Past the Century Mark Maj. Edw. Jas Monroe seems scarcely more than 75. His face

Zaro Agha

that 102 years ago Li received offi-

cial felicitations from the Chinese

government on the occasion of his one

hundred fiftieth birthday, and that

again, in 1877, the government con-

gratulated him on passing the 200-

year mark. He is further reported to

have found records showing that Li

Such are the reports which have

been widely published in our newspa-

pers during past months. But they

have also resulted in discussions in

other publications which tend to dis-

credit these stories and bring the

weight of scientific testimony to bear

out the belief that none of those men-

tioned are anywhere near the age

claimed for them. Recently the New

York World expressed its doubt that

Zaro Agha was 156 years old and

quoted the chief actuary of the New

York Life Insurance company to the

effect that no authentic record exists

of a human life longer than 106 years.

been extremely scarce. There were

only slightly more than 4,000 people

in the United States in the last cen-

sus who claimed to have attained that

age. But it is significant that of this

number almost 3,000 were negroes;

close to 2,000 negro women said they

were 100 years old or over. Although

negro females form only 5 per cent

of the total population, they give the

highly improbable, and while we are

not questioning the honesty of those

who make the claim, we strongly sus-

pect that in the great majority of

cases they are mistaken as to the ex-

act number of years they have lived.

Many of the old negro people are il-

literate, and nearly all of them lack

authentic records giving the date of

ords are absent centenarians rise up

and flourish. Turkey and the Balkans

have long been a happy hunting

ground for centenarians, in spite of

the fact that conditions of life are

very hard and public health standards

are exceedingly low. The claims to

extreme old age are nearly always

"In my opinion, authentic centenari-

ans are so few in America that they

can be counted on the fingers of one's

Perhaps most interesting of all "au-

thentic centenarians" which this coun-

try has ever known was Cornelius

Cole. In 1922 the New York Times

printed an interview with him in

"In 1847 young Cornellus Cole, then

twenty-four years old, received his

degree of bachelor of arts from Wes-

leyan university. A short time later

came rumors of the gold discovery in

California and with a half dozen

friends he set out to make his for-

tune. In 1922, Cornellus Cole, sole

survivor of his class, preparing to

celebrate his hundredth birthday on

September 17, received an invitation

from his alma mater to come to Mid-

dletown, Conn., and receive an honor-

ary LL. D. In spite of opposition from

friends and members of his family

who thought the journey too arduous

for a centenarian, he came, bringing

with him recollections which went

back to the thrilling days of '49, and

an active legal life that included a

friendship with Lincoln, a place in

both houses of congress, an interest-

ing part in the purchase of Alaska-

to say nothing of a live interests in

mer senator from California and na-

"Cornellus Cole, centenarian, for-

events of today.

which he is described thus:

appealing fictions.

two hands."

"In fact, we find that wherever rec-

"On its face, such a situation is

country half its centenarians!

"Centenarians are and have always

was born in 1677."

ELMO SCOTT WATSON

N RECENT weeks a foreign visitor to our shores has attracted considerable attention by his claims to being 156 years old. He is Zaro Agha, who hails from Istambul, Turkey, and who has many interesting rec-

Tormer Senator Cornelius Cole

ollections of events which took place over a century ago. He claims that when he was 20 years old he heard the news of the execution of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette of France, and that he served as a soldier in the Turkish army in 1798 when the Turks successfully barred the march of Napoleon from Egypt through Palestine toward India.

During his visit to Paris, before coming to the United States, it was reported that he had "no official documents with stamps or seals to prove his unusual age," but upon his arrival at Providence, R. I., last July he was photographed "exhibiting his birth certificate which is dated February 16, 1774." As a result of the publicity which this venerable Turk has received, some even more remarkable cases of longevity have been reported. One is a Chinaman, for whom the claim of being 163 years old has been set forth. Another is Ivan Proskuniak, a Russian peasant, who is claimed to be 170 and is said to have been discovered last year by Henri Barbusse, the French author, in the course of a long trip through the Ural countains in Russia, M. Barbusse in reported to have declared that "Ivan Proskuniak is an even better preserved specimen of humanity than Zaro Agha. Ivan has all his teeth, eats goulash peppered with powerful spices and chews tobacco, while Zaro can only manage milk and goat's cheese for his diet."

