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MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD.

Few persons, says the News Advertiser, are aware that the metal platinum when refined is more valuable than gold; probably fewer still are aware that in this Province is believed to be the largest deposit of this metal in the world. A few years ago there was comparatively little demand for platinum. It was used in the construction of stills for the manufacture of certain acids, of which other metals could not resist the effects. But even in a greater degree than was the case with nickel, the ordinary demand was so limited that had the production of platinum been in considerable quantities, the supply would have been difficult of disposal. The main known source of supply was in the Ural Mountains in Russia, where it is found in juxtaposition with gold. Even there, however, the quantity was so sparsely diffused that even with the cheap labor possible by the employment of convicts, it could not have been properly mined had not gold been also found in the same locality. The falling off in the amount of gold found has led to a comparative cessation in the supply of platinum from that quarter, notwithstanding that the price of platinum has greatly advanced during late years.

The new demand which has sprung up for platinum consequent on its utilization in the manufacture of the incandescent lamps used in electric lighting, has made the question of a larger supply a matter of importance, and the fact that probably the

source of this will be found in British Columbia, serves as another illustration of the enormous and varied character of the mineral riches of this Province. Mr. W. T. Thompson, who carries on an extensive mercantile business at Granite Creek, Keremos, and Rock Creek, passed through Vancouver Tuesday on his way home from Victoria. He is the manager of the Tulameen Improvement Company, which is about to undertake extensive hydraulic mining operations on the Tulameen river, about 12 miles above Granite Creek. The company is composed of Messrs. Ewen, J. Laidlaw, J. Armstrong, of New Westminster, Senator T. R. McInnes, of Victoria; J. Wilson, of Vancouver; and Mr. W. T. Thompson. It has secured a lease of the property, and is now purchasing machinery to work it in a thoroughly systematic manner. The locality has been worked for thirty years for gold, and at first the platinum was thought to be merely "white iron." It is found in conjunction with the gold, and considerable quantities of it have been shipped to New York during the last five years. Operations have, however, only been carried on in a desultory manner and with rude appliances. With proper hydraulic machinery far better results can be obtained, and there is little doubt that the company will obtain very profitable results from its operations. The metal, as found, contains about 75 per cent. of platinum and 5 per cent. of iridium, a still rarer metal. The operations of the company will be watched with great interest, and its success will

probably lead to such activity in hydraulic mining as will open a new era for an industry which, thirty years ago, made British Columbia famous throughout the world.

BUSINESS CHANGES.

Walker & Beggs, Chilliwack, have dissolved.

Henry Brown, of Brown & White, dry goods, Victoria, died May 15th.

R. E. Lemon has purchased the stock of E. S. Wilson & Co., Revelstoke.

McCallum & Woods, merchant tailors, Victoria, have dissolved partnership. John McCallum who will continue the business, will assume all liabilities of the firm, and collect all debts.

The following are movements of San Francisco foreign mail steamships: Out going mails: Alameda sails May 28th for Sydney via Honolulu and Auckland; City of Peking sails June 2nd for Hong Kong via Yokohama. Incoming mails: City of Peking due May 24 from Hong Kong via Yokohama, May 5; Oceanic due May 30th from Hong Kong via Yokohama May 16; Mariposa due June 11 from Sydney via Auckland and Honolulu.

The ships Forest King and Exporter will commence loading at Hastings Mill in about a week, and the bark Spartan in about two weeks.