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"Great Scene: Leaders of the Apostolic Faith Draw Wonderously Strange Gathering," Mobile Daily (1907)

Charles F. Parham

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The Mobile Daily Item, Thursday evening

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ALABAMA

1907?

GREAT SCENE

Leaders of the Apostolic
Faith Draw Wondrously
Strange Gatherings

MANY PEOPLE

ATTEND MEETINGS IN CRICHTON FROM LONG DISTANCES--SOME
WORSHIPPERS GIVE PECULIAR EXPERIENCES
AFTER HEARING SERMONS.

Charles F. Parham, founder of the Apostolic Faith Movement, assisted by W.R. Quinton, is conducting a remarkable revival in Crichton on Mobile street, near the Old Shell road, and because of their wonderful work are attracting people from all over Mobile. In fact the people who are attending the services tell of some wonderful things that happened to them.

Last night one woman who was a convert to the faith announced that on awakening the morning before it was discovered that she spoke in different languages. Another woman told of her sister having been murdered and that she forgave the murderer.

A feature of the services is the "mourner's bench." Sinners knelt in the sand to ask forgiveness. Some moan, some groan, some sing, some shout and they all look happy. It is the strangest sight that was ever witnessed by an Item reporter in the history of any religious gathering. Some of the believers remain there until early morning, praying continuously to receive the "Baptism of the Holy Ghost."

The Following from the Joplin (Mo.) News tells of the wonderful work of Dr. C.F. Parham:

It is doubtful whether in recent years anything has occurred that has awakened the interest, excited the comment or mystified the people of this region as have the religious meetings at

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Galena, being held by Dr. C.F. Parham, familiarly termed "the Divine Healer."

Almost three months have elapsed since that man came to Galena, and during that time he has healed over a thousand people and converted more than eight hundred. When Rev. Parham first began to attract attention he was holding services in a large tent and soon the streets in that vicinity were crowded nightly with people who were anxious to see and hear the wonderful man who was healing the "halt, the maimed and the blind" without money and without price.

When it was found that the tent was utterly inadequate to accommodate the crowd that assembled a large double store room that would shelter 2,000 people was procured, a platform was built at one end, stoves were set up and rough pine boards were installed to be used as seats. For the past six weeks Parham has preached to crowded houses, and the interest shows no sign of abatement. In this rude temple cures that are looked upon almost in the light of miracles have been performed. During the services there have been as many as fifty people at the altar at one time seeking to be restored in soul or body. The people who have not walked for years without the aid of crutches have risen from the altar with their limbs so straightened that they were enabled to lay aside their crutches to the astonishment of the audience. These cures, it is claimed, are affected solely through prayer and faith. Nothing else is done, though Mr. Parham often lays his hands upon the afflicted one while the devotions are going on, with the result that some say it is due to his own magnetism that he can accomplish the reported results.

Mr. Parham and his followers do not advocate Christian Science or Spiritualism, but their belief condensed is that God is able to overcome all, cure diseases of both soul and body and will do so if they live a consecrated Christian life and depend on him.

"The healer" makes no charges and takes no credit upon himself, saying that he is only teaching the people the true way. He takes no collections during his meetings, but notwithstanding he has had the needs of himself and family well provided for by donations from a grateful public.

Mr. Parham is a slight, spare man extremely delicate looking, and in fact he has said that he was an invalid and badly crippled until he was healed through prayer. His face is pale and earnest looking, while masses of brown hair cover his remarkably shaped head. Mr. Parham is the possessor of such a wonderful personality that some have accused him of hypnotizing his followers.

Others go so far as to term him a fanatic, but one and all, regardless of sect or prejudices, agree that he has brought about conditions that were never before witnessed in this section. Evening after evening the large room is packed with people, many of whom "have gone to scoff, but remained to pray." Here the man of prominence and position clasps hands with the uneducated son of toil or oft times with those who have a prison records back of them. Here women who have formerly lived for society and gayety kneel beside some fallen sister and endeavors to point her heavenward and here the "followers" receive what they term "the Pentecost and are enabled to speak in foreign

tongues languages with which they are, when free from this power, utterly unfamiliar.