But the prize winner so far is another Chinaman if we are to believe the following story which appeared in the New York World recently:

"That lively young man from Turkey, Zaro Agha, who claims a mere 156 years of life, must surrender his longevity laurels without a struggle if the life story of Li Chung-yun, whose fame reaches these shores from far off China, is ever authenticated. For Li claims to have entered this world 252 years ago and grown to the prime of manhood 96 years before Zaro was given his first nursing bot-

Nor does Li concede a thing to the playboy of Istambul in the matter of matrimonial prowess. He claims to have buried 23 wives before taking his twenty-fourth bride, while Zaro led but 11 to the altar.

"One record young Mr. Agha may be welcome to retain as far as Li is concerned: the Turk's claim to be the only man alive who has survived 156 years without a single drink stronger than goat's milk to sustain him is not challenged by the 252-year-old Chinaman. He has never kept track of how much rice wine he may have consumed in the last two and a half centuries,

"But Li, like Zaro, does confine himself to his own particular diet, and the item in it which he attributes his hardihood is ginseng root.

"Lest any reader be incredulous of Li's age let us hasten to add that it is vouched for by that eminent scholar, General Pei-fu, who also qualifies as a full-fledged ex-war lord, having captured Pelping after the custom of great military figures in his native land and having once brought all North China under his sway. Fu occasionally takes his pen in hand.

"According to Fu, at whose home the venerable Li lived for some time, the latter is 'an educated man and still possesses a virile mind.' In fact, he recently delivered a series of lectures at the University of Changtu on the art of life in general, with particular emphasis on how to get the most out of each century.

"Li, who eats nothing but herbs, disbelieves strongly in any form of strenuous exercise. 'Golf is the shortest way to a short life,' he told one of his audiences. When he was 217, he added, he himseif tried half an hour of tennis, which he regrets to this day, feeling that it shortened his life span at least a decade. A life of harmony in spirit and soul is the essence of his teaching.

"Prof. Wu Chung-chieh, dean of the department of education at Changtu university, has barned, it is reported, tive of Seneca county, New York,

offer his arm to a woman when crossing a mean spot in the road than to think of taking hers. His memory is comments when not serious are colored by a sense of humor that a man half his age might envy." Ex-Senator Cole died November 3,

in his case is clear. But considering seems remarkable that in 1924 many troit Free Press. newspapers printed the picture of "Maj. Edward James Monroe, son of the fifth President of the United States, who is feeling fit at the age of 109." The only difficulty with this story is that President Monroe had two daughters but no son!

is sun browned and unwrinkled. He is

active and robust and will sooner

Stories of persons who claim to have lived more than 100 years are numerous, but few of these cases will stand up under rigid investigation, acording to James A. Toby, writing in a recent issue of the Scientific American, who says that the age of a very old person seems to be one of the matters most susceptible to deviation from the truth, for memories are usually hazy in the extremely old, and the relatives, friends, and neighbors of these patriarchs seem always ready to exaggerate their antiquity.

He then cites numerous examples of longevity which proved to be greatly exaggerated. A few years ago a Kentuckian named John Shell received considerable notoriety as being 131 years of age, but a somewhat searching inquiry revealed him to be not more than 100, if he were even

In 1904 a Russian newspaper calmly reported the death at the advanced age of 180 of a woman named Therese Abalva, Another Russian newspaper in 1926 was more modest, for it allotted only 138 years to Ivan Tretya, a peasant of Rostov. A Hungarian farmer, Peter Zortay or Torton, exceeded them all for he was supposed to have been 185 when he died in 1724; as was also St. Monagh, whose death occurred in 1781. Some months ago Henri Barbusse, the French author, recounted his visit in Georgia in Transcaucasia to Nikolai Andreyevitch Shapkovsky, who was reputed to be between 142 and 147.

One of the most famous of the very aged persons of history was Old Parr, who was said to have been born in England in 1483 and to have died there in 1635. He was working as a farm laborer at the age of 152 when an interested nobleman, the earl of Arundel, took him to London and put him on exhibition where he died a short time later. John Taylor, known as the "Water Poet," got out a book called "The Olde, Olde, Very Olde man," in which he extolled this long life in prose and verse.

