke.

There were also bags full of gold coins of all sizes, and from all countries, and boxes, bags and bottles of dust from gold fields in all quarters of the globe. An important item in the assay office is the manufactured jewelry, of which large quantities are sent there to be reduced to bars. In explanation of this item, an employee of the office said: "Jewelry is an article of fashion, just as much as hats or coats, and when a manufacturer makes an article in large quantities without first having

tested its popularity, he sometimes finds himself loaded with stock which he can't dispose of, and he sacrifices the labor and sends the material here and takes his draft for that. It's a big sacrifice, but he undoubtedly thinks some money is better than nothing." From the receiving room, after being recorded, checked and registered, the metal is taken to the deposit melting room, where it is melted in crucibles under heat ranging from 1,600 to 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit. The place has the appearance of a miniature blast furnace, the small corps of workmen are grimy, but the yellow and the white ingots dispel the illusion, and when the guide says that the pots from which the blue flames are bursting contain each about \$100,000 in gold, one feels convinced that he is in no ordinary workshop. Samples weighing from one to two one-hundredths of an ounce are taken from the bars as they come from the smelting room and are carefully analyzed. By this process the quality is determined of the dust from the Klondyke, the coin from Wall street, or the watch cases from the Bowery. All through the building, in the department where the samples are placed in the tiny Cupell cups, where the silver is separated from the gold, in the assay weighing room where instruments of such delicacy are used that they readily determine the weight of a hair, as well as in the shops where heavy machinery is used, a perfect check system is employed, and the work of assaying is not complete until it has gone through the hands of three competent men.—New York Tribune.

—Here are some hints towards health:  
Drink less—breathe more. Eat less—chew more. Clothe less—bathe more. Ride less—walk more. Sit less—dig more. Worry less—work more. Waste less—give more. Write less—read more. Preach less—practice more.



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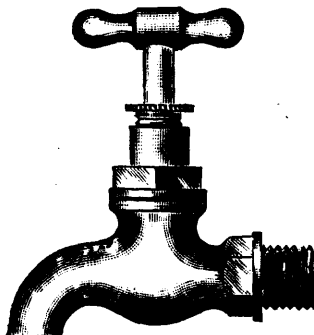
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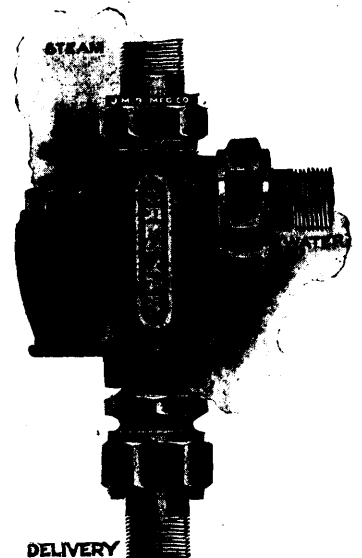
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