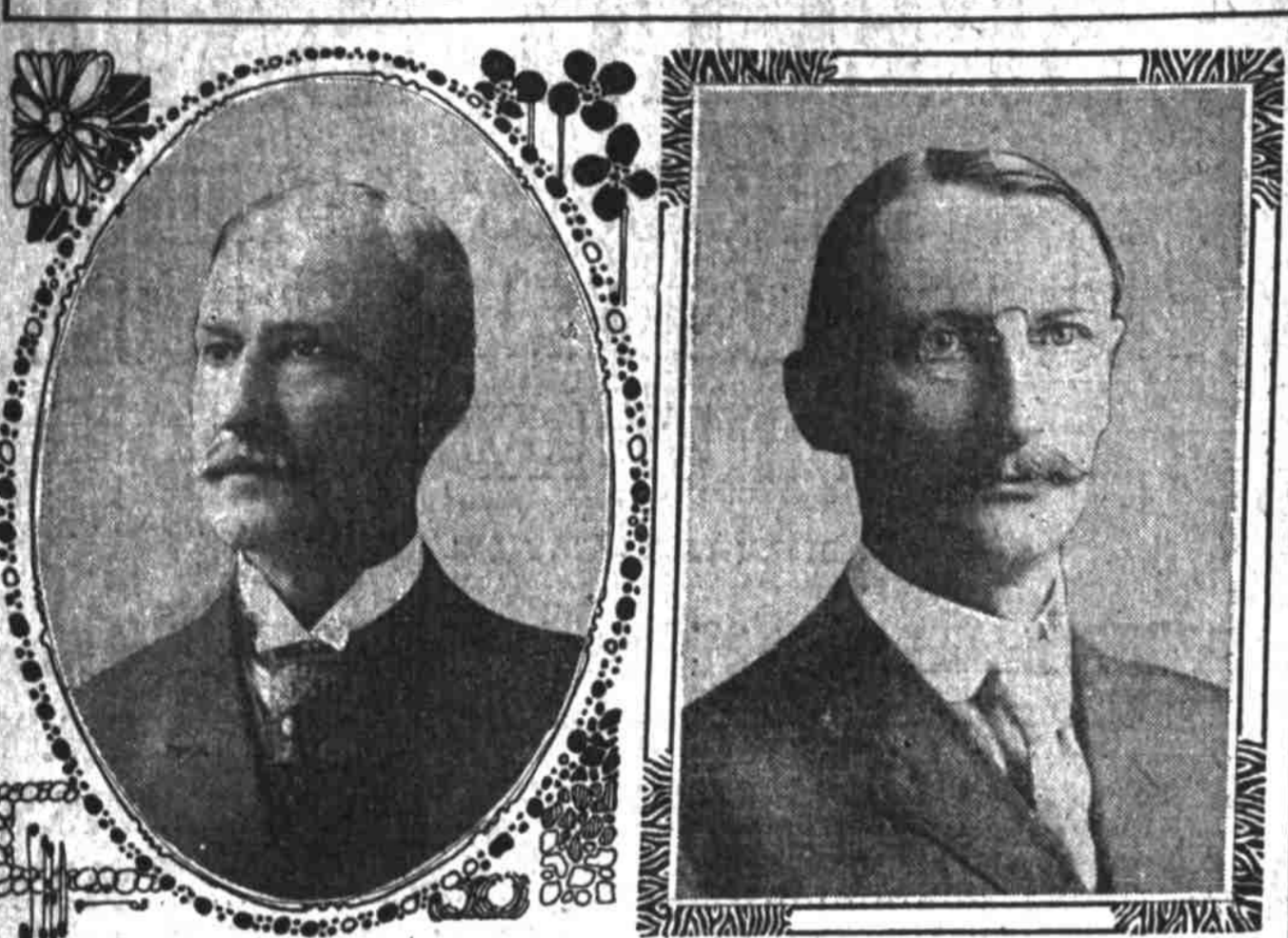


JUDGE BALLINGER'S TWELVE MONTHS OF GOOD SERVICE



R. A. BALLINGER.

FRED DENNETT.

By John E. Lathrop.
(Washington Bureau of The Journal.)
Washington, D. C., Jan. 18.—Richard A. Ballinger, a man of large intellectuality, came out from the far west to serve as commissioner of the general land office, beginning March 5, 1907. He has resigned, his withdrawal takes effect March 4, 1908. The 12 months in office here will have wrought for the betterment of the service, and he will have left an impress on the surface of placid affairs here seldom equalled in even longer terms of tenure.

The president already has epitomized the situation by saying: "Judge Ballinger is a \$12,000 man in a \$5,000 position." Newspaper men who have come in contact daily with Judge Ballinger during the past year repeat President Roosevelt's remark with emphasis. "That man Ballinger is a big man," one of the older correspondents remarked. "He has a fine faculty of getting things done."

Honorable Record.

Judge Ballinger had been a judge on the superior bench in the state of Washington; had been mayor of Seattle, refusing a renomination when it meant certain reelection; had codified the statutes of the state of Washington so extensively that Oregon's codifiers copied his method which is in vogue there today. He was a member of the leading law firm in that state, had an income of \$50,000 a year from his practice, owned quite extensive property interests, and was rapidly accumulating a fortune.

