The Gardens' Bulletin

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS

VOL. VI

Issued October 1930

Nos. 11-15

THE MEDICAL BOOK OF MALAYAN MEDICINE

Translated by Inche' Ismail, Munshi, Possibly in Penana, Circa 1886

Now edited with medical notes by J. D. GIMLETTE

and determinations of the drugs by
T. H. BURKILL

INTRODUCTION

Two years ago our attention was called to a manuscript in the possession of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, headed 'This is the Medical Book of Malayan Medicine', and endorsed above the heading Translated by Inche Ismael. Moonshee'. By the great kindness of the Society we are permitted to publish a revision of it, as below. We return our most sincere thanks for this favour.

The history of the translation has been lost. It is written upon blue lined foolscap in a handwriting presumedly that of the munshi or teacher of languages, Ismail; and the names of the drugs are repeated in the margin in another handwriting. We reproduce a few lines from p. 16 in illustration (see next page), being parts of the prescriptions which we have numbered 67, 68, and 69 (on pp. 338–339 below). In the margin of the first pages there are also pencil comments, written apparently by the writer of the endorsement above the heading. We believe him to have been a British officer employed in Malaya, and the munshi to have prepared the translation under his instructions; but we have not succeeded in identifying him by his handwriting.

It is possible that the translation formed part of the collections made in the Straits for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition. London, 1886; but this is a surmise only.

The prescriptions which we have numbered 246 to 260 (pp. 369-370) were published by Sir William Maxwell in 1887 (Journ. Roy. As. Soc. Straits branch, 17; Notes and Queries.

No. 4, p. 116). He does not indicate from what source he took them, and he ends with an appropriate doxology, absent from the munshi's translation. One of us (J. D. C.) has used prescription 99 (Malay Poisons and Charm Cures, 3rd ed. London, 1929, p. 21). The rest of the manuscript appears in print here for the first time. Owing to its grossness we have had to purge it in places; and we have had to remove many conspicuous mistakes made by the munshi, whose knowledge was inadequate

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for his task. Fortunately his presumed employer required transliterated Malay to be inserted freely, and this has exposed the mistakes. One of us (J. D. G.) accepts entire responsibility for all statements of diagnosis of disease, and the other (I. H. B.) for the determinations of the materia medica. We have found it necessary to append a glossary, and have so arranged it that it serves also as an index. We have modernized the spelling of the transliterated Malay.

The manuscript from which the translation was made, as is evident from the nature of some of the munshi's mistakes, was written in arabic characters. Probably it was so valued by its owner that he would not part with it, though he consented to allow translation. It bears the marks of being a compilation of notes of different dates. The writer, for instance, after a conversation with a brother-practitioner upon the treatment of burns, added prescriptions 421, 422, and 423 upon the use of sial menaum, which then entered into his pharmacopoeia; and in a similar way he seems in general to have proceeded; but in the earlier part of the book, he absorbed into it larger blocks of matter at one time than he did later. Still the whole is of the nature of notes, never collated nor revised, so that little order is perceptible in the arrangement of the diseases, and the drugs

are called by different names in different prescriptions. As notes for the owner's own use, it is quite possible that there was an intentional obscurity, for the Malay practitioners are in general auxious to keep their information to themselves as compounders of proprietary medicines. Sometimes he has defeated us,

It is easily observed that the Medical Book is not homogeneous: it changes as it progresses from a polypharmacy suggestive of the town to the relative simplicity of Malay Village Medicine (cf. the preceding part, vol. vi, pp. 163–321 of the Gardens' Bulletin). This may be illustrated by a table giving the average number of materia entering into the prescriptions in different parts of it:

Prescriptions	ì	to	100		4.03	drugs
••	101	to	200		3.90	,,
••	201	to	300		3.90	,,
**	301	to	400		2.70	
**	40 L	to	500		2.41	,,
,,	501	to	543		2.23	••

Where, at 326, the translator ceased to give his headings of sections in Malay, the simplicity is markedly increased, as if the compiler, when his notes had reached that number, had come into contact with a different class of practitioners.