Last week a woman arose during the meeting and spoke for ten minutes, not one apparently in the audience knowing what she said. An Indian who had come from the Pawnee reservation that day to attend the services stated that she was speaking in the language of his tribe and that he could understand every word of the testimony. Others have spoken in Latin, in Hebrew, in Chinese and various other tongues and while such manifestations have filled the public with wonder some are of the opinion that the religious demonstrations of this band are carried to extremes.

One evening recently over 400 remained at the meeting the entire night singing, praying and speaking in different languages. Not until daylight did they disperse and a strange sight they presented, wending their way homeward in the gray light of the morning. On another occasion hundreds congregated on the banks of Spring river during one of the coldest days of the winter and witnessed Mr. Parham immerse almost one hundred converts in its icy waters, not one of whom, however, contracted even a cold. But of all the wonderful things which has transpired in connection with these meetings nothing has attracted the attention of the public as has the "healings" which have not been confined to an ignorant, uneducated class of people. On the contrary some of the most conservative, intelligent persons, not only here, but with a radius of over a hundred miles, have visited "the healer" with wonderful results. Mrs. E.L. Arthur, wife of one of the most prominent and influential men in Galena, was one of the first to be healed through Mr. Parham's agency. She was almost blind, her visits to some of the most noted oculists in

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the United States having, according to her own words, done her little good. Under the healer's instructions she removed her glasses and went forth entirely cured and has never had even a slight return of her affection.

The high social standing and excellent reputation of Mrs. Arthur has done much in bringing Parham before the public in a favorable light.

Following close upon this case was the restoration of Mrs. C.O. Frye, of Joplin, whose husband is one of the best known mine operators in Southwest Missouri. Mrs. Frye had been a constant sufferer for years but states that she is now in excellent health through the prayers of Mr. Parham and his band.

Mrs. L.C. Anderson, of this city, has been healed of cancer. Mrs. L.B. Hinkley, of a tumor. She also has been given the power of hearing in one ear, through which she had not heard a sound for forty years. Mrs. James Pond had three cancerous tumors that have completely disappeared. Clarence Rowland, a 14 year old boy, was cured of stammering. His speech was formerly almost unintelligible.

Mrs. M.A. Boyd, whose lower limbs had been paralyzed for four years, and who had been an inmate of a hospital a year, at which place she experienced not the slightest sensation when electric needles were inserted in her flesh, was completely restored.

Children born deaf and dumb have been brought out of their affliction through Rev. Parham. Others who have met with accidents have been healed. Such a case occurred recently when the 2 year old child of Mrs. L. Love, a widow, fell from a window a distance of 18 feet to a stone walk beneath. Physicians were summoned who pronounced the injuries internal, and extended no hope. A friend prevailed on Mrs. Love to send for the healer,

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which was done, and in two or three days the little one was well. The list of those who have been benefited by Rev. Parham's visit to this section is indeed a large one and cases like the preceding have done much to cause the public to regard the man with an almost superstitious awe, but when one meets him in his everyday life he is so quiet, so unostentatious, so sympathetic that he invariably wins confidence. His wife, Mrs. Parham, is in every sense of the word a home woman and heartily in sympathy with her husband's work, although on account of three little ones is necessarily not able to take a very active part in it. However, her sister, Miss Thistlethwaite, is a close attendant at the meetings and an earnest worker. The Parham home "or stopping place," as they call it, is always full of visitors some of whom have come many miles to consult "the healer," others are objects of charity, whom the couple are befriending. In the last two weeks branches of the Parham meetings have sprung up to almost a dozen of the different mining camps of this district, all of which are attracting large crowds and it is difficult to enter a company where the wonderful results of these meetings are not the chief topic of conversation.

The Item is in receipt of a letter explaining this religion, which will appear in tomorrow's issue.