INTERMEDLED with sounds of New York's Christmas festivity, a horse anthem will be heard in Madison Square. It will be the angels' song, peace on earth, good will toward men, but even an angel would hardly recognize it. For the singers will be shaggy, slouching outcasts to whom earth has neither given peace nor good will; and the sharp blasts of the winter night will catch up the strain and scatter it under the wheels of the cars that rush along Broadway and the buses that hurry up 5th avenue. But the song will be sung, and should you hear it you will know that a shepherd is tending his flock by night. The chaplain is ministering to his own.

You never heard of "the chaplain"? Then you have not known New York by night, for he has been there in that spot, rain or shine, for more than twenty-one years. Stop a minute and draw up into the circle of his arc light. I will show you the strangest service that is held in America; a sermon the purpose of which is to put the audience to sleep, preached in a church whose altar is a fire box, its chancel rail a curbstone and its pulpit a hydrant. You are not cold already? Look across there at the other worshipers; there isn't an overcoat among them. He is Chaplain Frederick Rotzler, and the name of his church—that stretch of blank pavement behind the Worth monument in Madison Square—is St. John Baptist Pentecostal Evangelist. But by any other name it would do its work as well. Twenty-one years ago he was preaching in that church to an audience made up of equal portions of those who expected to sleep in the neighboring hotels and those who were certain to sleep in the park, when a man pushed through the crowd and dropped some money into his hand. He tried to return the money, but the man had vanished. And the chaplain goes on, following the path which he had taken, came sharp against the figure of a poor wretch buttoning a newspaper inside his ragged jacket—and stopped. The search for the man who had given the money was ended; here was the man who needed it. When the sermon was ended the chaplain gathered out of his audience the fifteen or twenty restless and stockingless ones, marched them across town to a cheap lodging house and, using the money which had been given him, put them to bed.

An Audience Waiting for Bed

Up by what channels news is spread through the unwashed world even the police have not discovered. On the next Sunday night the chaplain found himself confronted with a ready-made audience of fifty unshaved, homeless men, lined up in a ragged column of fours. That night at the end of his sermon he passed the hat and again the ragged portion of his congregation was provided for by the better fed. And every Sunday night since and every Wednesday night as well he has preached there bareheaded in the heart of the square. On one side, marshaled into a rude column, the bedless horde has waited, their gaze wandering from the face of the preacher to the faces of those other listeners opposite, who from time to time slip forward to drop their contributions in the preacher's hands. It is the only church I know of where the front pew is more popular than any other, for he who stands first in line receives the first bed check, and many a cold night the back row, having stood until midnight, finds the checks exhausted and returns to its dreary all night march.

"Out of the Darkness"

TENDING HIS FLOCK BY NIGHT

By BRUCE BARTON

You will have to move in closer if you are to follow the course of the sermon, for he who is to preach two hours in the open air must not speak with too loud a voice. He has sung the first hymn into the faces of his ragged audience and they—trailing notes behind—have echoed it back to him. On the little cloth-covered box that has been his platform for all the years he kneels to make the opening prayer, while the hats of the tattered worshipers are lifted and held in their hands. He prays to his Father for his flock, that they may know that "they 'can't depend on money, can't depend on the world, can't depend on nothing but the love of Christ." He prays that the Lord may open the hearts of kindly people so that these uncared for children of his may find a place to "lay their weary heads," and he asks for a blessing upon the service. Among all the many prayers in the world there is none that will seem to you more sincerely uttered, none spoken in a spirit of more simple trust.

A Church That "Ain't Got Any Debt"

"You may step up closer," says the chaplain, addressing the better dressed portion of his audience. "It won't cost you anything, and maybe you'll like to see a church that ain't got any debt." There is no spoken text, but the scarred faces opposite show a hundred texts to the curious who stop a moment in the outskirts of the crowd. "The wages of sin," they shout, "is death." And "Look not on the wine; and Except ye repent!" Because the host of the congregation are poor men the sermon is addressed to them, and it wanders up and down through the Scriptures, dwelling on the destructive power of wickedness and offering the healing and sustaining love of God.

It is not such a sermon as any other church on 5th avenue would pay regularly to hear, but those who stop a moment or more to listen are visibly impressed, partly with the sermon, partly with the fifty-fold text. One by one they slip up to drop their offerings in the chaplain's hand. Here is a lover and his huss; she leaves him on the corner for a moment while she steps across to give their pittance. He is a shipping clerk and she works all day long in one of the department stores. They cannot afford the luxury of many charities, but they have this one and every Sunday night for more than two years they have stopped to drop their mite. A white-fronted clubman pauses with his two companions, and as they reach into capacious pockets for their change you hear him tell the history of the chaplain. "It don't make any difference, he says, "it may be down to zero, but this fellow's always here. I've been seeing him now for years, and I tell you he does more good than any church in this town." They pass on, and a group of light-hearted young fellows stop their laughter long enough to listen for a moment, contribute their few pennies and go on more quietly. An automobile halts to allow a pretty girl to step down; she offers her contribution, goes back and is whisked away into the crowd. There is a benediction delivered while the crowd stands hushed in hand and then "God Be with You Till We Meet Again" sung from throats long ago burned out.