The plant-names used are markedly polyglot: some are arabic; many are words which merchants from Bombay would use; a few are employed in south-eastern India: others again are commonly heard in Batavia, or are Sundanese, and one is Balinese. Some of the diseases do not bear the ordinary names as used on the Peninsula, and suggest that this treatise is by no means pure Malay medicine. If then the whole work be regarded as a compilation of notes added from time to time, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the compiler lived in a port where men of various nationalities mix; and because several of the simples used in a fresh state are more easily procured in Penang than Singapore, and, moreover, because the weights used suggest Penang, we believe the compiler a resident in that port. His extensive use of such materia medica as are stocked in shops, marks him a town-dweller, and either the owner of a drug-shop or intimate with the drug-shops by his home. His devotion to polypharmacy culminates in prescription 289 (p. 376) for Smallpox, with twenty-nine ingredients.

William Marsden, in his History of Sumatra (1783-1811), left a very interesting account of Medicine among Sumatran Malays; but the Medical Book carries us beyond his outlines. Marsden dwelt upon the art of those among whom he lived, in the internal administration of juices extracted from various plants, the employment of leaves as external poultices, acids, arsenic, and of gunpowder for skin-lesions; counter-irritation with hot-

leaves; the induction of sweating by curious methods; cures for fever; uses of long pepper, lime, gelenggang, &c. The Medical Book adds fanciful remedies, ranging from burnt cockroaches to fried fish-heads; cures by suggestion; the boastfulness of the bomor, his magic, and his wide acquaintance with medicinal products found in somewhat remote places, and evidence of the strictness of his prohibitions (pantang). In contradistinction to our 'night and morning', the signature of his prescription runs: 'let him (the patient) take this morning and evening,' and again his invocation or inscription comes at the end of his prescriptions: 'and let him (the patient) be relieved.'

The Malay bomor, as a Mohamedan, being forbidden the use of alcohol, cannot make tinctures: and alcohol, in the form of rice-spirit (arrack), is mentioned once only in the Medical Book, in 308 (p. 380) for retention of urine.

Some light is thrown by the Medical Book upon native surgery. Much of it is devoted to diseases peculiar to women. There is no special mention of Cholera asiatica.

Among the drugs of the Book those prescribed for the cracked

tongue of Sprue (196) might repay investigation.

We have had the good fortune to obtain help from Sir W. George Maxwell, K.B.E., C.M.G., Mr. H. W. Thomson, C.M.G., Mr. C. Otto Blagden, D.Litt., Mr. W. W. Skeat, M.A., Mr. A. T. Bryant, and Mr. A. F. Worthington, and tender our very sincere thanks to them. We thank also Mr. R. E. Holttum, Director of Gardens, Straits Settlements, Mr. C. Boden Kloss, Director of Museums, and Mr. J. B. Serivenor, Director of the Geological Survey. Federated Malay States, for making several inquiries for us.

J. D. G. I. H. B. This is the Medical Book of Malayan Medicine

1. Sections to explain the medicines for violent headache (ngĕlu bisa), accompanied with pains in the bones, and loss of vigour.

In the first place, take jintan putch (seeds of Cuminum Cyminum), by weight. 5 cents; bawang putch (garlic), 10 cents; hajimuju kërsani (seeds of Hyoscyamus), 5 cents; ganja (Indian hemp); bunga pala (mace), 35 cents; buah pala (nutmeg), 5 cents; gadong China (Smilax China), 5 cents; halia (ginger), 5 cents; and akar tëmu lawas (rhizome of Curcuma xanthorrhiza), 5 cents. Pound them together. Mix with sufficient honey to make into pills. Let the patient take the pills, until he has finished them.

