

Supreme Span of Human Life Is Somewhere Between 100-110 Years

Census Bureau's Latest Annual Mortality Statistics Contains an Interesting Chapter on Centenarians.

Washington, D. C., May 20.—A chapter concerning reported centenarians is contained in the census bureau's latest annual mortality statistics report prepared by chief statistician, Dr. Cressy L. Wilbur of the division of vital statistics.

The report affirms that it is undoubtedly true that the age of 100 years is occasionally attained. It suggests that it is perhaps doubtful whether, as shown by incontrovertible evidence the age of 110 has ever been reached or exceeded. This would, it is stated, set the possible longevity of man or the extreme span of human life somewhere between 100 and 110 years.

Dr. Wilbur declares that it would be a feat of vast interest to humanity if it were true that a human being could live 150 or 160, or 180 years, or even 120, or 110 years, as established by exact observation. The capability of the bodily mechanism would be tested and it might be inferred that, with better hygiene, superior eugenics, and proper methods of living the extreme limit of life might more frequently be attained and that after many generations the average age of humanity might perhaps approximate to this limit.

The report goes on to show that up to very recent times the most incredible reports, the most inaccurate statements, and the most uncritical methods of study have been believed. Since Thoms' investigations in 1873 great skepticism has arisen in the minds of many in regard to the reputed ages of centenarians and, the report declares, some have even stated that there were no actual cases of centenarians on record in spite of the official returns of population and deaths to that effect.

As an example of the uncertainty attaching to individual statements of extreme longevity, the case of the oldest reported decedent is cited. The death was that of Noah Raby, known as the "oldest man in the country," and it occurred in the year 1904. Reference to the census office transcript which was returned by the state registrar of New Jersey, shows that the original death certificate related to the death of Noah Raby, stated to have occurred in Middlesex county on March 1, 1904, at the age of 131 years and 11 months. The conjugal condition of the decedent was not stated; the birthplace of the decedent and the birthplace of his mother were given as "U. S." The birthplace of father was not stated; and the cause of death was given as "senility"—an entirely unsatisfactory statement in this case.

Dr. Wilbur then observes that in the index catalogue of the library of the surgeon general's office, United States army, second series, Volume IX, under the title of "Longevity," may be found the following reference: "Centenarians and more; (Sophia Gab, aged 129; Noah Raby, 131 years 11 months) Med. Rec., N. Y., 1904, LK.V. 384." The issue of the New York Medical Record of March 5, 1904, contained the following item:

"Centenarians and more—Sophia Gab, probably the oldest woman in Chicago, died there last week. She was supposed to be 129 years old. Born a slave, she spent most of her life on a plantation near Richmond, Va. When released from slavery during the civil war she was 87 years old. A still more remarkable story of longevity is contained in the notice of the death of Noah Raby in New Brunswick, N. J., on March 1. It is asserted, with much circumstantiality, that he was born in Gates county, North Carolina, on April 1 (significant date), 1772, so that had he lived one month longer he would have been 132 years old. He entered the United States navy about as soon as the United States had a navy, and after serving for a number of years was honorably discharged in 1809. He never married, but had smoked and chewed tobacco for 122 years and had at one time been a heavy drinker."

Search was made of the record of the navy department and a report was made by Surgeon F. L. Pleadwell of the bureau of medicine and surgery, that "a Noah Raby has been found on the rolls of the Constitution in 1839, when that ship was under the command of Captain Bolton, so it is possible that the report of his discharge from the navy as being 1800 is pure legend. There may have been of course two Noah Rabys."

