

## YOUR SHARE OF GOLD

THE human race has never ceased to hoard gold. How much has man been able to save up in all these ages? How big would each person's share be if all this treasure should be divided evenly?

The precious metal never rusts nor spoils. Part of King Solomon's gold is in circulation today; perhaps even some of it was picked out of a stream by the wandering cave men.

The men who mined it, who traded and labored for it, who stole it from each other, who died guarding it; countless generations of them have gone back to dust, but most of their treasure is still with us today. The factories, ships, even the cities created with the gold are gone, but the yellow metal itself still remains and has the power to create new ones.

The total of humanity's hoardings is astonishingly small, amounting only to an insignificant pinch of gold dust for each grasping hand—and how hands have grasped for it down the ages!

The United States has the largest amount of gold ever assembled

in the history of the world. The government hoard weighs 400,000,000 troy ounces and is valued at a little more than 14 billion dollars. Yet unless you live in the East, it would not be worth your while to travel to Washington to collect your share. Divided equally among the 129,000,000 citizens of the Continental United States, this would make a trifle more than three troy ounces of gold apiece; about one heaping teaspoonful.

If all the gold known to have existed since the discovery of America but now lost could be recovered and divided equally among the citizens of the United States, each citizen would receive a level teaspoonful of gold dust, worth about \$60. One heaping teaspoonful worth about \$108, would be his share of the U. S. Government gold reserve; and moderately heaping teaspoonful, worth about \$156, would be his share of all the other gold in the world, publicly and privately owned, making in all about \$324 in value.

Gold already taken from the earth amounts to at least 1,200,000,000 ounces. But there is a shortage. Nearly one-fifth of the treasure has disappeared and it is worth about eight billion dollars to anyone who can find it today.

Two items reduce the deficit: gold buried in people's teeth and in rings which relatives prefer not to remove from dead fingers. Statisticians estimate that since Columbus, perhaps fifty million ounces of gold have been deliberately buried in this way.

"Gold is where you find it" runs the old prospector's phrase and there is probably plenty of it in the earth, if you know where and how to get it out without too much expense.

On top of the earth but in no man's possession are estimated to be 50,000 billion ounces of gold. It is floating about in the salt water of the seven seas—40,000 times as much as all the hands of the human race have succeeded in clutching since there has been a human hand.

No chemist at present has any idea of how to recover that sea gold profitably. But should someone put the secret in Uncle Sam's possession it would bankrupt him.

Instead of adding to the value of the gold he already has, it would make that and all other gold worthless, except for such commercial purposes as might be found for it.

Should the sea give up its gold, everyone's share, instead of a tiny pinch, would become 25,000 troy ounces for each one of the 2,000,000,000 people or enough to fill a ten-gallon pail. This would give about \$875,000 to everyone, and yet, if everyone possessed that much, gold would probably not have enough purchasing value to buy a barrel of flour, and dollars made of silver or tin or some other metal still rare enough to be expensive would have to be substituted for gold money.

If all the gold that has been mined since the discovery of America were melted into one cube it would have an edge of about 40 feet. But if all the gold in the ocean could be made into a cube its sides would be about 1,400 feet. It would contain nearly three billion cubic feet, a volume about 34 times the content of the Great Pyramid of Egypt or about 74 times that of the Empire State Building in New York City.—*Condensed from The American Weekly.*