The general land office had for years been one of the sore spots in the government here. It had been dominated by certain interests—dominated not in the interest of all the people, either. It even had degenerated into the seat of more or less graft and scandals had emanated therefrom which had smelted to high heaven, until it was worth almost more than a good man's reputation to assume the direction of that bureau.

President Roosevelt asked Judge Ballinger to take the job. Judge Ballinger demurred. It wasn't because of the financial loss he would incur, for he is a man who thinks of money, after other elements have been considered. President Roosevelt urged him.

"I personally ask you to do this for me," the president telegraphed; "you are needed here for a specific purpose—to place the general land office on a business level. The personal plea decided Judge Ballinger. He came, and he accomplished the changes expected of him, and then resigned, as it was known he would do when he came here even before he was commissioner.

Improved Service.

Besides specific improvements in the service which the commissioner has accomplished, the benefit of his year's tenure will accrue quite as much from the newer "atmosphere." There is a something that is different about the office, and reached by wagon road and trail from this state. Ben Neal, who located a claim on the head of Salmon creek last spring, recently sold the claim for \$100,000, and in the meantime located an extension of the same claim, for which he has refused an offer of \$60,000. He has speculated from the level of the sea, as the snow lies from 15 to 25 feet deep, the only means of getting in and out is by snowshoes. The owners of the original Wounded Buck, or Bridge claims of Upper Sucker creek have a crew continuing the development of this famous property. The

unimportant person, whose land claim may as well remain unsettled for another year, that he sets for now, is a man whose rights are worthy the brains and effort of the best there is in the general land office, and to protect those rights there is today the best organized force which ever has been known.

The western settler, waiting long for his patent, or waiting to find out at least that his patent cannot be issued, will never appreciate the well-nigh hopeless task to which Judge Ballinger addressed himself when he came to Washington. Judge Ballinger may not be pleased with these remarks, but it is true, nevertheless, that it was a dismal prospect, indeed, which laid before him. If there was any office connected with the government which might have been linked to Dickens' English circumlocution office, it was the general land office. For instance, it was sharply in contrast with the forest bureau presided over by Gifford Pinchot, who had upbuilt it himself along modern lines. It was inspiring to go to that bureau; it was opposite to go to the general land office.

No Long Opinions.

"Cut out your verbiage," Judge Ballinger wrote to the lawyers of the general land office. From with, voluminous opinions, three times as long as they need be, ceased to be delivered. He found land patents were being written by hand, necessitating about 20 people to write and compare them. Judge Ballinger introduced typewriters, to use carbon papers to make the three copies required by law, and a dozen energetic young men, accomplished more than the 30 had.

The force of special agents had been badly organized. Judge Ballinger organized them as an army, with clean lines of division of the country into districts and responsible men at the head of each.

These are samples of the specific changes effected. It was modernized, and the antiquated methods, and modernized won.

The one improvement which has been wrought, however, is the openness of the administration of the general land office nowadays, as compared with the star chamber regime formerly obtaining. When Judge Ballinger took the office he threw open his office door, and although I have been there many times during the past year, never before I seen it closed. Senators and representatives called to see the commissioner. The office door remained open. Messenger boys obtained quite as easy access as the rich senator. There were practically no secrets from the people. What was done was done in the light of day. It was given even to the "favorites" were played.

Responded to Duty.

Why devote so much space to the outgoing of a \$5,000 official? Because he came as a patriotic act, fraught with no advancement or promising no personal benefits, since Judge Ballinger already had his own means, never before I seen it closed. Senators and representatives called to see the commissioner. The office door remained open. Messenger boys obtained quite as easy access as the rich senator. There were practically no secrets from the people. What was done was done in the light of day. It was given even to the "favorites" were played.

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such an office—a part of the government's circumlocution office machinery—could not long be tolerable to a man of Ballinger's caliber. He may even take offense at this, but it is an honest opinion that he has chafed under intimations that delays in the trial of the land fraud cases in Oregon and elsewhere have been in part due to lack of desire of the general land office's chief that they be prosecuted.

It is impossible to induce Judge Ballinger or his assistants to admit this. But, anyone who has followed the course of recent events is compelled to conclude that there has been a galling year of unrest at the delay in bringing to bay men charged two or three years ago with serious crimes against the laws in connection with the public domain.

Long ago the general land office completed its work in connection with the individuals now under indictment in Oregon. Its responsibility, its ability to do more, ceased when the evidence was turned over for further proceedings by other departments.

It is therefore quite just to cite these things, which may even offend in the citing but which are "gospel truth," as all verily know who see things transpiring here.

It is no surprise that such a large man would not accept such an office excepting for a short time and under pressure of request by the president to accomplish specific reforms, and that, having accomplished them, he should return to his home in Seattle, to resume his accustomed pursuits.

One other legacy he leaves—the new commissioner—Fred Dennett—succeds to the place. Dennett's political recommendation back of him. He was appointed solely because he had worked up from the ranks and demonstrated his ability.

