Life of . . . .

Francis Schlatter

The Great Healer

or New Mexico Messiah

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Life of Francis Schlatter.

Wonderfully like the history of Christ are the scenes and incidents connected with the daily life of Francis Schlatter, the most noted man on the face of the globe to-day.

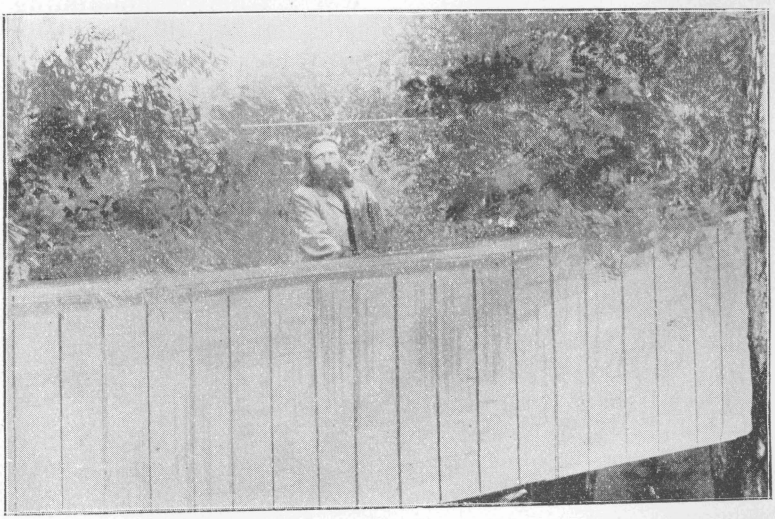
Suddenly bursting into view in New Mexico, from whence no one seemed to know, he began to heal the sick, the lame and the blind with such marvelous success, that his fame has, in this short time, reached not only every part of America, but to foreign lands, and already, from every quarter, are coming hundreds, hoping that by his mysterious power they may be healed of their afflictions. The rich and the poor are treated alike by him, all receiving the same kind attention. His Christ-like appearance, calm demeanor and child-like simplicity win all who come under his influence.

Thirty-nine years ago the "New Mexico Messiah," or "Healer," (by which title he is more commonly known) was born in Alsace-Lorraine, when it was a French possession, and he is therefore a Frenchman, although his accent and name indicate German extraction.

He stands nearly six feet in height, and weighs perhaps 165 pounds. Athletic in build, his long, flowing dark hair parted in the middle, and full dark beard certainly give him a striking resemblance to the likeness of our Savior. Clear blue eyes, mouth firm and delicately cut, gives him a most kindly expression.

After his father and mother died, in 1881, he came to this country, settling at Jamesport, Long Island, where he resumed work at his trade—that of a shoemaker. Soon after, forming the acquaint-

ance of William Ryan, who was an engineer on a fishing boat, he was persuaded to take the position of stoker under him; but tiring of this at the end of the season returned to his old occupation, at which he accumulated considerable money. During his leisure moments he would engage in out-of-door sports with the young people, and was always noted for his good nature. He also studied very hard to perfect his knowledge of the English language. Although he had been brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, he also attended the Meth-



THE HEALER.

odist and Congregational churches of the village. About this time he became interested in silver mines in Colorado, and in 1884 left for the West to look after his interests which, later, proved a failure.

Again, in 1891, he resumed his trade, and was located at No. 1843 Stout street, and later at No. 1848 Downing avenue, Denver, Colorado. It was here that he received his first spiritual communications, and, to quote his own simple language, he says:

"I was not very strong, and Father was preparing me for what was to come. He told me to exercise by swinging Indian clubs for two hours, and walk from five to ten miles every day. I did not know why I did this, but I do now. One day while sitting listlessly at my bench, a voice commanded me to write to a friend who lived on the north end of Long Island, and he would be cured of paralysis; but I doubted, and did not write. A few days later the command was repeated. I wrote, and later learned that my friend had been cured. For eight months I continued at my trade, when again I heard the voice which I knew was Father, commanding me to fast, and for seventy-five days I did not taste food. Then Father told me to close out my business, take nothing with me, but go heal the sick, and I started.

