

THE REAL MALAY: PEN PICTURES

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The Real Malay: Pen Pictures by Sir Frank Athelstane Swettenham

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SIR FRANK ATHELSTANE SWETTENHAM

**THE REAL MALAY:
PEN PICTURES**

THE REAL MALAY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

BRITISH MALAYA: an Account of
the Origin and Progress of British
Influence in Malaya.

MALAY SKETCHES

UNADDRESSED LETTERS

ALSO AND PERHAPS

THE BODLEY HEAD

THE REAL MALAY
PEN PICTURES

BY

*SIR FRANK ATHELSTANE
SWETTENHAM, K.C.M.G.*



LONDON
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TO THE READER

ONE sees, in newspapers, railway carriages, omnibuses, and throughout the meadows of England, advertisements which proclaim the innumerable uses, and absolute efficacy, of a host of patent cures for every ill that flesh is heir to. The specifics—whether in the form of pills, powders, potions, or plasters—will heal every sore, restore sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, hair to the bald, or work any other miracle at an extremely moderate cost. Babies clamour for these nostrums—if you can believe the pictured stories that meet your eye at every turn—fat old women simper at their recovered youth and slimness, after a second dose, and consumptive youths smash “try-your-strength” machines, in the vigour inspired by a single bottle of some famed elixir.

All this is very encouraging; and while the

pictures appeal to one's sense of the Beautiful in Art, the modest enumeration of the manifold virtues of the simples and the syrups brings us face to face with Truth.

It may be that I have not read the newspapers of widest circulation, have not travelled by the most favoured railways, studied the really popular omnibuses, or wandered through the best-advertised meadows, for I have not met with a cheap, portable, and effective giver of sleep.

In the nerve-exhausting bustle and excitement of an expiring century, what every one wants is the power to command sleep at short notice. I offer you this book, in the belief that, haply, you may find in it that needed restfulness, which will rapidly develop into blissful slumber. Unlike the pills and the potions, you gain the effect without losing the cause. There is no illustration, no "won't-be-happy-till-he-gets-it," because sleep is so generally unbecoming, to all but the very young, that I prefer to leave the picture to your imagination.

If my prescription fails; if the unexpected happens; I am willing to take the consequences,

and you can say, publicly or privately, that I misled you. I shall not be offended. If, on the other hand, my prescription produces the desired result, you will have both capital and experience, and I the reward of virtue.

The fair places of Malaya are as yet undesecrated by the mammoth placard of forbidding ugliness, but the Malays have their infallible cures, which possess at least as many and potent qualities as those so aggressively claimed for English quackery. Indeed, I remember that, some years ago, an epidemic of cholera broke out in a district of a Malay State, and I went there to see what could be done for the people. When I arrived, I found there had been a good many deaths, but the usual "scare" was absent. On inquiry, I learned that a medicine-man had appeared, shortly after the outbreak of the disease, and had sold, to almost all the Malays, a cholera-specific, for the very reasonable price of one dollar per charm. Talking to a group of people, I asked to see the charm, and they all held out their right hands, and showed a small piece of thin string tied round their wrists.