

Gompers contempt case the Supreme Court passed no opinion on the merits of the controversy. The dismissal was based on the statute of limitations and leaves the people as much in the dark as they were before, as to whether the court holds Justice Wright's tyrannical action to have been legal or otherwise. Should any similar case occur the whole subject will have to be threshed over again. All this might have been avoided had the Supreme Court let it be known how it would have acted had there been no statute of limitations.



It is further noteworthy that the court declared contempt to be a crime. That will necessitate some additional mental gymnastics on the part of the next judge who sends a labor leader to jail without a jury trial. If contempt is a crime then a prosecution for contempt must be a criminal prosecution and the Sixth Amendment to the Federal Constitution plainly says that "in all criminal prosecutions the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed." Clear as this language is, however, there is no lack of able jurists on the bench who will know how to evade it. S. D.

derweighed in one month six hundred tons there is little cause to wonder why this Colorado war is raging. One corporation in New Mexico controls 520,325 acres of coal land in Colfax county, worth at the Government price two hundred and fifty dollars per acre. It returned a sworn statement that \$113,775 is the total and fair valuation—for taxation purposes—while the little cottage is assessed in some cases far more than it could be sold for. However, an appeal was taken to the State Equalization Board which raised the assessment to three and a half million dollars. The county records show that this corporation has mortgaged this tract of coal land for fifteen million dollars.

These mountain coal companies are mostly managed from Wall street. Coal production is so carried on as to fix the price at "all the traffic will bear." Coal is being retailed in Raton by the sack within rifle shot of a six-foot vein. Why does such an injustice continue when the remedy is so perfectly clear and plain? It seems certain that the voters of Colorado now have it rubbed into them to such a degree that they will see the cause and the remedy and apply it. If they, like many, want a remedy that does not remedy, they will tread the old calf path, the same as their ancestors have been doing.

P. H. SMITH.



PHILADELPHIA COURT PROTECTS TAX DODGING.

Philadelphia, May 4.

In March, 1913, I learned accidentally that the Board of Revision of Taxes in Philadelphia had made several secret rebates to large taxpayers. Thereupon I requested access to the allowance book, armed with a decision by Judge Auderied of Philadelphia (dated 1895, Sixth District Reports, 287) asserting "that every corporation or citizen of a municipality has the right on all proper occasions to inspect and copy its record books and documents. It is not confined to such persons as may have a special interest in the result of the examination . . . and it is not for the respondent to inquire into or pass upon the motives of those who ask to see them."

The Board refused my request on the ground that the allowance book was not a book of public record. Thereupon I brought suit to compel the Board to allow inspection. Decision was made April 28, 1914, by Judges Bregy, Kinsey and Patterson. (1) The allowance book is declared to be a book of public record, but (2) "only those persons who have a special interest in public records have a right to inspect them . . . unless the relator shows some special and personal right different and apart from the general public, he cannot successfully prosecute this writ."

I had not shown any such "special interest different from the public in general." I was, therefore, refused access to the book. How such an unusual interest can be secured by any citizen is a mystery. The book has been declared to be a book of public record, but the public is not allowed to see it!

The assessment business in Philadelphia is in a unique position. The Board of Revision of Taxes which manages the business is absolutely independent of control by mayor and councils. Under the law councils cannot even spend a dollar to investi-

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

THE COLORADO TRAGEDY.

From a Neighboring Town.

Raton, N. M., April 29.

"Louie, The Greek," as Louis Tikas* was known to his many friends, was a most admirable and lovable character, kind, friendly and sympathetic to the extent of admiration. I have never met a man more to be admired—his testimony before the Congressional Committee, held in Trinidad, brought from a militia officer the threat "I'll fix you for that. I'll get you." And he did "get him" with sixteen others that he gave his life to protect. The sixteen were three women and thirteen children. Most of the sixteen victims of the Ludlow massacre were burned alive by throwing coal oil on the tents and setting them afire. The colony had been shot into many times before, and little pits were dug under the floor for safety, where the victims were when burned.

