

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY A BIT ABOUT WHAT TO DO WITH THAT OVERCOAT YOU DON'T NEED

By Jane Whitaker

Remember last winter when you put away an overcoat that you thought you would never want to wear any more, but you wanted to have by in case anything went wrong and you couldn't get another one this winter? But maybe you did get a new one this year and maybe you are wondering just what is best to do with the one of last year.

I will tell you. There are hundreds—yes, hundreds—of men walking along the street, especially on the west side, where most of the lodging houses, and the municipal lodging house, are located and the bread line in a dark alley street, who are almost blue with the cold.

They haven't overcoats. Some of them are wearing cotton sweaters under their coats of last summer. One I noticed yesterday because he was shivering so pitifully, and the wind as it blew against him betrayed the fact that he wasn't even wearing stockings. And his feet were covered with shoes that were not going to last very much longer.

These men are suffering frightfully. They are suffering more than they ordinarily would because they do not get nourishing food and their blood is cold even before the weather man on the outside adds to their suffering.

There isn't any place where relief is given to these men. That is, there is no charity. The county agent's office gives fuel and food to starving families — and there are many of these—but they get a little help. The charities give a very trifling relief in many cases, but they give that trifling relief to families.

None of the organized charities gives relief to these men who haven't any homes but the lodging houses or the streets.

On the west side, at the corner of Sangamon and Monroe streets, on the second floor of what was appar-

ently at one time a church, a number of the unemployed are trying to keep body and soul together until spring comes and work opens up again.

These men sleep in this hall. They haven't any cots, they sleep on the floor, but it gives them a shelter.

They are not asking charity. They are doing whatever they can to earn money enough to keep body and soul together. They are getting up an entertainment in January; they are now selling papers to make a few pennies.

But you can see them down in the loop without overcoats, their faces numbed, their feet beating a constant tattoo in a vain endeavor to warm them up; their hands almost blue. And very few of them have even sweaters under their summer coats, much less overcoats.

One of them that I saw yesterday had hands so cold that when he tried to hold open a store door for a woman who hadn't strength to hold it herself he couldn't get a grip on the door.

If you're worrying about what to do with that last year's overcoat you needn't worry any more. You can take it to the hall of which I have told you; you will find several men glad to get it; and your new overcoat will feel just about three times as warm and you will be all "tingly" inside with happiness when you know that one man less is shivering on the streets.

Direct giving of these things is the only real charity. Sometimes when I see the wagons of the Salvation Army and other like organizations taking away bundles of clothes from houses it makes me sick at heart, for I know that the really needy aren't going to get those things because they cannot pay for them and the Salvation Army and other like charities sell everything that you give them.