"I never begged during the two years of my wanderings, and after getting fully upon my way I avoided large cities and towns as much as possible. My route lay eastward from Denver, through the center of Kansas, stopping at Clay Center, Topeka, Lawrence and Kansas City. I asked for no food, but accepted it when offered. Remaining in Kansas City but a few hours, I took a southerly course, passing through Paola, Fort Scott, and entering the Indian Territory directly south of Fort Scott. Continuing on my journey, I reached Talequah, where I was taken very ill, by reason of exposure, irregularity of meals, and also loss of power of locomotion in one leg, and was prostrated for two days. During these two days I healed several of the Indians who had treated me kindly. The night of the second day I saw a vision, in which I was told to resume my journey in the morning. I arose refreshed, and with no symptoms of illness I bade my Indian friends goodbye and resumed my southern course. Something made me go in that direction, and urged me to such a degree that I soon found myself walking into Hot Springs, Arkansas, in my bare head and bare feet, begrimmed with dust, and presenting the appearance of a demented person. I suppose I looked tough, without shoes or hat. Then my

troubles commenced. I had trouble after trouble. The sheriff arrested me, because, he said, I was insane. I was in prison there for five and a half months, but was never brought before a judge. I was tried by a kangaroo court and given fifty lashes, because I had no money with which to pay a fine. My good nature seemed to win for me the confidence of the jailor, and I was treated as a trusty. I was required to saw wood, wash dishes, and clean the deputy sheriff's house, from garret to cellar. Oh. I worked hard. Father told me to work hard and I did, but I knew I would get out before long, for Father told me. One day I heard the deputy say to the sheriff: 'Hadn't we better let him go?' I laughed then, for Father had told me already that I would soon be free; and that is the funniest part of it all. The night before I had a dream, and in that dream I saw a canary flying loose in my room, and from that room he flew through an open door to another, and from there through another door into still another room. Some persons were trying to catch the bird, but it got through an open window and escaped. I knew Father had sent me the dream to tell me that I was the canary, and that I would be free, so when I heard the deputy speaking to the sheriff about letting me go, I told them of the dream, saying that the Father would free me, no matter what they might do to prevent it. Just after this the sheriff asked me if I did not want to go into some little business in Hot Springs. I replied that I had already given up one business, and given everything away with it—why should I desire to go into business again? He offered to set me up in something, but I said 'No;' Father told me what to say. One day soon after this, I was taken over to the house of the deputy sheriff. Well, the deputy and I were in the same room when his wife called him. 'John! John!' she cried, 'come in here and watch Jean for a few moments.' He forgot me, and suddenly Father said, 'Now start!' and I went out of the door and walked very fast. I did not run, but I *did* walk very fast, for I was glad to be free again. But, as I was in danger of being overtaken,

I kept on up the mountain side, walking at the same gait until I reached the top, where I laid down for only a few moments. Then I started down the other side, halting half way towards the foot in a little gully. I got behind the rotten trunk of a fallen tree where I slept until 11 o'clock the next day. That day I wandered, and all of that night, getting food at negro cabins, and then going back into the hills. I treated some of these people because of their kindness to me. The second day I was twenty miles from Hot Springs, near Sulphur Springs. Then I suddenly commenced going north. I was surprised, because Father had always told me to go south. I asked him why he made me go in that direction, when before he had always directed me to go the other way; but he told me to go on. It was not for me to quarrel with Father, so I obeyed. And then satan made his appearance. How he came to me, now, when I was troubled because Father kept me in ignorance of his purposes! Satan spoke to me about going back and accepting the sheriff's offer; but I fought him off.

"On the third day I found myself in a north and south road, which I crossed, and then found myself in an open lot. Then the other part of my dream was perfectly clear to me—this was the third room I had seen, and I laughed aloud, for now I felt that I was soon to be free. I crossed the lot and came upon another road going southwest. Now I knew I was free, so I started off very fast and traveled thirty-five miles a day for several days in a southwesterly course, through Arkansas, across the southeast corner of the Indian Territory into Texas, to Paris, from which point I departed from the Texas & Pacific railway line, healing some; finding but few who would listen and have faith in me.