The mothers and sisters of Colorado, aroused to desperation, have forced Governor Ammons to ask the President for troops (which are now arriving). But does that settle the dispute? Will anything short of the taking of the annual economic value for public use and freeing labor products settle the troubles? The coal company reports the cost to dig and car the coal to be 61 cents per ton. It would cost more if the miners were paid for all the coal they dig; but when it leaks out that one camp un-

*See Public of May 1, page 416.

gate it. Councils shows no disposition to do so, although the mayor has accused it of criminality. And citizens of Philadelphia, in general, whether "eminently respectable" or just plain folk, don't appear to care.

SAMUEL MILLIKEN.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of The Public for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Tuesday, May 12, 1914.

Mexico and the United States.

The activity of the mediators, Ambassador da Gama of Brazil, and Ministers Naon of Argentina and Suarez of Chile, has been unceasing; and there has been no overt act of war on the part of General Huerta or the United States. The three delegates appointed by General Huerta, Senator Emilio Rabasa, Augustin Rodriguez and Luis Elguero, left Vera Cruz on the 10th on the Kronprinzessin Cecilie for Havana, whence they will proceed to Niagara Falls, Canada, for the conferences that are to begin May 18. The Mexican Senate has approved General Huerta's nomination of commissioners, and conferred "full power and ample authority to judge, counsel, carry on business and sign any agreement or treaty whatever." President Wilson has appointed as American delegates Justice Joseph R. Lamar of the United States Supreme Court and Frederick W. Lehmann of St. Louis, former solicitor-general. It is now believed that General Carranza and the Constitutionalists will not be represented at the Mediation Conference.

Slight movements of troops at Vera Cruz, and the taking of Lobos Island, are denounced by General Huerta as a breach of the armistice. General Funston declares no advanced positions have been taken, that the troops have merely been shifted in the present lines to meet the threats of the Federal forces. Lobos Island, a sand dune off the eastern coast, south of Tampico, was deserted by the Mexican lightkeepers, according to report of Admiral Mayo, and men from the destroyer tender Dixie are now maintaining the light for the benefit of navigation.

The Federals still hold Tampico in spite of a week's hammering by the Constitutionalists, but there are reasons for expecting the city to fall at any time. The Constitutionalists have renewed their campaign in the north. Saltillo was not evacuated by the Federals, as at first reported; but

the garrison cannot hold out against present assaults. The Constitutionalists under General Villa are making ready to move on Mexico City, and General Zapata with a large force is advancing on the city from the south.

Reports are to the effect that a consignment of arms and ammunition for General Huerta from Germany has been landed on the Gulf coast, and that another consignment from Japan has been landed on the Pacific coast. The United States had no right to seize the arms unless the ports were blockaded.

Two newspaper correspondents made their way from Vera Cruz to Mexico City on the 9th, where, in spite of their credentials, they were held as suspects, but released on the 10th, and ordered out of the country. These correspondents report that every Mexican they met on the trip believes that the United States and Mexico are at war and that all Americans are necessarily enemies.

The fall of General Huerta seems so imminent, with Villa on the north and Zapata on the south and General Velasco's allegiance under suspicion, that the representatives of foreign governments are urging the United States to have an army ready at Vera Cruz to maintain order. President Wilson declines to send more troops to Vera Cruz at present, lest it be considered a breach of faith. But transports are gathering at Galveston and two brigades of troops under Major General J. Franklin Bell are ready to embark.

Federal Woman Suffrage Parade.

At Washington on the afternoon of May 9, five thousand woman suffragists representing nearly every State in the Union marched along Pennsylvania avenue to the east steps of the Capitol, where they massed to sing "The March of the Women":

Shout, shout, up with your song;
Cry with the wind for the dawn is breaking;
March, march, swing you along.
Wide blows our banner and hope is waking.
Song with its story, dreams with their glory,
Lo, they call and glad is their word.
Louder and louder it swells,
Thunder and freedom, the voice of the Lord.

Long, long—we in the past
Covered in dread from the light of heaven;
Strong, strong—stand we at last,
Fearless in faith and with sight new given.
Strength with its beauty, life with its duty,
(Hear the voice, O, hear and obey!)
These, these—beckon us on;
Open your eyes to the blaze of day.