

JUDGE NOYES INTERVIEWED

Nome's Despised Official Talks in Self-Vindication at Seattle on His Way East to Confront Wholesale Charges Preferred Against Him.

Hon. Arthur H. Noyes, judge of the United States district court of Alaska, second division, with headquarters at Nome, was a prominent passenger on the steamer Roanoke, which arrived from Nome last night. Judge Noyes is en route to Washington. At his request he has been granted a leave of absence by Attorney-General Knox.

Judge Noyes has also been cited to appear before the circuit court of appeals in San Francisco on October 14, in connection with the Nome mining litigation, which attracted widespread attention last year. This trouble was the outcome of the appointment of Alexander McKenzie as receiver of the celebrated Anvil creek claims.

The litigations at Nome last summer was of such a complex nature and involved placer mining property of such great value that the legal battle waged with such fury, will go down on record as the most celebrated of its character in the annals of court proceedings. As a result of its intense feeling that was aroused, charges of collusion, corruption and bribery were made, affecting among others prominent court officials.

During the past winter general circulation was given to these charges in the newspapers. No explanation or defense was or could be offered by the court officials, by reason of their isolation in an ice-bound country. The expected arrival of Judge Noyes has been anxiously awaited. His friends have maintained that not a taint of suspicion or reflection would be attached to his name after the presentation of the true facts in the controversy to the proper authorities at Washington.

A Post-Intelligencer reporter sought an interview with Judge Noyes at the Rainier-Grand hotel last evening and the Post-Intelligencer is thus enabled to present for the first time a version of the famous controversy, that has never before been given. Judge Noyes expressed the utmost confidence in his ability, thoroughly to satisfy the department of the honesty of his actions and

thorough conscientiousness in the discharge of his official duties. Judge Noyes' friends, who came down to the Roanoke, say that the general opinion expressed by the Nomeites, who are without prejudice, is highly complimentary to the integrity and honesty of purpose of Judge Noyes. His administration of justice, they say has been dispensed under the most trying conditions in a land where litigation is rampant and conflicting interests have resorted to most extreme methods. In discussing the many vexed aspects of the recent controversy Judge Noyes said:

"I understand that charges of collusion with various individuals have been made against me. Notably in the appointment of Alexander McKenzie as receiver of several mining claims. My appointment as judge was made about the 6th of June, 1900. For some weeks prior to that time I had not seen Mr. McKenzie to talk with him, but did meet and have a short chat with him in Washington the day following my appointment. After that I never saw or communicated in any way, directly or indirectly, with him until we met in Seattle prior to my departure for Nome. I had no knowledge until then of his intended visit to the North.

"With the other court officials I expected to leave Seattle about July 1 on the United States revenue cutter McCulloch. We intended to go to Juneau in company with Judge Wickersham and there meet Judge Brown and arrange a division of the district. In the meantime I received a telegram from Washington practically advising that I go direct to Nome or St. Michael. The steamer Senator was the first available vessel to depart, and District Attorney Woods arranged for our transportation thereon. It transpired that Mr. McKenzie had previously secured passage on the same steamer. Mr. Chipps was also a passenger. I never knew him beyond a passing introduction, or of his having any litigation in the Alaska courts.

"I had known Mr. McKenzie person-

ally for sixteen or eighteen years and had heard of his connection with an Alaska mining company. However, I did not know who were interested with him, or anything about the company.

"Soon after my arrival at Nome the necessity of immediately appointing receivers for the Anvil creek claims was urged and pressed upon me. The appointment was first tendered to James Matthews, but he was going to the outside and did not care to take hold. I was practically unacquainted in the new region and naturally desired a man in whom I had confidence. By reason of my long acquaintanceship with Alexander McKenzie and the honored and responsible positions which he had previously held, I requested him to take the position. He consented.

"I believed that the receivership would be temporary. By reason of the difficulties to immediately procure a large bond I fixed the sum in a small amount with the idea of enlarging it later, if deemed advisable, which was done. I directed that most of the old employees of the company that operated the claims be retained, and that the property be worked with expedition and economy. I further made an order as soon as the defendants requested it, that all the gold extracted from the claims be placed in safe deposit vaults, allowing them to be present at the 'cleanups,' and the privilege of weighing all gold.

