Malay Poisons and Charm Cures

John Desmond Gimlette

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- Reprint of the author’s third (updated) edition, long out of print and unavailable
- A classic text on holistic tropical medicine

First published almost a century ago, Malay Poisons and Charm Cures remains a classic and still definitive reference on the pharmacopoeia and practices of Malay healers, shamans (bomoh) and sorcerers (pawing). Gimlette, a British physician, resided in the Malay State of Kelantan for over a decade, during which he gathered the data that comprises the core of this work. Intended as a medical reference for the Colonial Administration, Gimlette’s observations were far more widely encompassing, shedding light not only on traditional pharmacology and toxicology, native theories of disease, medical practice, religious ritual and superstition, but also on Malay anthropology generally.

With the present revival in interest in traditional medicine, herbal toxins and treatments, as well as in shamanic practice, Gimlette’s work offers rich rewards for a new generation of readers.

Contents:
Methods of Poisoning and Malay Charms in General
The Work of the Bomor in Relation to Clinical Medicine
Charms and Amulets
Black Art in Malay Medicine
Spells and Soothsaying
Poisons Obtained by Malay Fish
Other Poisons Obtained by Malays from the Animal Kingdom
Poisons Obtained by Malays from Jungle Plants
Other Poisons of Vegetable Origin
Poisons from Inorganic Sources Used by Malays
Appendices:
Spells and Charms Transcribed into Romanized Malay
Classification in Natural Order of the Poisonous Plants
A List of Kelantan Poisons

Dr. John Desmond Gimlette was educated at Epsom College and St. Thomas's Hospital, London. Thereafter (1890) he joined the medical service of the colonial administration of the Federated Malay States as resident surgeon, first posted to Pahang and later Kelantan. His rich understanding of Malay language and culture, combined with a sincere and sympathetic character earned him the great confidence and affection of all his patients, from Sultan to the humblest Malay peasant.