"At Throckmorton, Texas, I was again arrested on a charge of vagrancy, taken before a court, and sentenced to three days' imprisonment. After serving out the sentence, I was instructed to leave the town within three days, in lieu of which I was threatened with a long term in jail. This last was unnecessary, for I started immediately over what is known as the

Llano Estacado, or Staked Plains, the northern desert of Texas, arriving at El Paso, after great suffering and privation, about July 1, 1894. My way then lay over the sterile Yuma desert, through the extreme southern section of New Mexico, Arizona and Southern California. The heat was intense, but I did not suffer for several days. By keeping along the line of the Southern Pacific, from El Paso, I was enabled to follow a chain of habitations, where sometimes I was given food, but more often went without. Though often fainting from weakness, Father supported me, and after passing the southeastern boundary of California, I fell in with a fellow traveler, a poor fellow like myself, without money, food or shelter, with whom I shared my store. Just outside of Colton, California, we prepared to spend the night. I was very weary, and rolled my pants into a bundle. I placed them under my head as a pillow, and was soon soundly sleeping. During the night I found that our camp-fire had burned low, and while engaged in gathering some more fuel and rekindling the fire, my companion made off with my clothes; but the next day I found them near the trail.

"On September 25, 1894, I arrived at Puenta, California, where took place my first series of pronounced healings. In the San Jacinto valley I spent three months and three days traveling from town to town, healing many Mexicans and Indians. This was the only period during my entire wanderings that the Father commanded me to accept money when offered. It came in small amounts. I did not know why Father wanted me to take it, but trusted that he would soon make it known. I had accumulated about twenty dollars, when Father told me to go to San Diego, and take the boat for San Francisco. En route to San Diego, I fell in with another poor fellow who was penniless and sick of fever. I healed him, and shared what I had with him. Arriving at San Diego, we took a room together. Father told me to take the boat next day. Before retiring I thought of putting my pants under the mattress, but Father told me hang them on a hook.

I had given my companion ten dollars with which to start in business, as I found my fare to San Francisco would be only ten dollars. When I awoke next morning my companion and all of my money had disappeared. So I was obliged to return into the country and raise more. One month later, having again accumulated sufficient funds, I took passage for San Francisco; remained there six hours, when Father told me to leave. I went to San Jose, then over the mountains to Merced. From Merced I was invited to ride on a 'helper engine' over the mountains to Mojave, which I did, as Father told me to do so; and this was the only ride I had during my whole journey.

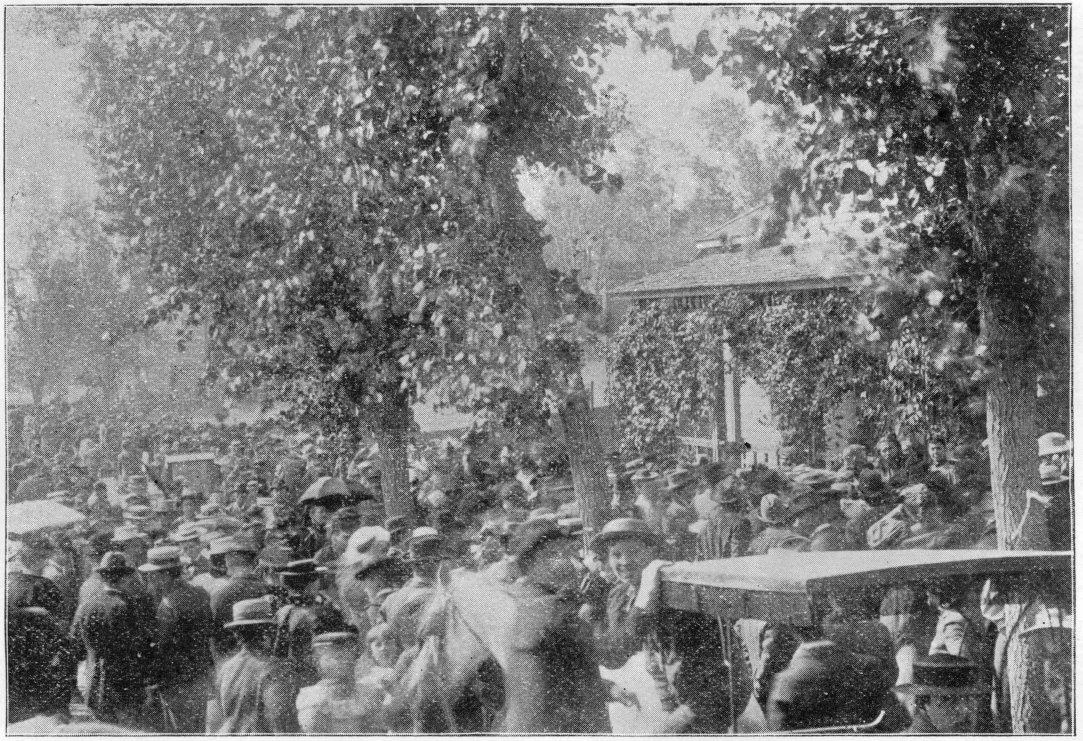
"At Mojave I purchased a forty-pound bag of flour, and carrying some water, started into the Mojave desert. I had been making a paste with the flour and water, but at the Needles my flour had given out, and I got a bag of wheat and ate that. Now my real sufferings commenced, and satan pressed me more than ever before. No man can ever know what I suffered. It was every day, every hour, and every moment, without rest, my body was racked with pain. I did not suffer mentally, because the worse the pains the happier I grew; but sometimes my suffering was terrible. I fought satan constantly. No one ever suffered like that. Satan would say, 'Throw down these things you carry and go back;' but I would reply, 'No; you cannot make me do as you want as long as Father does not wish it. You cannot lead me from the right path, because Father is with me.' But the visions! Oh, the beautiful, magnificent visions I saw during those dark hours! One bright moonlight night, when it was as bright as day, I saw the grandest vision ever seen by mortal man. Sometimes all of the prophets would appear before me. Then Father told me I was ready to begin healing in the cities.

