

Divine healer's claims intrigued curious 1906 crowd

Around Thanksgiving time in 1906, a long-haired, bearded man arrived in Bloomington to share his "gift to humanity." Instead, he gave local people an opportunity to think about how gullible they could be.

The man called himself simply "Schlatter," but he confided to a Bloomington *Telephone* reporter that his real name was Charles McLean and he was brother of John R. McLean, owner of the Cincinnati *Enquirer*. The visitor



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By Rose McIlveen

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also explained that he was the Schlatter who had engaged in great works of healing in Denver, Colo., in 1894, and afterward disappeared in the desert.

Reported the *Telephone*, "The man who is now here claims that he is the Schlatter of Denver fame and that during his disappearance for 40 days and 40 nights, he was buried alive in the mountains, but was resurrected."

Well, if that claim didn't sufficiently impress the readers of the newspaper, the "divine healer" tried to borrow some additional credibility by relating "biographical" details that sounded very familiar:

"Before I was born my mother was told by God that she would have born to her a son who would become famous as a divine healer. That the razor would never touch his face and his hair would never be cut. He would never marry, but be a celibate like Christ; he would journey around the world seven times, would be the means of healing 7,000,000 people and of raising seven from the dead. He would be able to foretell future events and would become the most famous

divine healer since the time of Christ."

Some of the local people who were to be taken in by the man's claims may not have bothered to read all of the *Telephone* article, which also said, "Several years ago a man claiming to be the divine healer made a tour of the north part of the state, but ended up in jail at Kokomo on account of drunkenness. The Healer who is here says he has heard of the man, but

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