

Country can form no idea of the multitudes who earn their living by mendicancy. Such persons take up their abode for the most part in lodging houses, and often herd together in a manner which decency forbids us to describe.

It is not likely that such outcasts from society will find their way very often to any place of worship, and it must be admitted that they are seldom spoken to on spiritual things, except when town missionaries may pay them an occasional visit. It might almost be said that "no man cares for their souls." John Ashworth had often thought about those poor people. He saw, as many have seen, that in all the large towns in England there were hundreds who never attend a place of worship, and often did his soul yearn after these lost ones, for whom so few were disposed to care. He proposed various plans for their relief, but met with little sympathy. At length, when laid on a bed of affliction, he resolved that if spared he would attempt in the name of God to preach to these destitute ones.

When he recovered he did not forget his vow, but at once rented a small room, got some bills printed, and went to all the lodging houses in the town, and made known the fact that "the Chapel for the Destitute" would be opened on the following Sabbath evening. There were no collections, and all were invited to attend. At the appointed hour there were some 27 persons in the room, and they were certainly a motley company such as are seldom seen, but all listened attentively to the story of God's love. This was the beginning of that remarkable work which has now been carried on for nearly twenty years, and has been the means of reclaiming many from the downward road. Fallen daughters have been led to see the error of their ways, and have gone back to their parents. Prodigal sons have returned home to their father's house, and not a few who were looked upon as irreclaimable have been elevated to respectable positions in society, and have not been ashamed to acknowledge their attendance at "the Chapel for the Destitute" as the turning point of their history.

To carry on the Christian work which was thus so auspiciously begun was a great trial of faith. Many professing Christians doubted the utility of the enterprise. Some ministers thought it was a rival place of worship, to which lovers of cheap religion would be sure to repair, as there was no collection. Then, too, not a few of those