"Satan had left, and tempted me no more. I was happy. At that time only the uppers of my shoes were left; my feet were on the ground; but I procured strips of rubber and bound them on the soles of my feet to protect them from the rocks. In

this condition I walked into Flagstaff. Here I spent some time herding sheep.

"July 7, 1895, I arrived at Peralta, a small town about twenty miles below Albuquerque, New Mexico, and began healing. From Peralta I came to Albuquerque, where hundreds were treated. I stopped healing and entered upon a fast of forty days, at the conclusion of which I came to Denver, arriving August 30, 1895."

The Messiah's fame had preceded him, and from the time of his arrival, the house at No. 336 Fairview avenue, where he was stopping, was besieged by the afflicted, who begged, as in the days of Christ, to be allowed to touch but the hem of his garments. All were denied, he being very weak as a result of his fast, had decided to take three weeks of absolute rest. However, word was passed that he would bless handkerchiefs, which when worn, would have an effect equal to his personal treatment. Immediately the little store around the corner was besieged for handkerchiefs, but curious enough, the proprietors not believing in the "Healer," would not sell them for that purpose; but hundreds daily were passed in to him for his blessing, and many cures have been reported as a result of their application. On September 16, 1895, at 9 o'clock in the morning, he emerged from his seclusion and took up his position just inside the fence in front of the residence of ex-Alderman Fox, No. 625 Witter street, North Denver. Leaning with one hand against the fence, he grasped firmly with his right the hands of those passing in single file before him, in regular order, on the opposite side of the fence, pressing the proffered handkerchief in his left hand. On this morning, as on every day since (with the exception of Sundays), the same scene has been repeated, and the open space in front and below the house, dotted with tents, lunch stands, wagons and people moving about, presents more the appearance of a country fair. About one hundred feet of railing has been placed in front of the house, leading up to the position occupied by the "Healer," so arranging that the crowd can reach him only in single file; beyond the



SCENE AT SCHLATTER'S SHRINE, NINE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.

end of this railing the line extends, several abreast, many blocks, while the large crowd of curious take up their position in the street at the head of the line and facing the "Healer." Promptly at 9 o'clock the "Healer" begins his work; slowly the line files past him, the treatment lasting from one to three minutes, except in severe cases, when it is continued as long as thirty minutes, and in two cases only for over two hours each. All are treated alike; but the effect is different. With some the contact with his hand is like a shock of electricity, causing the patient to writhe and groan in agony, while with others it is imperceptible.

At noon he ceases work for a short rest and dinner, when it is continued until about 4 o'clock, when he proceeds to the carriages, and for thirty minutes treats a few who are not able to stand in line, and then he retires to the house.

From this time until, often, 2 o'clock the next morning, he is busily engaged in an almost hopeless effort to answer the 10,000 or more letters which have accumulated since his arrival here, beginning with a few, steadily increasing, until now over 1,500 are received daily.

To relate all the good he has done while in Denver, Colorado, would fill a volume; but some few cases might be given, showing his power and practice:

One lady had been crippled by rheumatism so that the ends of her fingers were bent to touch the palms of her hands. She felt a prickly sensation, the evening after treatment, and suddenly regained control of her fingers.

W. C. Dillon, of 1738 Champa street, Denver, is another fortunate. He suffered horribly for two years with inflammatory rheumatism and gouty symptoms, and the day of treatment was not able to move a joint. Now his joints are flexible, and he feels a new man.