The census report then goes on to state that the enumerators' returns of the twelfth census, June 1, 1900, show that Mr. Raby was then an inmate of the Pleasantway township almshouse, and his age at last birthday 128 years, and the month and year of birth April, 1772, as given in these returns correspond with the age subsequently stated upon his certificate of death. His birthplace, as well as that of his father and of his mother, is given as North Carolina; his conjugal condition as single; and under the head of education it is stated that he could read but could not

write. At the eleventh census, June 1, 1890, Mr. Raby's age at nearest birthday was given as 117 years, the other particulars being the same as stated in 1900, except that his mother's birthplace was stated as Pennsylvania. No record was found of Mr. Raby among the inmates of the almshouse at the tenth census, 1880, but his name appears among those there enumerated at the ninth census, 1870. In the returns for this census his age at last birthday was stated to be 59 years and not 98 years as it should have been if the subsequent statements as to his age were correct, and his birthplace was given as South Carolina and not North Carolina. Birthplaces of parents were not reported in the ninth census. It appears not unlikely that the statement of age made in 1870 was at least approximately correct, so that at the time of his death at an advanced age March 1, 1904, he was over 90 years old (92 years and 11 months if the statement of age made in 1870 is precise, and not an actual centenarian at all, much less the "oldest man in the country.")

The report later on states that it would be impracticable for the bureau of the census to determine the truth in regard to all unusual ages which are received upon the official transcripts of deaths, and that the state or city offices be expected to investigate all such cases. Indeed the evidence necessary for conclusive proof of extreme longevity in any given case may be extremely difficult to procure even when the facts exist. This is true for European countries as shown by Thoms and Young, and is even more true for the United States, for a great part of which even at the present day there is no complete registration of births. The statements in regard to the ages of decedents are made by the informants and can not as a rule be questioned or rejected by registration officials. Such statements are undoubtedly in the vast majority of cases believed to be correct by the persons who reported them, and when officially registered become like the other statements upon the certificate of death, prima facie evidence of the facts. Any statement upon a certificate of death may, however, be refuted by sufficient evidence of its untruthfulness. It is well known that many statements of exact age even in the middle period of life and in youth, are not strictly correct. In old age, with impaired memory, with possible unintentional confusion of what has been heard and what has been actually experienced by the individual in regard to the events of early years, after the death of contemporaries whose testimony might contradict claims to excessive longevity and with the well known tendency of many aged persons to exaggerate in the utmost good faith, the number of years they have lived, it is not at all surprising that many unfounded claims to extreme old age arise. The deaths of centenarians reported by the census are too few to vitiate seriously the statistics, even if in every case the age was incorrectly stated, and they are therefore shown just as they were returned.

A GREAT BATTLE.

The One Known in History as the "Victory of Victories."

The battle which is known in history as the "Victory of Victories" took place at Nehavend, in Ecbatana, and was fought between the new Moslem power in 637 and the empire of Persia, then one of the most powerful of the eastern monarchies. It was one of the most absolutely decisive battles in the history of war, and it was all the more amazing by reason of the fact that it was won by a people who twenty years before had been unknown barbarians, lost in the deserts of Arabia.

Arabian historians place the Persian loss in a single day at 300,000 men killed. This may be and probably is an exaggeration, but the fact remains that the Persian dynasty came to an end when the battle was over and that Zoroastrianism, which had been the religion of Persia for over a thousand years, was at once supplanted by Islam. Its modern representatives, as is well known, are now the Parsees of India.

The victory was so absolutely decisive that it extended the Arabian dominions over the whole of the region lying between the Caspian sea and the Indian ocean. With the exception perhaps of the battle of Tours, no single fight ever made such a difference in the after history of the world.

An Indignant Poet.

Beranger, the famous French poet, whose greatest gift lay in writing little poems which he called songs, was particularly dependent upon the chance visits of the muse.

He was once visited by the author and academician Viennet, who said to him:

"You must have written several songs since I saw you last."

"I have only begun one," answered Beranger.

"Only one? I am astonished!" exclaimed Viennet.

Beranger became indignant.

"Tuppli!" he shouted. "Do you think one can turn off a song as one turns off a tragedy?"

It is difficult to realize that in the fiscal year, 1908, the railroads of the United States killed, in addition to passengers, 3,470 of their own employees. When three or four hundred persons perish in some steamboat disaster or theater fire, the world stands aghast at the calamity. Yet our railways have brought about an average of 328 deaths each month since 1903. Many a tiny little city has fewer adult male inhabitants than the 4,534 employees whom our railroads killed in 1907.—June McClure.

LARGE INTERESTS SULKING IN TENT MERELY TO SPIE

Opposed to What Beveridge Stands for, But It Cannot Be Seen What Gain Is Made By Defeating Him.