2. Should this fail.

Take otak kambing (goat's brain); těpong (wheat flour). 2 parts (approximately 4 oz.); pulut hitam (raw, glutinous, purple rice), 1 part; lada puteh (white peppercorns) 1 part; kayu manis (cinnamon), 2 parts; koma-koma (saffron), 1 part; buah pala (nutmeg), 1 part; buah chěngkeh (cloves), 1 part; akar těmu lawas (rhizome of Curcuma xanthorrhiza), 1 part; kětumbar (coriander seeds), 1 part; chabai Jawa (Java long pepper), 1 part; hajimuju kěrsani (seeds of Hyosvyamus), ½ part; kulit měswi (bark of Massoia aromatica), ½ part; bawang puteh (garlic), 3 parts; ayer madu (honey), 1 part; minyak sapi (ghi), 1 part; and apiun (opium), a piece the size of a black peppercorn. Crind all together finely. Then cook sufficiently to form into a jelly. Let the patient eat this daily, and be relieved.

3. Sections to explain the medicines for a cough, accompanied with spitting of, either blood, or matter.

First, take susu (milk), either human, or from a black goat; and ayer bush delima (the juice of a pomegranate fruit). Drink this for three mornings, and be relieved.

4. Should this fail.

Take ketumber (coriander seeds); and ayer madu (honey). Grind both together into a pulp. Take this also for three mornings, and be relieved.

5. Should this fail.

Take about seven ripe fruits of buah bulang (fruit of *Gmelina villosa*). Squeeze them and take the juice. Mix it with cow's or buffalo's milk. Drink this for three mornings, and be relieved.

6. Should this still fail.

Take akar těmu hitam (rhizome of Curcuma aeruginosa); and kapur Barus (camphor of Dryobalanops), a piece as large as an Indian corn seed. Grind together. Take this for three mornings, and be relieved.

(cloves). 14 in number; beras (raw husked rice), as much as four fingers can lift; akar lengkuwas (rhizome of Languas Galanga; galingale); bawang putch tunggal (one entire garlic bulb); and some kayu manis (cinnamon). Grind all these finely. Then divide into three parts (or doses). As required, dissolve one part in water to the depth of one joint of the forefinger (ayer-nya suatu ruas tělunjuk). Take a dose on three consecutive mornings.

139. Another medicine.

Take bunga laksana (flowers of Acacia farnesiana; bunga Siam); ibu kunyit (the fingers of a fresh turmeric rhizome); and a little kemenyan putch (white, or purest, gum benzoin). Reduce these to pulp. Divide it into three parts (or doses). Dissolve in water. Take a dose on three consecutive mornings, and be relieved. The way of drinking this medicine must be when standing upright.

140. Another medicine.

Take daun merpuying (leaves of Carallia integerrima); ibu kunyit (the fingers of a fresh turmeric rhizome); kemenyan puteh (white, or purest, gum benzoin); and lemukut (rice dust). Reduce them to pulp. Divide into three parts. Take this medicine in the same way as aforesaid (139), and be relieved.

141. Another medicine.

Take daun bunga Siam (leaves of Acacia farnesiana); puchok sendudek (young shoots of Melastoma spp.); buah chengkeh (cloves); kemenyan puteh (white, or purest, gum benzoin); lada a hitam (black peppercorns); and buah pala (nutmeg). Divide into three parts or doses. Take a dose on three consecutive days, and be relieved.

142. Another medicine.

Take daun jalamudi (leaves of an unidentified plant); hajimuju (jēmuju; seeds of Carum copticum); chabai Jawa (fruit of Piper retrofractum; Java long pepper); buah chëngkeh (cloves); buah pala (nutmeg); akar manis China (Chinese liquorice; roots of Glycyrrhiza glabra, and others); and buah kĕdĕkai (Chebulic myrobalans, fruits of Terminalia Chebula); akar puchok (rhizome of Saussurca Lappa; the Indian kut); kulit mĕswi (bark of Massoia aromatica); and halia kĕring (dried ginger). Take this medicine for three mornings, and be relieved.

143. Fasal pada měnyatakan sakit běrnama sěnggugut tiada buleh běranak oleh sěbab sěnggugut.

A section to explain the illness called Senggugut, on account of which a woman cannot bear a child. [Compare with 226, Senggugut is a generic name for loss of uterine blood; the group includes catamenia and lochia. The disorders that arise

are merely symptoms, either due to a local cause, or the consequence of a general constitutional disease, such, for example, as venereal disease, or puerperal fever.

