

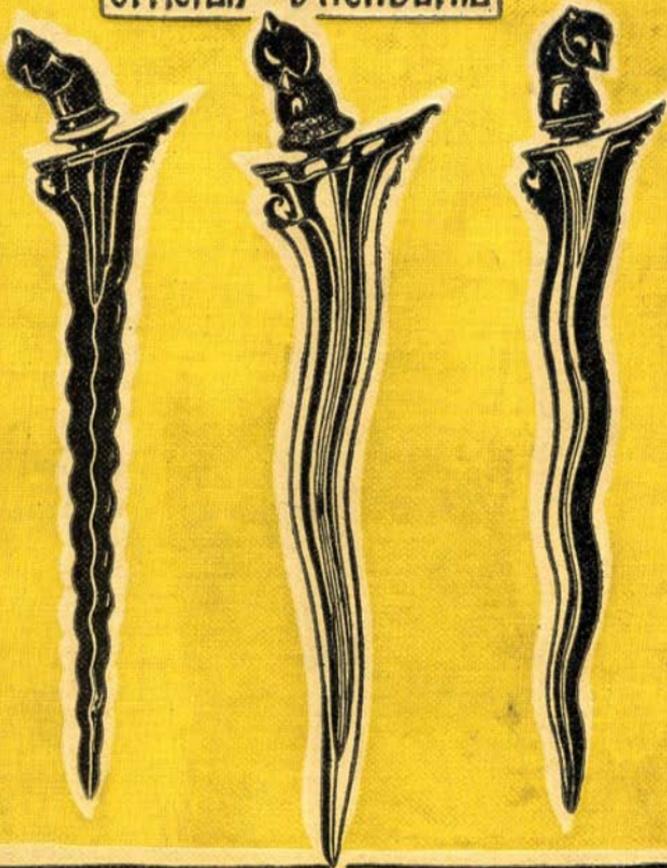
# MALAY SKETCHES

FRANK

ATHELSTANE

SWETTENHAM

OFFICIER D'ACADÉMIE



Swettenham, Sir Frank.

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## NOTE ON THE COVER DESIGN

*THE colours used on the cover of this book are those recognised as "Royal" colours in one or other of the Malay States. Throughout the Peninsula yellow is the special colour worn or used by those of Raja birth. By the ancient Malay sumptuary laws the lower classes were not allowed to wear yellow garments, nor to use this colour in the decoration or furniture of their houses. These laws are no longer rigidly observed, but in most Malay States the use of yellow fabrics is confined to the Raja class.*

*It is a universal practice to put letters addressed to Malay rulers (when they are of Raja birth) into covers of yellow cotton cloth or yellow satin, while those addressed to Rajas who have no official position, or to chiefs of importance but not of Raja birth, are stitched into covers of white cotton.*

*In some of the States the royal flag is yellow, in others it is white or black, while in several of the more important States*

## NOTE ON THE COVER DESIGN

of Sumatra (as for instance in *Acheen*), black garments are the special privilege of the *Raja* class.

In *Perak* the three highest native authorities in the State, the Sultan, his heir (styled *Râja Mûda*), and his *Wazîr* (the *Râja Bëndahâra*), fly flags of white, yellow, and black respectively, and these three colours united have, for the last twenty years, been adopted as the *Perak* State flag.

The three daggers on the cover are good types of the Malay "kris," the favourite national weapon. The originals of these particular specimens are in the *Perak* museum and were photographed for this design.

F. A. S.

Xmas day, 1895.

## PREFACE

**T**HIS is not a book of travels, nor is it, in even the smallest sense, the record of a traveller's experiences in a foreign land. It is a series of sketches of Malay scenery and Malay character drawn by one who has spent the best part of his life in the scenes and amongst the people described.

These pages contain no statistics, no history, no geography, no science, real or spurious, no politics, no moralising, no prophecy,—only an attempt to awaken an interest in an almost undescribed but deeply interesting people, the dwellers in one of the most beautiful and least known countries in the East.

The traveller will come in time, and he will publish his experiences of Malâya and the Malays; but while he may look upon the country with a

## PREFACE

higher appreciation and paint its features with a more artistic touch, he will see few of those characteristics of the people, none of that inner life which, I make bold to say, is here faithfully portrayed.

FRANK SWETTENHAM.

THE RESIDENCY,

PERAK, *28 March 1895.*

“Quel est donc ce pays, disaient-ils l'un a l'autre, inconnu a tout le reste de la terre, et où toute la nature est d'une espèce si différente de la nôtre?”

VOLTAIRE

**I**MAGINE yourself transported to a land of eternal summer, to that Golden Peninsula, 'twixt Hindustan and Far Cathay, from whence the early navigators brought back such wondrous stories of adventure. A land where Nature is at her best and richest: where plants and animals, beasts of the forest, birds of the air, and every living thing seem yet inspired with a feverish desire for growth and reproduction, as though they were still in the dawn of Creation.

And Man?

Yes, he is here. Forgotten by the world, passed by in the race for civilisation, here he has remained