

BEAT LOTTERY OF DEATH.

AN INCIDENT OF THE CIVIL WAR.

During the great Civil War hundreds of brave soldiers who participated in that memorable conflict had very narrow escapes from death, but of them all none was more miraculous or thrilling than that of Captain John M. Flinn, a Shelbyville, Ind., boy, who commanded company F of the Fifty-first Indiana Infantry and who through a most mysterious agency succeeded in escaping the penalty of death after he had drawn a "black bean" in the lottery of death and his execution at the orders of the Confederate general whose captive he was seemed inevitable.

The story of how Captain Flinn was imprisoned at Libby prison, of how he was one of a number of Union officers who had to draw in the lottery of death, of how he with one other drew a death prize as indicated by a black bean, of how on the very hour set for his execution he was given a ten days' reprieve and of how at the end of that period he finally through a mysterious agency escaped the death penalty—all these incidents form a most remarkable story, which is passing strange and in its very truth is even stranger than fiction.

Among the thousands of hoosier boys who volunteered in the Union army was John M. Flinn, a Shelbyville youth, who enlisted first in company C, Seventh Indiana Infantry, and later on Oct. 11, 1861, became first lieutenant of company F, Fifty-first Indiana. He became captain of the same company on Nov. 1, 1862.

Early in the year 1863, shortly after he was promoted to the captaincy of his company, Flinn was captured along with a number of other Union soldiers at the battle of Day's gap and Crooked creek, near Gaylesville, Ala., and confined in a rebel prison.

Shortly afterward he was removed to

Libby prison. The rattle of chains and the grating of the ponderous iron door of the cell which they occupied aroused them. Looking up they recognized Captain Turner, a Confederate officer, as he entered and announced that all Union officers then imprisoned were expected to "line up" for inspection.

This was on the morning of July 6, 1863, and the announcement made to all the officers who were in prison created no little excitement. At first, catching at the slightest straw which gives promise of freedom, just as the imprisoned criminal catches at every straw which he thinks might make him free, the officers thought they were to be exchanged or discharged. Consequently they "lined up" rather cheered by the prospect.

Their bright hopes for freedom, however, were soon dispelled when all the captains from among the prisoners were summoned to the lower room of the prison. There, instead of hearing an order read for their release or exchange, they were confronted with the startling news that a special order had been issued by the Confederate war department that two captains should be selected by lot to be executed in retaliation for the execution of two Confederate officers by General Ambrose E. Burnside a short time before.

The Union captains, who with death-like stillness listened to the reading of the order, were amazed and dumfounded. What could it mean? What was to be done? What was the reason for the order? Would the rebel informer explain its full meaning to them?

These and other questions flashed through their minds and when replies were asked for Captain Turner, who had charge of the prison, refused to enlighten them. Instead, he cold-heartedly and calmly asked them:

granted them a reprieve of ten days.

Years afterward, in relating the incident to his friend, Lieutenant James M. Strading, who contributes an article to a recent number of McClure's Magazine telling the story of this "Lottery of Death," Captain Sawyer said:

"The cart moved on and the bishop hurried at a rapid pace to interview President Davis. The bishop was mounted on a full-blooded and a very spirited horse and he seemed to us to go like the wind when he started for the residence of his friend. We moved on to a small hill on which was a single tree and to this tree the cart took its way. When the tree was reached ropes were placed around our necks and we were doomed to be hanged. This would have been an ignominious death if we had been guilty of any crime punishable by death, but we had committed no crime and yet we did not want to die in that way. We had a slight ray of hope in the bishop's intercession for us, but it was too slight to allay our fears for the worst.

"I was so weak that the tree and the guards seemed to be moving in a circle around me. We stood up in the cart so when it moved away we would dangle between the earth and sky and in this way our existence was to end. No courier from the bishop was in sight and the suspense was terrible for us to bear. The Confederate officer took out his watch and informed us that while his instructions were to have us executed before noon he would wait until one minute of 12 and then if there was no sign of a courier the cart would be driven away and the arbitrary orders of the war department of the southern Confederacy would be obeyed.

"Half-past 11 arrived and yet no signs of any courier from the bishop. Our legs became so weak that we could not stand any longer, so we requested that we might be permitted to sit down in the cart until the time for us to be executed arrived. Then we would stand up and the ropes could be adjusted to our necks and the execution concluded. The ropes were then unfixed and we were permitted to sit down on the side of the cart. Ten minutes more passed in dead silence, and yet no eye could detect any signs of a courier. At the end of another ten minutes we stood up and the ropes were adjusted to our necks and the Confederate officer was raising his sword as a sign to the driver to move away when a cloud of dust was observed in the distance and the Confederate officer hesitated for a few moments, when a horseman white with dust and his horse covered with foam dashed up to the officer and handed him a dispatch. He opened it and quickly read: 'Captains Sawyer and Flinn are reprieved for ten days.' I never felt so happy in my life, and Flinn and I embraced each other and cried like babies. The ropes were then unfixed and the cart started slowly back for Libby prison. Our comrades were greatly rejoiced to see us return alive and made many inquiries concerning the postponement of the execution."