Now these are the medicines.

In the first place take akar bunga susun kělapa (root of Erratamia), 3 duits, or ‡ cents, by weight; akar lěmpoyang (rhizome of Zingiber spp.), 2 duits; lěngkuwas (rhizome of Languas Galanga; galingale), 1 duit; buah chěngkeh (cloves), 1 duit; kapur makan (shell-lime used in betel-chewing), 2 duits; and chabai Jawa (fruit of Piper retrofractum; Java long pepper), 1 duit by weight. Grind finely, and when grinding, add the juice of a lime fruit. Place the mass in an earthenware pot containing water. Tie plantain leaves securely over the mouth of the pot. Bring the pot to the boil. Remove it from the fire when the decoction has been reduced to one third. When it is required for drinking, dip three pieces of red hot iron into it. It is now ready to drink. Act in this manner on every occasion, and take the dregs that remain in the drinking cup. These must be rubbed over the pubes, and let the patient be relieved.

144. Another medicine.

Take bunga pětola (flowers of Luffa spp.; a pumpkin); kulit rambutan (bark of Nephelium lappaccum; the rambutan tree); bunga changkok (flowers of Schima Noronhae); bunga chadaya (flowers of Woodfordia floribunda; sěduwayah); and chuchur atap (leaves of Leptospermum flavescens; hujong atap). Blend these together. Drink it like an infusion of tea, every morning and evening, and be relieved.

145. Should there be (fever) and thirst.

Take bunga pělasari (měmpělasari; flowers of Alyxia); koma-koma (Arabic saffron); chěndana (sandal-wood); bulang (Gmelina); and yang-yang (Vitis hastata). Boil these together. Let her drink it every evening and morning.

146. Should there be puerperal infection. Sapraemia. [Compare with 137 and 226.]

Take a handful of daun sepang (leaves of Caesalpinia Sappan); some akar lempoyang pahit (rhizome of a bitter ginger); some ganti (rhizome of Peuccdanum japonicum); some kalambak (best quality resinous wood of Aquilaria; gaharu); puchok kunyit (young shoots of Curcuma domestica); and kayu kesturi (wood of Juniperus chinensis). Grind all these finely together. Take this medicine for three mornings, and be relieved.

147. Should there be a (specific) ulcer (luka).

Take 'sahing badak (rhinoceros fang)'. Burn it near her side. [Sahing may be a miswriting for taring (tusk); but, as the incisor and canine teeth (siyong) are reduced or wanting in the

rhinoceroses, it is probable that the horn (sumbu) of the rhinoceros is meant, rather than the fang of the animal.]

148. Moreover, make a medicine for bathing the ulcer.

Take kulit nangka (bark of Artocarpus integra; the jak fruit tree); kulit bachang (bark of Mangifera foetida); and kulit tengar (bark of Ceriops Candollcana). Boil all these together. Make a lotion for washing the ulcer, and let her be relieved.

149. Fasal pada menyatakan ubat sakit pinggang.

A section to explain the medicines for pains in the loins.

Lumbago. [This is given in the manuscript as Sciatica. Compare with 66.]

Take puchok malapari (young shoots of Pongamia glabra); hujong lemukut (very fine rice dust); and mata kunyit (a stembud on a fresh turmeric rhizome). Grind finely. Rub this médicine into the loins.

150. Another medicine.

Take three handfuls of daun lenggundi (leaves of Vilex trifolia); a pinch (sa-jemput) of jintan hitam (seeds of Nigella sativa); a nutmeg (bush pala); and fourteen cloves (bush chengkeh). Reduce all these to pulp. This must be taken as a draught for three mornings and evenings, and the dregs well rubbed into the loins.

151. Another medicine.

Take daun gandarusa (leaves of Gendarussa vulgaris); akar jerangau (root of Acorus Calamus; sweet flag); and bonglai (rhizome of Zingiber Cassumunar). Grind finely. Steep in vinegar and warm slightly over a moderate fire. Rub this well into the loins, and be relieved.

