

It is pre-eminently ductile and malleable; so malleable that it may be beaten out into leaves so thin that one grain of gold will cover 57 square inches; so ductile that a single grain weight may be drawn into a wire 500 feet long.

It fuses at a temperature estimated at about 2020 degs. Fahrenheit.

Gold is invariably found in the metallic state, but is never quite pure, being alloyed with silver in different proportions, and being generally associated with small quantities of copper, iron and other metals.

There are other combinations of gold, which are, however, of comparatively small commercial importance. One, an alloy of gold with Palladium, called Palladium gold, another with Rhodium, called Rhodium gold.

There is also a native amalgam of gold and mercury. The *Electrum* of Pliny, so called by him on account of its amber color, seems to be a definite compound; specimens from Siberia, analyzed by Klaproth, were found to contain 64 parts of gold and 36 parts of silver.

There are few parts of the globe in which gold has not been found more or less to exist, but it occurs very irregularly, here and there in great abundance, in some places in minute quantity. Prior to the great Californian discovery, in 1847, various countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and America had contributed large supplies of the precious metal, the most celebrated mines of which, in Europe, are those in Transylvania, which have been worked since the time of the Romans.

There are mines in various parts of Africa: those on the Mozambique Coast are supposed by some historians to have been the famous Ophir of the time of Solomon. Subsequent to the discoveries in California and Australia, the old gold mines have become of comparative insignificance.