It was not long after their return to Libby prison that word was sent back home by the captains that they had but ten days to live. As soon as the word was received Captain Sawyer's wife went to Washington and personally reported the matter to President Lincoln.

To the kind-hearted president, who loved his people dearly and who ever was ready to help one in trouble, the news was both startling and shocking. After studying the matter over during that night he told the woman next morning to return to her home and that he would do what he could.

And he did do what he could. He saved the lives of the two condemned captains.

Knowing that the two Confederates who had previously been executed by General Burnside, and because of which execution Captains Flinn and Sawyer were to be executed, had really been deserving of their fate, and knowing, too, that Captains Flinn and Sawyer were innocent, he delivered a message to the Confederate agent for the exchange of the prisoners to the effect that if the two men were hanged he would at once order that General W. H. F. Lee, son of General Robert E. Lee and then a federal prisoner, would be immediately executed.

The order created consternation among the Confederate authorities. But it had its desired result. Word was at once sent to Libby prison to the effect that Captains Flinn and Sawyer were not to be executed.

President Lincoln had saved their lives.

Following this the captains were confined in the dungeon of Libby prison for twenty days, when they were relieved and placed upon an equal footing with the other officers who were imprisoned.

They remained thus prisoners until March of the following year, when they were exchanged for General W. H. F. Lee and Captain R. H. Tyler, of the Confederate army, both of whom had been federal prisoners for several months.

After that Captain Flinn returned to his company and served until the close of the war, when he was mustered out with his regiment. The great struggle ended, the captain returned to

his home in Shelbyville, Ind. For the next few years until his death, Aug. 5, 1872, he was a familiar figure in and around Shelbyville. At the time of his death he was forty years old. He left a widow and one daughter. The daughter died several years ago, but the widow is still living in Indiana.—Chicago Chronicle.

HOW TO GAIN IN HEIGHT.

Machine to Stretch the Body—Will It Stay Stretched?

"Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" is a question contained in Christ's sermon on the Mount which has generally been regarded as unanswerable, says the New York Tribune. The Hebrew cubit was equal to about twenty-two inches, and the problem involved in making such a gain as that was enough to discourage any one. But there are two men in Colorado to-day who by taking thought have contrived a machine by which, they declare, a gratifying number of inches may be added to the height of any person who will be satisfied with something less than a foot. The originators of this method are Profs. David B. Cropp, former physical director of the State University of Colorado, and Fordyce P. Cleaves, of Denver.

In using this body-extending machine the patient lies down upon the framework and is securely fastened to it by straps around the head and feet. At his right hand there is a lever by which he extends the machine and thus submits his body to whatever extreme of stretching he desires, using the lever to apply more power or relieve the strain at will. The machine extends like a dining table, from the middle both ways, and by means of the straps around head and feet the pressure is applied evenly along the body.

The user submits himself to whatever stretching force he wishes and takes the exercise as often as he pleases and for as long. The best results have been attained when the pressure is applied daily for periods of thirty minutes at a time. The idea is that the patient shall have a machine in his room and take the stretching each night before retiring. The construction of the machine is calculated to draw out the spine and hold it extended sufficiently long for nature to start building, to conform with the new situation. Persisting in the exercise for three months is deemed sufficient to bring results. Some persons have their height increased two to three inches, the inventors declare.

A Stranger in Town.

Fifteen miles below the head of the passes of the Mississippi, and not far from where Southwest Pass loses itself in the Gulf of Mexico, a little stream no wider than a village street curves away from the main "pass." Along both sides are tiny landings, and back of each there is a cottage. The cottages are now neglected and forlorn, but once they were palm-shaded, rose-guarded and lovely. There, in the days when Southwest Pass was the principal mouth of the Mississippi, dwelt the pilots who carried ships across the bar.

"Old Pilot-town" is hidden from the traveler on the pass by a dense cane-brake, and strangers seldom enter it from its bayou. One who did came down the river in a skiff, and turned into "Old Pilot-town Bayou" at noon for dinner. He found a ready meal at the first cottage, where dwelt an old woman, widow of one of the old-time pilots. As the meal progressed, one by one interested neighbors dropped in to see the stranger, till a dozen were braced against the walls.

