

TALL STORY

ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL

During the second year occupation of Hong Kong a local doctor who was assisting military intelligence at Chungking and other Allied centres was unfortunate in that he had a difference with his Chinese chauffeur who betrayed him to the Japanese.

At the time, the Japanese were holding what might be termed a "purge", and a prosecutor had been sent from Tokio with orders to obtain as many capital sentences as possible.

A large number of civilians had been executed and military officers shot for alleged communication with Chungking, and the doctor's life was undoubtedly forfeit.

However, a large Chinese dinner cum gambling party was arranged. Here, the Chief of the Japanese Gendarmerie after becoming hopelessly intoxicated was inveigled into heavy gambling.

After he had lost everything of value to the various Chinese guests, one notable Chinaman challenged him to play for the life of the doctor.

The challenge was accepted and the Chief of Gendarmerie lost.

He honoured his debt and the doctor was released.

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- Sgt C. Bland -
H.K.V.D.C.

Two Life Insurance Agents met and talked "shop". One was an American representing a New York Life Office, the other British, of a Home Office. They boasted to each other how quickly their Company settled death claims. The Britisher said one of their Policyholders died at 9 o'clock one morning and a cheque in settlement of the claim was paid to the widow at 9.30. The American said his Head Office was situated on the 17th floor of a 29 Storey Building. A Policy Holder who lived on the top floor of the building fell out of the window one day, and they handed him a cheque as he passed.

- H.B.W.- Ward D -

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I remember quite well an experience of mine which happened way back in 1976, and when I tell how it all came about I'm sure that there will be no doubt at all regarding the authenticity of this narrative. I was steaming along in my 14 ft. sailing boat in that region of the world where the Indian Ocean borders on the Arctic. This in itself was a rather unique experience, and one which very few people have enjoyed. The main beauty of it was, one could by steering two points off course either way, have a fair spell of sunbathing, and then back again to real ice coffee on the other tack. However, this is beside the point. As we all know, at that time there were still certain sects, in any case they were all imbeciles, who still knew nothing about how Japan discovered the Atomic bomb, and how they refused from a humanitarian point of view to use it on New York. Well, I was pondering deeply on this subject, and failed to look where the wind was dragging me and suddenly right in the middle of a large ice field I hit an old tree stump which had been overlooked by the local villagers when they were collecting fuel for the annual Guy Fawkes display. This sort of tore a hole in things, and I decided to evacuate, which I did with all possible speed, although owing to several encumbrances this took me the best part of six months.

Finally after much skill and exertion I managed to make a nearby island, and being very tired I immediately lay down and in a few minutes was fast asleep, covering myself well with leaves to prevent excessive sunburn. Later on I was awakened by a howling blizzard and was seriously thinking of hunting a couple of bears to make myself a couple of vests, when the sun broke through. It all happened with such speed and the sun was so hot, that it baked the snow a golden brown before it had time to melt.

After a few days of baked snow, I got a little fed up with this diet and determined to return home which I did with all haste. Several years later I returned and built a skyscraper on the island and took in paying guests. This went all very well until one day a fire broke out in the top floor. Although the fire hoses could reach the fire, the ladder escapes were miles too short. We were all getting worried about the people on the top floor, when, suddenly the weather changed again, and froze the water jets into solid ice. This allowed the occupants to slide down the frozen water jets and so to safety. After such excitement on the advice of my dentist, I decided to leave the island and join the R.N.V.R. in the hopes of having a quiet time, but that is another story.

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- R.N.V.R. - Ward D -