152. Another medicine.

Take pulut hitam (raw, glutinous, purple rice); bawang merah (the onion of Allium Cepa), 7 pieces, or wrappers (ulas), sliced; and one closed handful (sa-genggam) of white peppercorns (lada sulah). We ourselves (the patients), must reduce this to pulp, and our own children (the patients' children). must reduce it to powder. Eat it daily, every morning and evening.

153. Moreover this powder (152) is of benefit in amenorrhoea.

154. Fasal pada měnyatakan ubat sakit lělah, atau batok-nya, Sections to explain medicines for asthma, or for coughs. [Compare with 99, and 311.

First, take daun sudu-sudu (leaves of a succulent Euphorbia), about 4 gantangs (gallons). Let it be this amount after the leaves have been chopped up. Boil them. Dry them partially after boiling. Next, take padi (rice in the husk), about 1 gantang. Dry this. Mix the padi with the leaves. Boil them _

together. When sufficiently cooked, throw the leaves away. Expose the padi to the heat of the sun. When dry, let it be pounded into rice (beras). Let it be well covered. Whenever the pains (fits of asthma) come, take about one ounce of this rice at one meal, and be relieved. Do not take more than one ounce of this medicine at one time.

155. Should the cough not relax.

Take a half-ripe fruit (sa-těngah masak) of buah pupot (? perepat: fruit of Sonneratio). Cut it in halves. Take one half. Rub it on a stone with about half a tea-cupful (chawan) of warm water. Let him drink this. Rub the husk of the fruit on his neck, and let him be relieved.

156. Fasal pada menyatakan ubat panan kurap. A section to explain a medicine for Panau Kurap.

'Ringworm, or white spots on the skin occasioned by leprous,

or scrofulous distempers.' [Compare with 306.]

Take kapur tohor (coarse lime); chunam (prepared lime used in the betel-quid); and daun chememar (leaves of Micromelum). Grind finely. Moisten with the juice of a lime fruit. Rub this over the body, and be relieved.

157. Fasal pada menyatakan ubat puru dalam tulang. A section to explain a medicine for ulceration of bone. [Compare with 410.1

Take lada hitam jadi-kan serbau (black peppercorns already ground); ayer madu (honey); and minyak sapi (clarified butter). Mix these together. Give this to the patient to eat, and the ulcer will then 'come forth' (granulate).

158. Fasal pada měnyatakan ubat tulang patah. A section to explain the medicine for broken bones.

Take a chicken about ten days old; and biji bayam (seeds of the garden cockscomb; Celosia cristata). Fry the seeds in oil. Pound them with the chicken. Then apply this to the broken bone. Truss (bind closely) with cloth, and it will be cured.

159. Fasal pada měnyatakan ubat anak kěchil sakit pěrut. Sections to explain medicines for infants suffering from pains in the stomach.

Take buah chabai tali (fruit of Helicteres Isora); akar delima, (root of the pomegranate); and isi pinang muda (the interior of a green betel-nut). Take all in the same proportion. Reduce to pulp and mix with honey. Let the infant lick it up.

160. Should this fail.

Take buah chabai tali (fruit of Helicteres Isora); akar dělima

raden galoh, the name of a princess of romance, which appears in the Medical Book for gading galoh (q.v.).

raksa, mercury, is in one prescription only, 168, a tonic.

rambutan, Nephelium lappaceum, Linn. Internal, 144 (bark); external 460 (leaves).

rambutan pachat (leech's rambutan) is a name given to several forest trees allied to the last: Xerospermum spp. are most entitled to be so called, and, secondly, species of Mischocarpus, Arytera, and Aglaia. Internal, 492 (root) and 493 (leaves).

rami, Boehmeria nivea. Gaud. The root is prescribed for application to a foul syphilitic ulcer, 360.

rami hutan (wild rami), Alchornea villosa, Muell.-Arg. External, 464 (root) and 465 (leaves), for an application in scables. Randia, see antan gading and kayu tulang.

rebong, see bulch.

rěmbega, see lembega.

rěmunggai by metathesis for měrunggai (q.v.).

rengas manau, Melanorrhoea Wallichii, Hook, f., or an allied species. External, 412 (root) and 413 (leaves).