Dennett was born in Valparaiso, Chile, in 1865, was educated in England, came to this country in 1883, farmed at first two years, was in business in Milton, North Dakota, from 1887 to 1889, owned and edited the Millon Globe 1889 to 1891, was a member of the North Dakota legislature in 1891, came to Washington as secretary to Senator Hansbrough, served as clerk of the library committee up to 1905, became chief of the field division of special agents of the general land office stationed in Seattle in 1905, and became assistant commissioner March 1, 1907.

Dennett was graduated from George Washington university here as LL. B. with honors in 1894, took the master's degree in 1895, and was honored as "Doctoratus Juris" by the Catholic University of America here in 1904. He was for a short time in the New York law firm of Townsend & Avery in 1902.

This is the career to date of the man who is to wield much power pertinent to the western settler's interests. He is familiar with the field, knows the country from north to south and east to west, is fortified with complete education and was endowed with first-class talent by nature.

He was under duty with an eye as he worked in Seattle. Judge Ballinger recommended him as his successor. He takes the commissionership to continue the good work begun by the present commissioner, and the people of the west, so vitally interested in the personality of the man who administers the general land office, may depend on him to safeguard their rights zealously.

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BONANZAS YET IN SISKIYOU

New Finds Fit to Tempt Argonauts as of Yore—Placer Richness.

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.)

Grants Pass, Or., Jan. 18.—More interest is being taken this year in the mines and prospects of the Siskiyou districts than since the fabulous strikes made by David Briggs and his boys on the Oregon-California line a few years ago. The gold districts that are attracting particular attention are those of Siskiyou county, across the line from Josephine and Jackson counties of Oregon, and reached by wagon road and trail from this state. Ben Neal, who located a claim on the head of Salmon creek last spring, recently sold the claim for \$100,000, and in the meantime located an extension of the same claim, for which he has refused an offer of \$60,000. He has speculated from the level of the sea, as the snow lies from 15 to 25 feet deep, the only means of getting in and out is by snowshoes. The owners of the original Wounded Buck, or Bridge claims of Upper Sucker creek have a crew continuing the development of this famous property. The

CHARGES OF WOMAN'S JUVENILE COURT SORROW FOR THEIR WRONGS

The juvenile court of Mrs. S. M. Dockarty who has a postal card stand at 324 Washington street, is a success. The boys who broke into the stand and stole cards worth \$12 which were never returned, have offered to repay Mrs. Dockarty for her wares.

Three boys robbed the stand and Mrs. Dockarty, learning their identity, refused to turn them over to the authorities or tell their parents of their misdeeds. Instead, she has taken a thoughtful interest in the youngsters and every evening they report to her and confess their sins, and their troubles and their accomplishments at school.

The youngest of the trio is 10 years old. "I am realizing more than ever

that we did wrong," he said to Mrs. Dockarty the other day, "and I am willing to repay you for the cards which we did not return. I haven't got the money now but my pals and me can work and in a few months we will have the debt paid."

Mrs. Dockarty has refused the offer, however. She took an interest in the boys to do them good and had no idea of getting the value of the goods in return.

"I think my idea is working successfully," Mrs. Dockarty said yesterday. "If I had sent these boys before a judge they would have felt that they hadn't a friend in the world. Now they know differently and are trying to do some good. The little fellows come around regularly and so far have kept their promise to me in every way."

has a mammoth body of rich ore exposed. None of the quartz on this mine runs less than \$40 a ton, and much of it runs as high as \$100 and \$200.

Southern Counties Keep Up Output.

According to the report of the United States geological survey, the counties of southern Oregon are the only districts in the state that do not show a falling off in gold output for the year. Josephine and Jackson show an increase in placer gold. Southern Oregon, like eastern Oregon, suffered a general decrease through the closing down temporarily of several of the leading quartz mines of the Taklma Smelting & Mining company at Waldo. The ore treated at Waldo averaged \$4.75 per ton in copper and gold.

The main thing that brought about a big production of placer gold in southern Oregon was the heavy rainfall, the precipitation being 39 inches for the year. This allowed the giants to operate day and night for a long season.

Recital Hall for Rent.

Eilers Recital Hall, seating capacity 350, perfectly ventilated, comfortable, free from street noises, superbly equipped with highest class musical instruments of all kinds, is available for a few more dates for high-class musical functions and meetings. Day or evening. For terms, apply Dooly & Co., 33 1/2 Third street, or advertising department, Killers Piano house.

WIFE DEAD, BUT SUES, CHARGING ALIENATION

Dentist Commences Action Against Wealthy Broker, Asking \$250,000.

New York, Jan. 18.—Jacob Field, who began his successful career in Wall

LOSES DAMAGE SUIT AGAINST CAB COMPANY

E. W. Shipley lost his suit for \$5,000 damages against the Portland Railway company for ejection from a Morris street car. His transfer had not been correctly punched, and he put up a stiff resistance when told that he must get another fare. The case was tried before a jury. In Judge Bronaugh's department of the circuit court, the company claimed that Shipley should be followed the rule established by paying the fare in dispute and the making his complaint to the company office.