"When the defendants made demand that the receiver give a bond of \$100,000 on each claim I consented with the understanding that the property pay the high premium for the bond, which they declined to do. There was never any contention that Mr. McKenzie did not work the property in an economical and judicious manner. After various phases of litigation a writ of supersedeas was received from the circuit court of appeals. I consider that I complied with it absolutely. Contention, however, has been made that I issued an order directing the marshal not to permit the defendants to take possession of the gold which had been extracted from the claims in dispute. This is positively without foundation.

"Never, by word, act or deed, did I say or do anything, directly or indirectly, to interfere with or obstruct the order or process of the higher court. Affidavits, however, were presented to the circuit court as to the appearance of the records, and upon the strength of these incorrect affidavits I have been cited to appear and show cause why I should not be punished for contempt of court in failing to comply with the order in the matter of allowance of ap-

peal. Instead of indulging in the least possible evasion, on the contrary, I exerted every effort to enforce the court's order.

"On the arrival of the writ of supersedeas from the circuit court I was ill in bed. I was called upon by the military authorities in the person of Maj. Van Orsdale and Capt. French, who reported that there was a large gathering of excited people at the bank building and that bloodshed was likely to ensue. I assured them personally of my desire to enforce the order of the higher court and to render every possible assistance in the maintenance of order and protection to life and property. I had not then been able to examine the papers in the case. Later in the day, after I had done so, I dictated and signed two letters, of which these are verbatim copies.

"The letters shown by Judge Noyes are as follows:

"Maj. Van Orsdale, Nome City, Alaska: My Dear Major—After you called with Capt. French this morning I saw the original papers on file from the circuit court of appeals, and I find it is necessary for an order to be entered by this court which will be entered, of course, as soon as the same can be prepared, and such further steps taken as will be a full and complete compliance with the order of the circuit court of appeals.

"My anxiety in this matter is to do everything in my power and have all those whom I can in any wise control fully comply with the order of the court above, which of course will be done. In the meantime, it is necessary that matters should rest in statu quo, and peace and order be preserved, and I therefore request that you render such assistance to the marshal as may be necessary to maintain that peace and quiet.

"Assuring you of my desire to cooperate in every effort that is needed in order to preserve life and property, I am, very sincerely yours,

"ARTHUR H. NOYES, Judge."

"Nome, Alaska, Sept. 15, 1900.

"C. L. Vawter, United States Marshal, City: Dear Marshal—I have been able for the first time to make an examination of the original order sent down from the circuit court of appeals, and find that it will be necessary for me to enter certain orders of record here, which will be as soon as they can be drawn and spread upon record. In the meantime, it devolves upon you to preserve the peace and good order so far as it is possible for you to do, and I have taken occasion to request Maj. Van Orsdale to render such assistance as it is necessary to protect life and property and to hold things in statu quo until the order can be prepared and presented to the court. Sincerely yours,

"ARTHUR H. NOYES, Judge."

"I had the order referred to in the above letters, prepared and submitted to me on Monday," continued Judge Noyes. "It was not entirely satisfactory, and I directed that it be changed so as to include the exact language used by the higher court. This was done and the following morning I signed it. There were four cases involved. In two of them no papers were sent down other than the supersedeas. In the other two were included the order of court.

"When the case at issue were before me I refused to allow an appeal because, in my opinion, the appointment of a receiver was not an appealable order. The code especially provides for an appeal of an injunctive order. From authorities cited I did not believe the injunctive feature incident to the appointment of receivers made the order appealable. This feature was made prominent for the first time in the circuit court of appeals. No contention was ever made before me that the injunctive order incident to the appointment of a receiver was the appealable order provided for by the code. It was for the first time forced to the front in the argument, as seems to me, before the circuit court of appeals.

"In the early mails received February last I heard that charges had been filed against me and forwarded from Washington. I did not receive them until July 4, and knew nothing previous to that time as to the nature of the charges. I had never had or read

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