"Tull we meet; till we meet again," the musty notes come forth—and as your eye runs over the serried faces of the singers you pick out here and there one who will never meet in that company again. That white whiskered old man whose knees tremble in the chill— he has met his last defeat at the bottle; before another Sabbath night he will have passed on. And the slim young chap, two rows back in the center, there is a light of resolution in his eye which was not there before the chaplain began speaking. He does not belong here anymore, he will not be here again. The singing ceases and the chaplain distributes his checks, each one entitling the holder to a 15-cent bed. You go home, for it is nearly midnight, but there is no sleep for the chaplain. From lodging house to lodging house he trudges on his weary rounds to be sure his poor "misfortunates" are in bed. And at each bedside he pauses for a word of simple prayer.

It is his work; he is chaplain of the homeless, confessor of the unshaved. Tonight it will be 3 o'clock before he sleeps and tomorrow
row he will be up and in the prisons or the workhouses or the hos-
pitals, taking the magazines and fruit which he has collected from
goodness knows where, speaking words of kindness and doing little
deeds of help. They are his people and it does not concern us that
he speaks of them as "poor, desponding chaps" or tells us that they
travel under "consumed names." The love of God which he carries
to them has not one single trace of self-seeking to adulterate it;
if prayers in heaven are answered in the order of their sincerity his
stand high upon the list.

And you want to know whether it does any good?

One winter night when the wind caught up the snow and flung it
into faces so that it cut like a knife, a smooth faced young chap
stood in the line clothed only in trousers and a linen duster. His
face was molded in good lines, but despair had settled upon it
like a mask; he gazed toward the preacher vacantly and when his
check was handed him he walked off to bed with a dragging step.
The chaplain followed. That night in the ill-smelling loft of a
cheap lodging house the chaplain took the hand of that young
fellow and fastened it with a new grip upon life. And the boy, who
was not bad but merely heartsick and ready to be claimed by the
force of either good or evil, whichever should be the first to reach
his side, started the next morning with his face toward the sunrise.

Last Sunday night he stopped on his way up the avenue to drop his
contribution in the chaplain's hand, for success has not hardened
his heart nor blunted his memory.

But you wonder whether it does any good?

They were in the middle of the sermon one night when a smartly
dressed woman left her carriage and without so much as a word
to the chaplain hurried over to the line and peered into the hun-
gered faces of the flock. Down each row she went, scanning every
face, until she reached a white haired old ruin near the back. With
a cry she fell on her knees, stretching out her white arms toward
him. "Father, oh, father!" she moaned. And bending down the
misty eyed old man put his arms around her and pressed his hard
lips to her cheek.

And you question whether it does any good?

**Trying to Help the Grand Army of Sin**

Twenty-one years times 104 services is 2,184. At each of those
more than 2,000 services 200 well dressed men and women have
paused for a moment in their leisurely walk up 5th avenue. Perhaps
it was only a moment. But even a moment is sufficient to paint

that picture on the memory; even a moment can stir the heart to
wonder at a Power which keeps that strong man standing there
bareheaded night after night. The other churches on 5th avenue
mean little to the throng that passes them—their open doors pro-
voke hardly an instant's introspection. But he must be thoughtless
indeed who will not hesitate before this scene. For prayer is here
being made in the midst of the highway and hatless in its presence
stand the broken ranks of the grand army of sin.

The chaplain knows that the same hopeless ones emerge into line
again and again. He knows how much seed is scattered and how
little comes to fruit. But through twenty-one years his faith has
not slackened nor his courage run low. He knows, too, whom he
has believed. It is enough for him that nights are cold and men
homeless. He asks them no questions. It is his place to stand firm

So on Christmas night a tuneless anthem will be sounded in the
heart of Madison Square, and the chaplain will minister to his own.

**War's Grim Trail in Thrace**

Recent visitors to the vicinity of Adrianople and Chorlou in the
interests of the British relief committee bring back sad tales of the
destruction caused by war in the whole vilayet of Adrianople and
especially in the sandjak of Chorlou, says The Orient, the mission-
ary weekly of Constantinople. The Ottoman army swept north-
wards and then southwards over this area. The Bulgarian army
swept southwards and then withdrew northwards over the same.
Then the Ottomans went again over it to Adrianople and Kirk
Kilise. The result is that devastation and ruin have left their grim
mark everywhere. The thousands of refugees that fled thence to
the capital and across into Anatolia have in large numbers re-
turned—but to ruined homes. One family was met returning to
Vize who had driven their cart back all the way from Deurt Yol in
Cilicia, and they found their home only a blackened and charred
wreck.

Out of 1200 houses in the region of Serai and Vize less than 1,000
were left standing. Out of all the schools, mosques and churches
only one was found that had not suffered. From the standpoint
of the farming population, a worse fact is the loss of cattle and of
farming implements.