KERN MORE RADICAL THAN BEVERIDGE IS

Democratic Nominee Would Stand for Many Things Beveridge Does and for Many Things He Doesn't.

(Palladium Special)

Indianapolis, May 20.—If there are factional troubles in the ranks of the republicans in Indiana they are nothing when compared with the troubles that beset the democrats. And it is well known that the republicans have a happy way of getting together in time for the election, no matter how hard they fight beforehand. On the other hand when the democrats get into trouble among themselves their troubles never cease, not even on election day. They keep right on fighting after the battle is over.

No one need attempt to disguise the fact that there is a serious condition in the republican camp in Indiana. Inurgency is abroad in the state and the large interests that have always come to the front in former years and supplied the sinews of war with which to carry on campaigns are, many of them, sulking in their tents this year. No one is expecting them to do anything this year to help elect Senator Beveridge to another term in the senate. They are opposed to what he stands for. And yet observers of the situation cannot understand how they expect to better themselves by defeating him.

Kern No Protectionist.

"John Kern would favor all of the things that Senator Beveridge favors and he would go much further and favor many things which Senator Beveridge could not support," said one republican, yesterday. "Then why should the interests oppose Beveridge and lend their aid to help elect Kern? When it comes to the tariff question, Senator Beveridge is a protectionist of the first water. You could not drive him away from that belief. He differs with some of the interests on the question of whether it is the people or the interests which shall be pro-

A Most Horrible Condition

Related by E. G. Moore, Whose Reputation for Truthfulness Is Unquestioned.

As so many people of this country are taking Root Juice these days, and as a majority of them, after taking a bottle or two of it praise it very highly, those who have not tried the medicine are doubting the great good it is doing will last. However, they have no cause to do so, as there are many living proofs throughout the country of the lasting good results from the Root Juice treatment.

That Root Juice is making hundreds of those who are taking it, feel much better, no one doubts. If those who are rapidly improving under the treatment could have a talk with E. G. Moore of Rural Route Number 9, Fort Wayne, Ind., (a man whose word is not doubted by those who know him) they would be convinced that the great good Root Juice is doing, is lasting. Mr. Moore said: "Three years ago my wife was in a horrible condition. She suffered a long time with her stomach and kidneys. Several doctors treated her, but all of the doctors and medicines failed to do any good. She was almost a living skeleton, and a bundle of nerves. Her stomach was so sore and weak that the slightest foods would lie in it and ferment, causing gas to form and bloat her up as tight as a drum. When she commenced to take Root Juice she was too weak to feed herself, and was living on liquid diet, but after taking the medicine a short while she gradually began to eat solid foods, and take on flesh and strength. The remedy seemed to soothe her nerves, and in a short while she could sleep like a baby, and her sleep was refreshing. The medicine soon had her up and around. That was about three years ago, and her stomach continues to be all right. Her appetite is good, and she can eat anything she wishes and digest it."

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pected, but he could not be induced to abandon the protective theory.

"Kern is not a protectionist by any manner of means. He stands on the democratic platform which declares for tariff for revenue only, and I am sure that the interests do not want that policy adopted. The only thing I see that the opponents of Senator Beveridge can hope to accomplish if they keep up their fight to defeat him would be to elect some other republican. But this is not at all likely, because the state convention has already declared for the re-election of Beveridge, and wherever you see a candidate for the legislature nominated you find him declaring for Beveridge. There is only one source from which danger to Beveridge may be sensed, and that is from J. Frank Hanly. It is well remembered that Beveridge defeated Hanly for senator eleven years ago, and Hanly has treasured up a hatred for him ever since. Hanly has a following in Indiana which, while unknown as to size, is certainly large.

What Hanly Could Do. It may be large enough to enable him to swing it against Beveridge with effect. Now, suppose the republicans were to have a small majority on joint ballot in the next legislature when the United States senator is to be elected. Suppose they had a majority of ten or twelve. This would be sufficient, of course, to elect Beveridge if all of the republicans would stand pat for him. But suppose Hanly were able this fall to elect to the legislature five or six members whom he could control, and suppose he would tell them to vote for some other republican and not for Beveridge. Then Beveridge could not be elected without the aid of democrats, and it is not reasonable to suppose that democratic members would vote for him.

