

## PLACER GOLD.

The existence of placer in Lardeau creek and the Lardeau river, in the Trout Lake Mining Division, has been known for a number of years, but, so far, all attempts at saving the gold have proved failures, partly owing to the difficulty in diverting the water, and partly to the presence of large boulders in the stream-beds where the gold occurs.

Near the town of Trout Lake, at the mouth of a small canyon, during a period of extra low water, a pocket of gold was found a good many years ago in the gravel of the present stream-bed, and the gravel-banks a little farther down the stream contain gold, as can be proved by panning. In order to work this placer, a Spokane company built a dam at the mouth of the canyon, from which a flume was constructed to carry the water of the creek and expose the gravel of the creek-bed, so that it could be mined. The experiment was unsuccessful, however, on account of the heavy flow of water that season, and the following spring's high water took out a part of the flume, which was never rebuilt.

At Ten-mile, a short distance below the mouth of Garner creek, a placer-miner by the name of Peter Culkeen has done much exploration-work endeavouring to locate pay-gravel in an ancient lake-basin. Lardeau creek at this place is crossed by a rim of hard rock, through which it has only recently (geologically speaking) cut, and which it has not yet worn down to grade, but flows over in a low fall.

Placer gold has been found on both sides of this rim, and the supposition is that on bed-rock in the basin above gold in paying quantities exists. Mr. Culkeen has been acting on this theory for the past few years, and during his leisure-time has done a considerable amount of trenching, sluicing, and hydraulicking with home-made apparatus. Plate 18 shows one of the trenches with his hydraulicking apparatus. It is his intention, during the low-water period this fall and winter, to drive a crosscut through the rock-rim of the basin and explore the gravel along bed-rock above it. There is too much water in the gravel to permit of its being explored by shafts, which Mr. Culkeen attempted to do, but only succeeded in sinking a few feet before the water drove him out.

He has found gold in several places in the gravel; some pieces shown to the writer were a good size, but considerably flattened and worn smooth, showing that they have been transported some distance. In the Lardeau river below Poplar gold has been found in the present bed of that stream as far south as Gold Hill, in the Alnsworth Mining Division. The river, however, is full of boulders, some of which are quite large, and contains such a heavy flow of water that it would only be possible to work it by means of a dredge.

An attempt is being made to do this by an American company, the dredge being located in the river a short distance above the railroad bridge at Gold Hill, in the Alnsworth Division. What the results are is not yet known. Owing to lack of time, and the dredge being outside the district under examination, it was not visited by the writer, nor did inquiry elicit any definite information. The problem of successfully dredging the Lardeau river is a difficult one, on account of the swiftness of the stream and the presence of boulders, which add materially to the cost of operations.

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