Rennellia, see čmpědu tanah.

resam, Gleichenia linearis, C. B. Clarke. The leaves in a cooling lotion, 460. Malays commonly so use this plant.

resin, see dammar.

restong urat, pokok restong urat, see lada-lada.

Rheum, see kělěmbak,

rhinoceros' tooth, 'sahing', for use in a fumigation, 147, for ulceration of the vagina. In Sarawak a kayn sahing is used for fumigation. Perhaps this is worth remembering in any endeavour to ascertain how the word sahing came into the manuscript.

Rhodamnia, see mempoyan

Rhodomyrtus, see kemunting.

ribu-ribu, Lygodium scandens, Swartz and L. flexuosum, Swartz. The leaves in a complex oil, 289, for Small-pox,

rice finds many uses. The ashes of the straw are prescribed internally in 226. The dust from off the grain produced in pounding it (lĕmukut or mĕlukut), internally, 125, 140, and 215; externally, 21, 51, 66, 81, 94, 149, 192, 215, and 271. Raw unbroken grains in a magic treatment, 446. Raw rice pounded, internally, 138 and 227; in the eye, 183; externally, 23, 214, 267, 281, 406, 416, 425, 432, 438, 449, 486, 490, and 500. Fine rice flour (hujong bĕras); in the eyes, 393; externally, 178, 332, 334, 372, 393, and 400. Boiled rice, dried and powdered, for internal use, 99 and 154. The same perhaps dried until burned, for external use, 8 and 135. Gruel made with boiled rice, internal, 31, 32, and 85; external, 277, 399, 495, 529, and 530. The surface of a pan of boiling rice (kĕpala

nasi), external, 407 and 535. Water in which rice has been soaked, internal, 27 and 30; in the eye, 182 and 315; external, 28 and 381.

rose water, see ayer mawar.

rotan bini, Flagellaria indica, Linn. For loss of hair after fever, externally, 531 (shoots and leaves). This treatment seems to be common.

Rourea, see akar salah nama, kachang-kacham, kachang-kachang, and sembelit.

ru, Casuarina equisetifolia, Linn. The bark powdered in a treatment for pimples on the face, 190.

rukam, Flacourtia Rukam, Zoll. & Moritz. Internal, 227; external, 289 (leaves in both cases).

ruku-ruku, see sĕlaseh.

rumput angin or kapur angin, *Usneu spp.* Internal, 350; external, 52.

Saccharum, see sugar and tebu.

safflower, see kësumba.

saffron, see koma-koma.

saga, Abrus precatorius. Linn. External, 108 (leaves) and 278 (root). In 164 the seed of saga is used as a weight; for weighing two seeds of saga kěchil (Abrus precatorius) = 1 of saga běsar (Adenanthera), and it is saga běsar which is used here.

sagu, sago of Metroxylon spp., as an excipient in the poultice, 276.

sail, see ashes of a fabric.

Salacia, see empedal.

salt, sodium chloride. Four kinds are prescribed: (1) ordinary salt, (2) garam jantan or coarse salt, (3) salt from India, and (4) salt from Ormuz, or rock-salt. Internal chiefly as a seasoning, 31, 45, 61, 96, 130, 161, 170, 204, 206, 241, 261, 316, and 509; in the mouth, 17, 18, and 325; in the eye, 353; in the ear, 262; externally, 8, 11, 20, 74, 118, 174, 216, 266, 267, 465, and 537.

salt-bag, see ashes.

saltpetre, see sendawa.

sandal-wood, see chendana.

Santaloides, see akar salah nama, kachang-kacham, kachang-kachang, and sembelit.

Santalum, see chendana.

santan, see coco-nut palm.

sappan wood, see sepang.

Saprosma, see kësimbukan and sëkëntut.

sarang burong pipit gunting, sparrow's nest, the nest of Passer montanus malaccensis. Its ashes in an embrocation, 377, for paresis.