Miss Maud Ward, of Longmont, had been suffering with an impaired vision and paralysis of the right arm. She had worn glasses for five years, and her condition was a lamentable one. Dr. D. N. Strad-

ley, of Longmont, treated her, and was assisted by Drs. Callahan and Bickford, also of Longmont. The girl came down to Denver and visited Schlatter. She felt better soon after she left him, and when she reached home she could see without the use of her glasses, and could move her arm as if it had never been afflicted.

Herber Beckwith, of Longmont, was cured of paralysis, from which he had suffered during the last three years. After talking to Schlatter he was able to use his arms.

Mrs. J. S. Fitch, of 2541 Clarkson street, Denver, Colorado, was also a sufferer from paralysis. She saw the "Healer," and says that she has feeling in limbs which before were numb.

William A. Roach, of Globeville, threw away his crutches thirty minutes after he had seen the "Healer." He was thrown from a wagon ten years ago, and lost the use of his lower limbs. He walked with difficulty by the use of two crutches, and was assisted by friends to the presence of the "Healer." He felt that he was well soon after leaving the place, and believes that he is thoroughly cured.

John Doyle, of Boulder, was carried before Schlatter, suffering from paralysis in the left side. His entire side was useless. Now he is able to walk easily and can use both arms.

Another surprising cure is claimed by Mrs. Diana Dill, 2853 Blake street. She had dropsy in her feet and limbs, and had been treated by three physicians without getting any relief. She was in constant pain, and during the last five months had been unable to wear shoes on account of the swelling. She visited Schlatter Tuesday afternoon, and on Wednesday the swelling had disappeared, there was no pain, and she was able to put on her shoes.

I. Arnold, of 815 Fifteenth street, Denver, has thrown away his crutches. For years Mr. Arnold has been a cripple, and had tried everything. He was treated by the "Boy Magnets" on the stage in the Tabor Opera House, Denver, last June, but without the least benefit. September 16 he was treated by

Schlatter, and began improving at once. Now Mr. Arnold appears on the street unsupported save by a cane. The story of the man's cure was published in the daily papers, and achieved world-wide circulation. The result has been that Mr. Arnold has received a large number of letters asking regarding the work of the "Healer."

An old woman occupied a place in front of the "Healer" for a long time during one day. She seemed to be engaged in prayer, and little noted the stream that passed along. At last she was given opportunity to clasp the hand of Schlatter. Retiring one or two paces, she held her hands together as if in the attitude of supplication or adoration. The eye of the "Healer" fell upon the poor woman. "By and by it will be all right," said he, in an assuring tone of voice. "In seven months it will be all right." The woman said nothing in reply, but the expression of gladness that smoothed out her wrinkled face transformed her again to the years of youth.

Mrs. E. S. Rice, of this city, says that for ten years, or since she was 14 years of age, she was troubled with an ailment that baffled medical skill. She heard of Schlatter and visited him with the result that she is now a well and hearty woman.

Mr. D. M. Powers, of Georgetown, says that about a month ago he received a letter from Mr. Schlatter in reply to one which he had written, in which he instructed him to use the letter to relieve his pains. For two years he had been afflicted with rheumatism, and had reached such a stage that he prayed for death every day, and had given up hope until he heard of the cures made by Schlatter in New Mexico. He tried the effect of laying the letter on the spots that pained him most, and immediately began to improve, and expects to be fully well within a month.

An affecting scene was the presentation of an afflicted lady late one afternoon. The patient was brought to the spot in a carriage. Effort was made by her friends to induce the "Healer" to leave his place and treat the invalid in the carriage. The press was so great that they could not approach near

enough to make their wants known. After waiting an hour or more, the assistance of strong arms were secured and the patient was lifted and carried to the "Healer." Her wan face and sunken eyes told of suffering unto death. Even the most skeptical person in the crowd bowed his head in silence as Schlatter solemnly performed the act which has brought relief to so many.

"I have traveled 360 miles to feel the grasp of your hand," was the greeting of a blind man, as the strong clasp of the "Healer" closed over his fingers. This was one of the few moments when Schlatter broke his usual silence. "Your sight will be restored within three months," said he. "Have faith."

"I have suffered from a stiffness in my right wrist for six years. It was impossible for me to bend my wrist or to move my thumb. See what I can do now."

