

WORKING WOMEN WHO WONT WORK.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., April 15, 1897.—A public registry has been opened here for the benefit of the unemployed men and women. Some of the applicants are really glad to earn the dollar a day or less the chance offers, but some of the women really don't seem to want work at any price. They seem to regard the registry office as an offer "to get genteel help" in return for an indifferent application for work. I went to the registry office yesterday, where orders for serving, washing and domestic service are distributed to the applicants, and the woman in charge told me all about them.

There have been one hundred and sixty applications for work—and money. Every case has been thoroughly investigated, and there are many without money, but they are those who would be without money anywhere, and who would still be without money if it were given them daily. These cases belong, of course, to the Associated Charities, and how best to deal with them seems to be a problem that has never yet been solved.

There are others of the number who have no trade, but who say they are anxious to work and willing to do anything, which certainly sounds encouraging. One of these, a fairly well dressed, healthy looking woman of about thirty, came in when I was there yesterday. The manager suggested her taking some sewing to do. She said she couldn't sew; had never done any, except, perhaps, a few little things for herself, and was very slow at that, and "it hurt her stomach." The manager sighed and said "Washing?" "She couldn't wash; had never learned how to do fine washing, and when it came to ordinary washing she couldn't compete with Chinamen in prices, and anyhow she couldn't take it home to do, for she had nobody to send for the clothing and return it when clean."

"Cooking?" "Oh, yes! She could cook—plain cooking." I began to feel encouraged, but the manager warned me by a look not to be hasty, and inquired "How plain?" It was soon painfully evident that nobody would pay wages to a cook whose knowledge was limited to one kind of bread, two kinds of pudding and fried meat! A little further inquiry brought out the fact that even the one kind of bread was not always a success, "as the yeast here seemed to be different from where she learned to make bread." She "didn't like children," so there was really nothing else left to suggest except a position as chambermaid or housemaid, and she said she "would be willing to 'hire out' in either capacity if she could get enough wages." There were two vacancies, but the particulars did not please her in either case. The wages were too low in one place and the hours were too long in the other, so she left her name and address and said she would call again. I asked her as she was leaving whether she felt competent to do chamberwork, and she withered me with a look and replied: "Why, it don't take any training to do that kind of work. Anybody can make a bed and sweep a room."

The manager assured me that her case was one of many, although many were "willing" to try the plain sewing. Of these a number have been sent to the Committee on Decorations for the yearly Fiesta soon to be held here, but the foreman has nearly lost his mind trying to keep them from sewing two stripes of the same color together in a flag and to induce them to put the hood of the dominoes on the neck the right way to, and he says the dollar a day they are getting is munificent pay for the amount of work accomplished.

After careful investigation it has been found that of the one hundred and sixty cases there are only sixty who are really able and willing to do any one thing, and of those none now belongs to the "unemployed," as all are provided

with work. To be sure, the work is not congenial in all cases. Women who really are trained in the business are working at something else, at least temporarily, and often working hard, too, and it is necessary for those at the agency to keep a constant supervision of the willing workers to see that they are not taken advantage of by well-to-do patrons.

Only the other day a woman was kept ironing the finest of baby clothes all day, a very meagre lunch being provided at noon and fifty cents given her at night, and last week a seamstress was given twenty children's waists to make, each having eighteen buttonholes to be worked, and after having sewed on them three days of fourteen hours each she was given one dollar for the job. As they said that hers was the most needy case on the list I asked for her address and went to see her at once. I found her up a high hill in a tiny two-room cottage, working like mad on a tremendous pile of boys' trousers. A six-months-old baby was asleep on the bed and a three-year-old girl played with the shreds on the floor. She said there were two more girls, one of five, at kindergarten, and one nearly seven, who went to school. Her husband (who had no trade) had gone off looking for work and was now in a hospital in Sacramento, recovering from malarial fever. To take care of four little children and do the housework seemed to me quite enough for a strong woman to do without having to earn the living for them as well, but when I tried to sympathize she assured me she didn't need it.

