

The Public

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EDITORIAL

The mysterious teamsters' strike.

We should be glad to chronicle this week the end of the teamsters' strike. It seemed to be at an end when the teamsters themselves called it off unconditionally. But the mysterious hand which has made itself felt so often before, has again pulled a mysterious string, and once again this mysteriously begun strike is mysteriously revived. This time, however, there appears to be but little vitality in the revival.

Feminine incapacity.

The ghost of the man who, after demonstrating the intellectual "incapacity" of women, with statis-

tics of the short weight of the feminine brain, died and disclosed to the dissecting anatomists a brain of still shorter weight, must have experienced some mortification. But after the recent exploit of Mrs. Sophie Mayer, of New York, how must those lawyers feel who speak slightingly of the professional abilities of women. She has just been admitted to the bar at the head of nearly 1,000 candidates—at their head. And most of them were men. Not only that, but during her career in the law school she led most of her classes, also mostly men. With such a notable example before us, and any number of minor ones, is it not reasonable to conclude that if women are unsuccessful as lawyers, the incapacity is of the conscience rather than the intellect?

"The Niagara Movement."

We publish in full this week the belated address of "The Niagara Movement," organized at Buffalo during the present month. We do this not only because it is an address of a race which gets but scant hearing for a fair recital of its grievances, its bitter grievances, but also because the document is a self-respecting appeal from oppressed to oppressor, and one of the best expressions of worthy Americanism that has seen the light in many a day. The man of whatever color who reads it without at least a spasm of fraternal sympathy, puts his manhood to a risky test; the American, wherever his domicile and whatever his party politics, who ignores its principles had better question his patriotism. If he is white and has any sense of fair dealing in his soul, he will recoil in utter shame for his race from this dignified indictment of its treatment of the Negro: "The Negro race in America, stolen, ravished and degraded, struggling up through difficulties and oppression, needs sympathy and receives criticism, needs help and is given hindrance, needs protection and is given mob violence, needs justice and is given charity, needs

leadership and is given cowardice and apology, needs bread and is given a stone." The sting of it is its truth.

There is just one false note in that address. It is the recognition as legitimate, of discriminations based on poverty. Possibly nothing more is meant than that he who is too poor to pay for a dollar's worth must be content with a discrimination which necessitates his buying less than a dollar's worth. But the context implies that something else is meant, namely, that discriminations as to rights, such as Negroes suffer under, may be legitimately made against the poor of any race. And indeed the Negro race is not without representatives who, though vociferous enough in denouncing discriminations based on color, are indifferent to discriminations based on wealth. It is largely because the Negro race has too many leaders of that type, that the race prejudice among organized workmen, which was dying down, has revived. Every Negro should clearly understand that the question in connection with which he finds himself "a problem" is at bottom not a Negro question. That is only a form of the real question, which is the man question, and the man question is everywhere and always a question of common rights against special privilege.

Direct legislation in California.

It will be remembered that under the municipal home rule system of California, some of the cities of that State have charters providing for what are known as direct legislation and the recall. Direct legislation is a method, usually the initiative and the referendum, whereby the people may by popular vote command their representatives, as in the initiative, to enact a particular law or laws in execution of a general policy for which the people declare, or may by popular vote, as in the referendum, veto laws which their representatives have enacted. The recall is a method whereby the people may, by popular vote, recall a representative, de-