"How many people live here now, Mrs. B?" asked the visitor. "I thought the bayou was rather deserted."

Mrs. B. looked round the room and took account of stock.

"You can count them for your-self," she said. "They're all here."

No Holiday.

People have different ideas as to what constitutes a holiday—or a vacation. Mrs. Pettis had her own firmly fixed opinions on the subject.

"I don't count Thanksgiving or Christmas or Washington's Birthday or any of those, holidays," she said, frankly, to an old friend one day. "What I count a holiday is when Ezra and Jim and Bob and 'Liphlet go off up to the wood-lot with their dinner, and I know they won't be back till night."

"I'm not one to deny that men folks have their good points, but how any woman can call it a holiday when they're in the house, calling for food by looks when they aren't by words, is beyond me!"

Thinning Down the Congregation.

"I notice that the Rev. Dr. Hills says it's wrong to go to church in an automobile."

"I s'pose he's thinkin' of the church-goers on foot who are likely to be run over before the automobile gets there."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Philosophy.

Miss Emerson—Have you read Kant?

Miss Achison—No, but I've read "Don't."—Cleveland Leader.

OLD Favorites

Hohenlinden.

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Isar, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight
When the drum beat, at the dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neighed,
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven,
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Isar, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun,
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave!
Who rush to glory or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part where many meet;
The snow shall be their winding sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulcher.
—Thomas Campbell.

ONCE UPON A TIME.

First Railroad Train Isn't So Old as Youngsters Sometimes Think.

Did you go to the St. Louis fair? If you did, and you failed to see the railroad exhibit you missed a wonderfully interesting part of "the show." You missed seeing what may be called the evolution or development of that wonderful invention, the railroad engine. The trouble is that the boys and girls of to-day are so accustomed to the railroad that they think little of all that it represents. Some of them may be like a little girl I happen to know, who once said:

"Why, papa, didn't we always have railroads?"

Just ask your grandparents about that. I have an idea that some of them will tell you that they were men and women long before they ever saw a railroad engine. A man but forty-five years old told me the other day that he walked ten miles with some other boys when he was ten years old to see a railroad train.

It has not been so very many years since the most intelligent men and women laughed and even jeered at the mere idea of people riding at the rate of fifteen or twenty miles an hour. When George Stephenson first began to talk about inventing an engine to be run on lines of wooden or iron track, the people looked upon him as a dreamer, a visionary who might not be quite "right in his head."

But this George Stephenson, of Wylam, near Newcastle, in England, was not to be put down by sneers nor jeers, and he had the audacity to declare that he could invent an engine that would run at the terrific rate of twenty-five miles an hour, whereupon one of the most noted periodicals of the day said that he ought to be "put in a straitjacket."

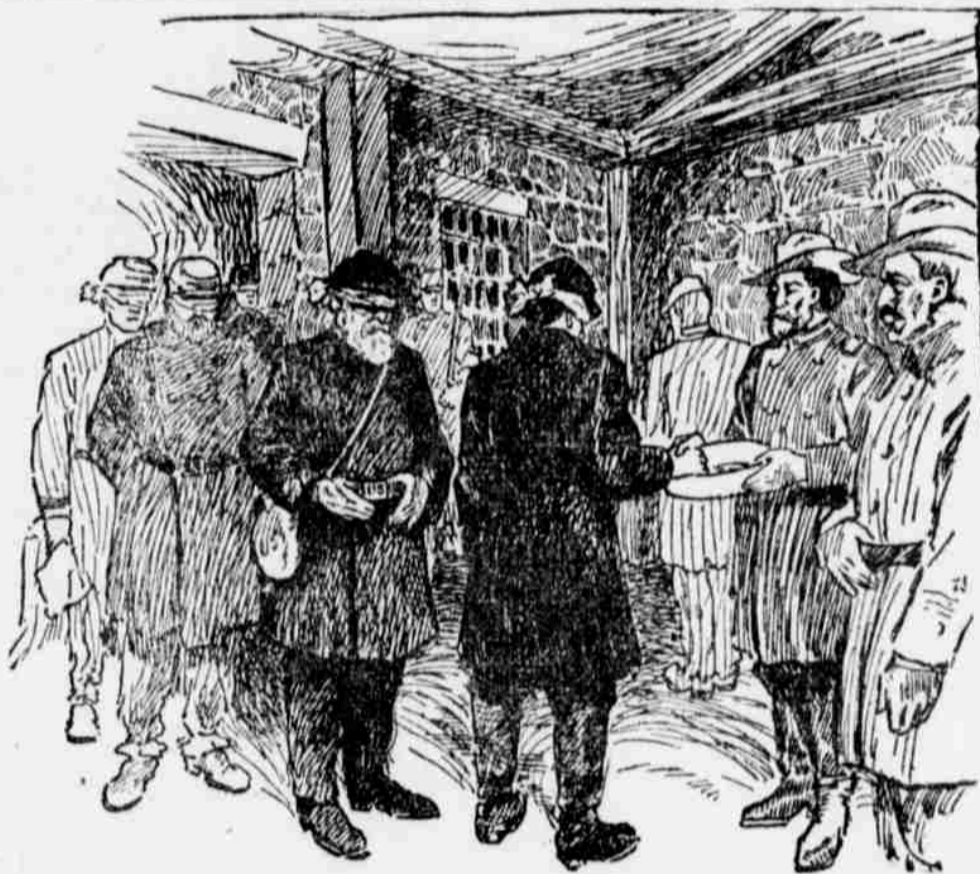
Stephenson went to work and built a queer-looking little railroad engine called the "Rocket" in 1829, and that was the beginning of one of the most useful and wonderful things in the world—the modern railway system.—St. Nicholas.