The speaker bent his wrist without apparent effort. He called attention to a moisture which had appeared on his hand, remarking that he had noticed nothing of the kind for years.

Among the cases which attracted a great deal of interest on the part of those who were in the presence of the "Healer" at the time, was that of S. S. Nichols, of this city, residing at 1726 Page street. Mr. Nichols is employed at 1837 Larimer street, where he can be seen in verification of his remarkable experience. He was born in West Prussia, only a few miles from the birthplace of Schlatter. For many months he had been a sufferer from acute pains in the back, which finally took the form of sciatic rheumatism. His health broke down under the pain, which those who have suffered from this disease can testify is indescribable. It is one of the most dreaded of all diseases, and he became doubled up so that when he walked he was obliged to stoop over and place his hands on his knees for support. A week before he said it was out of the question for him to sit erect, and he secured the services of an expressman to convey him to Schlatter in the hope that he might gain some

relief. The appearance of the man excited the commiseration of the attendants of the "Healer," and he was at once taken to Schlatter, who began the usual treatment. As the treatment progressed the form of the patient soon became erect, and in a few moments he had gained his original stature, standing up as straight as an arrow. The man was as much astonished as the spectators, and rejoiced as one who had renewed his youth. He walked away sounding the praises of the quiet man, who proceeded with his work as though nothing unusual had happened.

Among those who have been attracted to Denver by the fame of Schlatter is James B. Stetson, a capitalist of San Francisco. Mr. Stetson's sister has been badly affected with asthma for many years, and has been trying the effects of traveling upon her trouble. While in Boston a few weeks ago she read of the remarkable power claimed for the "Healer." In the hope that there might be some help for his sister, and to leave no possible source of relief untried, Mr. Stetson brought her to Denver. She was in one of the carriages that awaited the pleasure of Schlatter yesterday afternoon, while a tall and fine-looking man, dressed in the latest style—a wonderful contrast to the man all were there to see—implored the "Healer" to see the sick woman. He was repulsed by some close to Schlatter, who told him that all were treated alike, and that the sister must wait; but he persisted until he attracted the attention of the "Healer," who immediately repaired to the carriage. He took the hand of the invalid and sat before her for a time, looking into her eyes with that strange look that comes into his own at such times. When he left he gave no encouragement, but said: "If the Father so wills, she will get better; if not, she must bear her sufferings as best she can."

A four-year-old child, whose arms had been useless from its birth, clasped its little arms around its mother's neck after the "Healer" had given treatment. It was the first time the child had ever clasped its mother in an act of affection.

A young lady who had been grievously afflicted with walking in her sleep, declares that she was cured by one treatment.

Harry Webber, of Denver, a boy, was afflicted with a hip disease which ate away the flesh, laying open the bones of the left hip. He has been sick two years, and suffered every day. He could not sleep at night, and could not play with the other boys. Three weeks ago Mr. Schlatter treated him. He slept that night, and has been sleeping regularly since. The skin is growing over the bone, and he has no more pain in the hip. He says he feels better every day.

This man with such wonderful power accepts no money, asks no questions, and imposes no restrictions on his patients *but faith.* He speaks only when spoken to, and then in few simple words.

By his seeming intuitive knowledge he singles out the scoffer and passes him by with a "You may pass on;" or, "I cannot treat you." With his eyes cast heavenward, he quickly decides the ability to take their turn in line of those in carriages or those seeking immediate attention.

Standing in the blazing sun or the drenching rain, without hat, coat or shelter; holding in perfect order by his magnetic influence the crowds which, under other circumstances, would require police protection; grasping with a firm grip the hands of the thousands daily, day after day, week after week, with no physical inconvenience whatever; relieving poor suffering humanity to an extent never equalled since the days of our Savior, he is truly the wonder of the Nineteenth century. His strength and power are steadily increasing, and he says: "Greater things are yet to come, but the work will be performed alone for a long time."

Daily the crowds of suffering humanity continue to increase, usually beginning as early as 6 p. m. the night before in order to secure a treatment the following day; the line steadily increases until at daylight there are hundreds, then slowly fading away after 3 p. m.

Thus they will continue to gather at the shrine of the "Healer" until November 16, 1895, when he will cease treating in Denver, mail replies to all his unanswered letters, and soon after leave for Chicago, Illinois, where his fame has preceded him, and hundreds already await his coming. From Chicago he will probably go to Europe, as he has been commanded by the Father to visit each city but once.

Long may he live for the good he is doing!