Thomas Parr was said to have beer married at 120, and after the suitable interval to have become the father of a child. When he died in 1635, the celebrated William Harvey, discover er of the circulation of the blood, per formed an autopsy on him and found his general condition good, though the brain cells were somewhat worn. A reprint of Taylor's book was issued by James Caulfield of London in 1794

Old Parr's unusual age was accepted until 1873 when W. J. Thoms, deputy librarian of the house of lords, made a real investigation of the case and concluded that about fifty years had been improperly tacked on to the actual life of Parr. The gentleman was a real centenarian, but little more than that.

Mr. Thoms also exposed two other notorious long-lifers. A certain countess of Desmond was credited with 140 years, but the doubting librarian showed that the ages of two separate countesses of the same name had been added together; instead of one person living to 140 years, two women had each lived about 70.

A writer familiar with Mr. Thom's iconoclasm on this subject, a John B. Bailey, wrote a book in 1888 which he called "Modern Methuselahs," and in it he cited a number of instances of well-known centenarians.

He began with St. Anthony, who was said to have lived to 105, but most of his other examples, such as the Emperor Cantacuzenus of the Fourteenth century, Pletho, Cornaro, Titian, De Fontenelle and Amory, were only 99 or 100. The author, however, did list a dozen cases which he believed to have been actually 100 years old or more.

(@ by Western Newspaper Union.)



Upkeep Cost Lessened

by Good Construction Living rent free by owning one's home is a fine thing, but living upkeep free in that same home is an entirely

different matter. Of course, nothing of a material nature is permanent, but the natural life of any material used in the construction of a home can be prolonged through proper care and treatment.

If in our homes we desire to keep down upkeep, it is necessary first to use good materials and to have then assembled according to good construction methods. Few home builders are familiar enough with materials and methods to write their own specifications and to see that the terms of the specifications are carried out. For these reasons alone, although there are others, the services of an archi-

tect should be engaged.

Never was there such an opportunity to build into a home permanence and quality as exists now. Research, carried on continuously, has brought the standard of building materials of surprising, his outlook young, and his a level probably beyond the comprehension of our forefathers. It is now possible for a manufacturer to guarantee his product whether it be tile, brick, cement, heating system, plumb-1924, at the age of 102. The record ing fixtures and fittings, or paint. All of which has brought to us better the fact that it would have been easy homes at lower prices, if we go about enough to check up on the facts, it getting them in the right way .- De-

Not Enough Attention Given to Roof's Effect

Oftentimes the greatest need of an old house is a modern, up-to-date roof. Many old dwellings have patchwork roofs. An addition or the porch of one of the houses may have a roof that differs in every respect, coloring. material and designs, from the roof

which covers the main building. This patchwork effect spoils the appearance of the residence. In this day when there is such a wide choice of roofing material the property owner will experience small difficulty in planning a new roof which will harmonize with the style of architecture of the old house and add to the appearance of the building at the same time.

Building Art Improving

For 75 years or more builders of moderately priced homes have built just houses, sadly lacking in architectural style and beauty. The older portions of nearly every city and town prove this, for in these sections rows of houses stand, as out of date as the leg of mutton sleeve.

With these thoughts in mind a short walk through such a section makes us glad that there is a renaissance in interest in architecture so far as the small dwelling is concerned. We have but to walk on to the outskirts of the town to see this in the trim, well-designed houses recently built. The debt we all owe to the architect and the value of the stock plan services which make good designs available at low cost is evident.

Wide Entrances Needed

The growth of large cities, which includes a considerable area about them, has revealed no need more urgent than that of wider thoroughfares leading into the population centers. In many places the widening of these highways already has progressed to a marked degree. Notable examples are found about such centers as Los Angeles, Detroit and Chicago. In the metropolitan area of Chicago plans now are being agitated for the widening of nearly 900 miles of road. It is one of the chief projects of the regional association which is concerned with an area having a radius of 50 miles or more about the city.

