

Basic Detail Report



Newspaper-Cutting

Date

1931

Medium

Paper and print

Description

Rectangular newspaper cutting from 'The Daily Telegraph', 7-12-31, describing the use of 'Dragon's Blood', a plant-based powder, with references to contemporary popularity of 'Black Magic' in Europe: 'Dragon's Blood "Seven cases dragon's blood." These were not, as you might suppose, a sinister item in some gruesome and colossal witches' brew of the Middle Ages, but part of the cargo of the s.s. Kashmir, which docked in London the other day. According to the bill of entry, the strange cargo was "ordered". It was taken aboard at Penang, and in Malaya, as is well known, there dwells a small lizard known as a "dragon," [sic] not to mention the ten-foot "dragons" of the Dutch East Indies. Yet there remained something mysterious and macabre about this consignment of dragon's blood. For whom was it intended? There has been talk recently of a recrudescence of Black Magic in Europe. Could it possibly be that ...? In fact, dragon's blood is most useful to violin manufacturers, but rather expensive. Palm Tree Powder "It has nothing to do with either the komodo or the smaller lizards. It is produced from the fruit of a palm tree

- daemonorops draco (hence the name) - and made into a varnish-dye to be used on fiddles," [sic] an authority tells me. "One hundredweight of the fruit produces 7lb of the powder at a cost of £1. Limited quantities are produced and the supply is scarce. Some 2-3cwt is exported a year. It sells in London at 1s 5d an ounce. Dragon's blood is well named. I examined a sample. It is a fine powder of a suggestive dark crimson colour of the peculiar rusty tint of dried gore.'

Dimensions

Object/Work: 120 x 60 mm