

## THAT NELSON PLATINUM, MR. FRENCH, AND SOME FACTS

We have been desired to publish the following letter. We do so without comment.

21st February, 1913.

The Honourable

The Minister of Mines,  
Victoria, British Columbia.

Sir,—I beg to report as follows regarding my investigations into the alleged finding of platinum metals of that group in certain dykes in the vicinity of Nelson.

Last year I had a number of samples sent to me; these I sent to several eminent chemists for assay, all of whom reported that they were unable to detect even a trace of platinum metals of that group in the samples tested.

These results were published in detail in the report of this department for 1911—pages 165, et seq.

On October 1 of 1912, I proceeded to Nelson—at your request—to obtain other samples from the same and other localities, so that our samples would represent a wider range.

I made you a detailed report of my trip to Nelson, under date of December 18, 1912, which may be briefly summarized as follows:

I personally took the following samples, with the assistance of Mr. James McGregor, inspector of mines, and in the presence of the parties interested:

- No. 7201—Devlin dike; general sample, upper and softer portion of dike;
- “ 7202—Devlin dike; general sample, lower and harder portion of dike;
- “ 7203—Paternaude dike; general sample, across dike;
- “ 7204—Paternaude dike, special sample of 2 feet next to contact;
- “ 7205—Beelzebub dike, Granite-Poorman Mine, general sample;
- “ 7206—Beelzebub dike, Granite-Poorman Mine, special sample of footwall.
- “ 7207—Greenhorn dike, Granite-Poorman Mine, general sample;
- “ 7208—Granite dike, Granite-Poorman Mine, general sample;
- (It was from this dike that the 50 tons milled was taken.)
- “ 7209—Hardscrabble tunnel, No. 1, chute, general sample of dike.

In addition to the samplings made by me personally, the following samples were supplied to me:

- “ 7211—Monaghan dike, general sample, sampled by owner;
- “ 7212—Monaghan dike, general sample, 2 ft. next hanging wall, sampled by owner;
- “ 7269—McQuarrie & Robertson dike, samples supplied by owners.
- “ 7215—Sample given by Thomas Gough, manager Granite mine, to the Provincial Mineralogist and said to be a sample from “concentrates” made on Wilfley table, in 1911, during a run

through the Granite mill of 50 tons of dike matter, taken from same dike as was sample No. 7208.

As the ratio of “concentrates” to the ton of ore is unknown, this sample would not determine the amount of metal in the dike, and was taken only to determine whether there was any platinum present even in ore so concentrated.

It was Mr. A. G. French who was primarily responsible for the alleged discovery of platinum, and I found in an interview I had with him that he claimed that the metals of the platinum group “were so elusive that no ordinary assayer, even the best, could find them upon assay, but that he (Mr. French) by his great experience had found a method of assaying that would show them.”

I obtained from Mr. French a description of his method of assaying, which I had typed, and submitted a copy to him for correction; this was returned with slight corrections and initialled by him.

To show me the manipulation of his processes, Mr. French had some samples run through in my presence; those on dike matter were, however, abandoned, but a sample of concentrates was run through to the end.

The samples, re-agents, and operators were of Mr. French's selection, which was unimportant, as it was only the manipulation I was there to see, and the result was of no consequence, as of course I could not certify the results without control of operations.

Upon my return to Victoria, I had the samples I had obtained divided each into several identical samples.

There has never been any question as to the samples or sampling—the whole question has been as to the assaying of the samples, so to obtain the best expert determination on this point, I sent a set of four samples, each set identical, to a number of the most expert chemists, asking that they be “tested with the greatest possible care for metals of the platinum group, for even a trace, and if found, then in what quantities.”

With each of these sets of samples I sent a copy of Mr. French's method of assaying.

Sets of samples were sent to the following parties, each set being identical and comprising Nos. 7203, 7205, 7211 and 7215:—

Canadian Government Bureau of Mines, Ottawa, courtesy of Dr. Eugene Haanel; this laboratory does all the chemical work of the Bureau of Mines and of the Geological Survey of Canada.

Johnson—Matthey & Co., London, England, Assayers to the Royal Mint, one of first authorities in England on Platinum assaying.

Dr. Frederic P. Dowey, Washington, D.C., chief Chemist to the U. S. Mint and the greatest authority in America on de-