Lawn "Entrance Hall"

An open stretch of well-kept grass is necessary to properly balance the mass of architecture which the front of the house presents. This lawn area should be broken up as little as possible. Keeping the entrance, walk and drive to one side or the other will aid immeasurably, though if the walk must cross the lawn it should appear as inconspicuous as possible by using soft-toned materials.

Plantings of evergreen, shrubs and shade trees should be kept to the boundary lines or about the foundation of the house. Then will the outof-doors entrance hall extend a real welcome to those who enter it.

Highways and Towns

People are fast learning that while a main highway within easy access is an advantage it is likely to be a liability when it passes through the town. Through-town main highways are getting into the same class with railroad grade crossings, to be avoided when possible, endured where they must be and cured where they can be.

Home Ownership Gaining

Home owners are gaining on home renters by more than 3 per cent annually. Of the 24,000,000 homes in the United States, 11,000,000 are occupied by their owners, and the total will be increased greatly within the next few years.

Needs Help

Good roads do not necessarily make a town. The town has got to make itself.-Country Home.

Vets Recall Memories of Ban on "Blackjack"

Veterans who knew General Pershing when he first was called "Black Jack," back in the days of the Philippine insurrection, answered to roll call in the Baltimore War memorial recently and organized the Maryland branch of the Eighth Army Corps association.

While all of those present did not serve under the man who was to become the commander of the American troops in the World war, they recall General Pershing's famous order prohibiting the playing of the game of blackjack in his troop of the Fifth cavalry.

They told how news of the order, which was posted on the company bulletin board, spread throughout the island army and was laughed at by such men as Harboard, Summerall, Ligget and others who a few years later were to become famous in their own right .- Baltimore Sun.

One of Oldest Legends,

That of Wandering Jew How long the story of the "Wandering Jew" has been in circulation, and what was its origin, are questions on which there is no evidence to base replies. But it is certain that from the period of its first writing it became more prevalent than ever in various homes.

It was not till after that the aspect of eternal wandering was introduced, and this was possibly encouraged by the fact that at intervals persons claiming to be the original "Wander- Chicago Beautiful. 50 colored views \$1. 50 ing Jew" made their appearance in different parts of Europe.

According to the Italian astrologer Guido Bonnati, the wanderer passed through Forli in 1267. Philip of Novara, a famous jurist who resided for a long time in Jerusalem, writing in 1250, refers to one Jehan Boute Dieu as one proverbially long-lived. suggesting that the legend was then well established in Jerusalem.

Crop Rotation Ancient

The principles of soil cultivation, which are included under the term "scientific farming," were known to the farmers of the most ancient times, according to H. W. Warner, writing in the Farm Journal.

"The principle of crop rotation was known and practiced to some extent more than three thousand years ago," he says. "We find application of lime to the soil mentioned in writings dating well before the Christian era. The early white settlers of New England found the Indians fertilizing corn, and artificial fertilization with guano was practiced by the Incas in South America 20 centuries ago."

Hopeless

A certain motion-picture star was receiving the condolences of friends after his third picture in succession had "flopped." The reason, poor stories, was patently apparent. The star was inclined to take the matter philosophically. He shrugged his shoulders and said with mock grav-

"Spare your pity, my friends. Everything in life eventually adjusts itself, except a bow tie."

Controls Watershed Forest

Seattle has acquired control of approximately 90,000 acres of land for safeguarding its municipal watershed, says the American Tree association. Although the principal object is watershed protection, the area has been placed under the supervision of a trained forester with a view to continuous timber production.

Complex Typewriter

Japanese typewriters have 7.026 characters. The operator has a directory and chart at his elbow to help him find unusual letters or signs. Good writers average 60 words a minute, which is as fast as handwriting. And tucked away in one corner of the machine is the English alphabet, which may be used at will.-Capper's Weekly,

Convincing Evidence Betty-I understand George has

quit college. Polly-Are you sure?

Botty-Well, I saw him in a haberdashery buying garters.-Brooklyn

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Goethe Remembered

"Frankfort-on-Main is full of remarkable sights.-Goethe," reads a cancellation stamp which postal authorities there have adopted to advertise the city. The quotation is from the great writer's "Dichtung und Wahrheit."

Not a Heart Breaker Another peculiarity is that no financially poor man ever breaks a heart .- Arkansas Gazette.



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