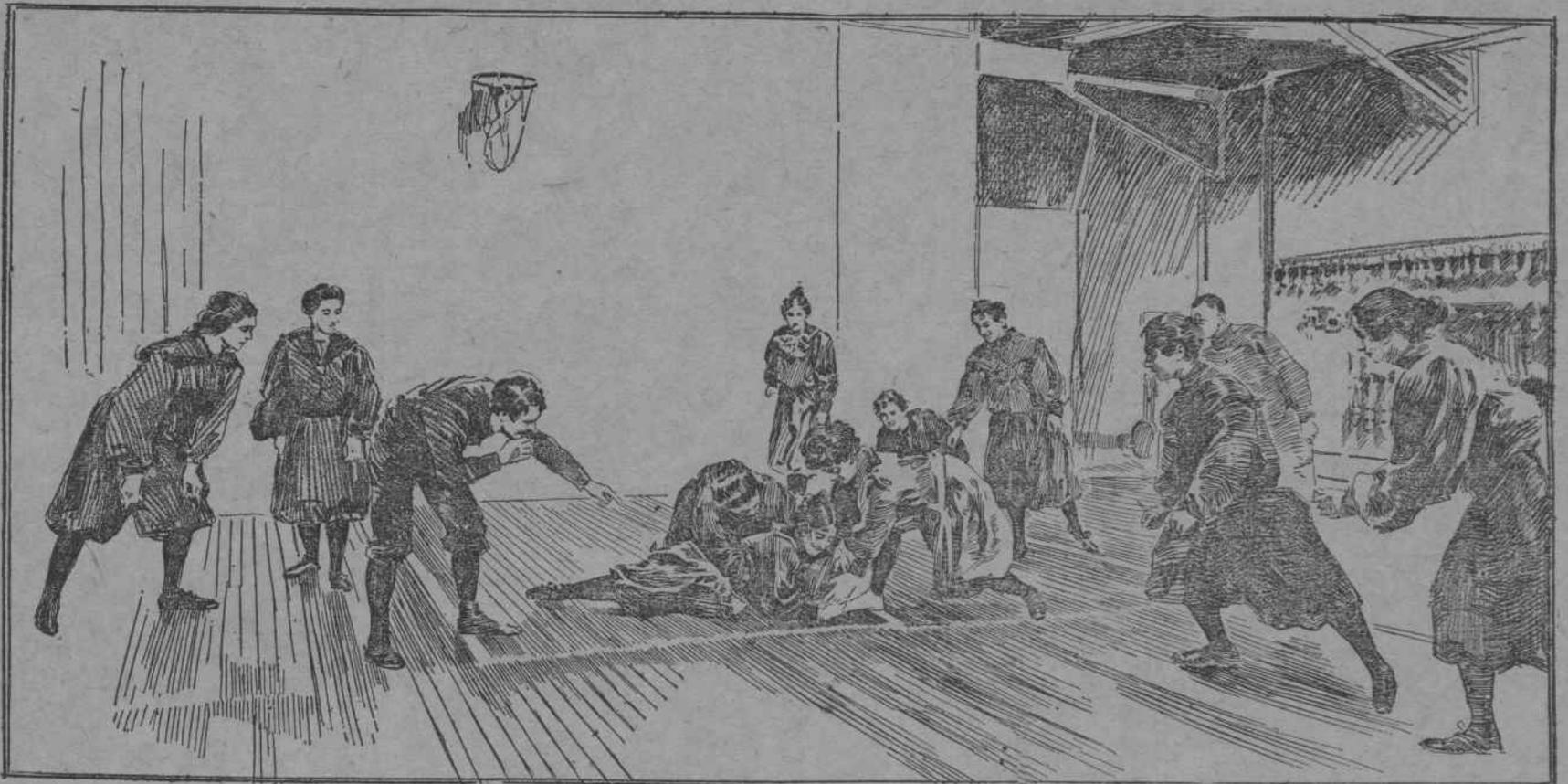
"As long as I am well," said she, "I shall get along all right. Last week I didn't get very good pay for the waists I made, but I can do very well on these trousers. Clothes making was my trade as a girl and it's just in my line. If I were East fuel would be a big item, but here there are not a dozen days in the year one needs a fire, except for cooking, and fresh vegetables and fruits are so cheap that they make a large part of our living, with plenty of bread and mush. Indeed, I shall get along splendidly until my husband is able to help again."

If a woman in as bad a predicament as that can keep her family together, keep out of debt and not have to accept charity, it is proof positive that there is no excuse for an able-bodied woman of thirty, with no encumbrances, to ask it. If the fault does not lie with the incompetent ones it must reflect back to the parents who have allowed these girls to grow up in this condition. It is a fine thing for a woman to have a profession, a business or trade, and the last, at least, appears to be within the reach of all, but, admitting that all three might be unavailable, should not every mother, no matter what her station, see that her daughter learned how to do some one portion of the household work so well that in an emergency her knowledge would make her self-supporting?

ADELINE SUMNER.

To Clean Ostrich Feathers.

We are apt, and very justly, to set great store by any really good ostrich feathers which we may chance to have. A French recipe for cleaning such things may be acceptable to those women who like to do everything for themselves, although it is generally more satisfactory to entrust any specially fine ostrich feathers that need renovating to a professional cleaner's expertness. However, the following is so useful in emergencies that it is worth putting into pieces some soap and put it into as much tepid water as you think you will require. When the soap is dissolved put the water on the fire and let it remain there until it is almost boiling. Plunge the feathers into the water, leave them for at least four hours, stirring them from time to time; then remove them, rub them gently with the hands, then rinse them thoroughly in cold water, dry them with a soft towel, and finally shake them until they become quite dry. Curl the feathers before the heat of a fire, taking each small portion between your thumb and a paper knife, and gently drawing it through. In experimenting for the first time, it would be advisable to clean one feather only before submitting the rest to the water bath.



THE CHAMPION BASKET BALL TEAM OF THE YEAR AT WORK.

(Drawn from a photograph.)

THE young ladies of Dr. Savage's school claim to have the champion basket ball team of the country. They have just finished a series of brilliant victories against all challengers in this section. Heavy scores were made against such star teams as the Adelphi College, Brooklyn, the Teachers' College and the Yonkers High School. For two years these athletic young women have been in active training at basket ball. In doing this they have taken an

all round course in gymnastic exercises, and have become all-round athletes. "The greatest difficulty I had," said Mr. Jardine, their trainer, "was in teaching them to throw the ball, not toss it, as is natural for women."

As the team now plays, the positions are: Captain, Miss N. Armstrong; Miss J. Armstrong, right forward; Miss B. Georgia, left forward; Miss C. Georgia, centre; Miss J. Tynin, right guard; Miss McKean, left guard; Miss Hutchinson, right forward.