A Horse's Hands and Feet.

Now the horse never puts his heel on the ground, nor even the ball of his foot. He stands up on the very tips of his toes, and this is, in part, the reason why he can trot so fast. Dobbin's heels are half way up his hind legs, and what we call his knees are really his wrists. The part corresponding to the upper arm is short, and is so embedded in the muscles of the shoulder that the elbow comes next the body. But the horse has only one digit on each limb, and the wrist bones are comparatively small. The so-called ankle, then, is the knuckle where the digit joins the hand or the foot, and the "foot" is only a single thick finger or toe, with a great nail for a hoof. The lower half of the horse's fore leg is really a gigantic hand with only the middle finger and a piece out of the middle of the palm, while the corresponding part of his hind leg is a big, single-toed foot.—St. Nicholas.

A Cheerful Soul.

A man lost a leg in a railway accident, and when they picked him up the first word he said was: "Thank the Lord, it was the leg with the rheumatism in it!"—Atlanta Constitution.



DRAWING THE "DEATH PRIZES."

Libby prison—that southern dungeon the very mention of which sent cold shudders over Union men—where he was held in confinement for many weeks. It was indeed an unkind fate that brought him behind the dingy bars of this dingy old prison. But, as brave blue-coated soldiers who found themselves there, Captain Flinn viewed his misfortune as an incident belonging to the expected events of cruel warfare and made no complaint.

When he was taken to Libby prison Captain Flinn was placed in a cell with Captain Henry W. Sawyer of company K, First regiment of New Jersey cavalry, who had fallen into the hands of the Confederates after having been in a hospital at Culpeper court house for some time. These two captured captains became fast friends and after suffering the torments and hardships of the southern prison side by side for many weeks became resigned to their fate and calmly awaited the hour when they would be liberated either by human hand or the hand divine.

So poorly were they fed that day by day the two men, as well as many other unfortunates who were prisoners along with them, grew weaker and became thinner and thinner until they thought their very life blood would soon be sipped from their bodies. Indeed, they thought their summons of death was inevitable and that such would be their only means of freedom from the prison. To them it seemed that they would never again hear the familiar strains of a bugle call or lead the members of their companies charging against the enemy.

It was while in such a plight as this, while their spirits were exceedingly depressed and while life seemed to offer precious little for them in the future, that one day the monotony of their prison existence was broken by an in-

"In what manner is it the desire of the captains that the selection be made?"

It was several moments before the company of prisoners regained their composure sufficiently to answer. Presently, however, Captain Sawyer suggested that as many beans be placed in a hat as there were captains to draw them. Since two of the captains were thus by lot to be selected for execution Captain Sawyer suggested that two of the beans be black ones and the rest white. The black beans were to represent "death prizes."

With the approval of the plan the drawing began. Captain Sawyer drew first, Captain Flinn followed him. They both drew "black beans."

The execution was soon to follow and preparations were at once begun for the death march. The two captains were not compelled to wait long for the coming of the summons. Soon a Confederate officer appeared with a guard, who marched Flinn and Sawyer to where a car was in readiness to convey them through the streets of Richmond on to the place of execution.

Before they had reached the city limits they met a Roman Catholic bishop. Learning that they were being marched away to be executed, the bishop inquired the cause. The Confederate officer paused in his reply and at that Captain Flinn, who was a Catholic, said he was being executed without the "rites of clergy."

Fortunately for the two captains, the bishop was a friend of Jefferson Davis, and with the words that he would hasten to see Mr. Davis the bishop requested the officer to march the men away slowly and if possible delay the execution until he returned. The bishop's intercession for the condemned men was not in vain, for he came back with the word that Mr. Davis had