"Under such circumstances Hanly might be able to prevent the re-election of Beveridge, and there are those who believe that Hanly's dislike for Beveridge is strong enough to prompt him to do this very thing. This appears to me to be the only menace to Beveridge's chances."

Hanly has written letters to the various republican state candidates and to Senator Beveridge asking them where they stand on the question of the repeal of the county option law. It is known too, that he and the Anti-Saloon league are working to bring about the nomination of candidates for the legislature who will oppose the repeal of that law. The fear of some republicans is that in picking out the candidates who will take this stand on the liquor question Hanly may also see to it that these candidates, or at least some of them, will agree to do his bidding also on the senatorship.

Strong for Beveridge. While this is the possibility it is not believed that such an attempt will be

made or that it could be put over even if attempted. The Beveridge sentiment seems to be so strong that nothing could affect it, provided the republicans carry the legislature.

But the democrats are having their troubles. The only strong support which the democrats can count on just now is from the brewers and the brewers do not care whether John Kern goes to the United States senate or not. What they are after is the legislature. They will use every possible effort to elect members of the legislature, both democrats and republicans, who will be in favor of the repeal of the county option law above everything else. They will not leave anything undone to carry this point. They are ready to make all kinds of trades or deals to bring this about.

It is reported here that in one of the largest counties in the Sixth district the democrats have nominated a wet candidate and the republicans a dry candidate for the legislature. It is said that an agreement has been reached by which the dry republican, if elected will vote for a bill to substitute some other kind of liquor law for the local option law in return for the support of the brewers at the election, and that the wet democrat has agreed in return that if elected he will vote for Beveridge for re-election if his vote is required to elect him. This would be in return for certain republican support. This story does not sound very good, but it shows the kind of talk that is going around and the kind of deals that are put over at times like these.

Fleming Wouldn't Cry. There has also been a general belief that Steve Fleming, of Fort Wayne, president of the State Brewers association, would not cry his eyes out if Kern were defeated for senator. He has not liked Kern for years, ever since Kern kept him from being elected chairman of the democratic state committee several years ago. It is true that Fleming cast the vote of Allen county for Kern at the recent state convention, but he did it merely as a hand wagon rush to get on the winning side. Another thing that may find a place in Fleming's mind is that if a democratic legislature is elected it may bolt Kern and elect Tom Taggart unless Kern can either make good on his charge that eight democratic members of the legislature were bribed to vote against him in 1909 or else back up and admit that he does not know who they were. Fleming would not be a bit better pleased with Taggart as senator than with Kern. So, so far as the senatorship itself is concerned, it is believed that Fleming would not care whether the legislature was democratic or not, so long as it would be a legislature that would re-

peal the county option law and enact a new one along the lines laid down in the democratic state platform.

In Marion county the democrats are shot to pieces. The old Taggart machine has attempted to dictate the county ticket as well as the candidates for the legislature, and there is a fight on that bids fair to bring disaster. A large number of the old Taggart followers are now fighting the machine with all their strength. The machine is seeking to put them down and out and they will not stand for it. The machine has made up a slate composed of one gambler, one ex-saloon keeper, and some others of that kind, and the better element of the party is up in arms. By the time the nominations are made the party will be split into a thousand splinters in this county.

So when it comes to trouble in the ranks, the trouble is not monopolized by either side. It is a peculiar situation. Both sides are fighting around their own firesides.

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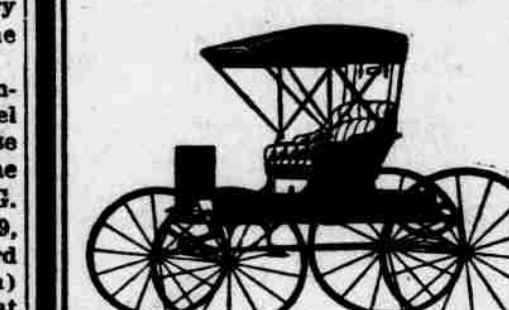
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-BURGLARY-
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