

(1) Number of Pages.....12
(2) Date of repair.....12-1-68
(3) Initials of the Referencer.....*26.1.68*

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 1362
B.P. No.

Press
~~Mis.~~

Dated 13-9-1875 196 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

1362
1

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
13th September 1875.*

No. 119. Read the following Endorsement of the Under-Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, (Fibres and Silk,) dated Simla, 28th August 1875, No. 107 :—

Read the following despatch from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India.

Statistics and Commerce,
No. 71.

INDIA OFFICE, LONDON,
22nd July 1875.

MY LORD,—With reference to your letters noted in the margin, asking for reports on the Nilgiri Nettle fibre, I forward a copy of a Memorandum on the subject by Dr. Watson, the Reporter on Products in this Office.

Fibres and Silk No. 5 of 26th Aug. 1872.
" " 3 of 8th May 1873.
" " 13 of 5th Dec. 1873.
Dated 20th May 1875.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) SALISBURY.

To His Excellency the Right Honorable
The Governor-General of India in Council.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.
NILGIRI NETTLE FIBRE.
Comm Report by Dr. Watson, dated 20th May 1875.

country. The fibre is considered unsuitable for textile purposes, and as the process of separating it from the plant is much more difficult than even in the case of Rhea, there is no prospect of there being any demand for it in this market at prices which could possibly be remunerative, the best China grass at the present time selling with difficulty at £35 per ton. Some remarks on the nature of the fibre and the character of the plant will be found in the accompanying sheet marked A from the Appendix to my Report on Rhea.

NILGIRI NETTLE (*Urtica heterophylla*.)

VI.—Nilgiri Nettle.

A SHORT notice of a fibre similar in character to the Rhea may find a place here.

It is the *Urtica heterophylla* of Roxburgh, commonly known by the name of "Nilgiri Nettle,"* although one of the most widely diffused of the tribe to which it belongs. It is not only found in Southern India, but it also flourishes in Burmah, Assam, and many other places along the foot of the hills. In Assam it is known by the name of Horoo "Surat," according to Colonel Hannay, being the general term employed by the Assamese to designate all the larger nettles.

It is described by Dr. Roxburgh as a "most ferocious-looking plant," and the accompanying out (fig. 3), showing a portion of it, sufficiently indicates its formidable character. It is an annual, has upright angular stems, covered with small prickles, and is marked with small white specks. The leaves are similarly protected by bristles; they are irregularly serrate, long, variously lobed, petioled, and almost candate at the base. The seeds are of quick growth, and the cultivation of the plant could be rapidly extended if necessary. From the injuries consequent upon its sting, as also from the character of its stem, there are, however, greater difficulties in manipulating it, so as to obtain its fibre, than in the case of the Rhea or Poah; and as, in addition, its fibre has hitherto been always valued at a considerably lower figure than that of the Rhea or China grass, the prospects of its becoming a commercial article of any importance are very small, unless some special use were discovered for it. Its fibre is well known and appre-

* From Wight's "Icones Plantarum Indiae Orientalis," Vol. II.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
13th September 1875.

ciated by the Todawers and Burghers of the Nilgiri Hills as well as the Bhoteeas to the north of Assam, who are said to use it extensively for the manufacture of cloth. By the former, the plant is boiled before the separation of the fibre is attempted. The necessity for machinery in this case, is even more obvious than in that of the two former, although for all some readier method of separating the fibre is absolutely essential. The remarks made with respect to the rough character of the fibres of the Rheas are still more applicable to those of the Nilgiri Nettle. Indeed, so similar to wool is the fibre now under consideration that, when cut short and crumpled up or "scribbled" like that substance, I have known it valued by an experienced broker as wool, and its price stated accordingly. The term "vegetable wool," which it has already received, is therefore very suitable.

The diameters of the fibres of the *Urtica heterophylla* are exhibited in the following table:—

NILGIRI NETTLE (*Urtica heterophylla*.)

Name and Place of Growth.	DIAMETER OF FIBRES.					
	ORDINARY.			ULTIMATE.		
	Mini- mum.	Maxi- mum.	Mean.	Mini- mum.	Maxi- mum.	Mean.
	INCH.	INCH.	INCH.	INCH.	INCH.	INCH.
<i>Urtica heterophylla</i> , from the Nil- giri Hills	·00160	·00420	·00210	·00040	·00070	·00055
	1 660	1 260	1 370	1 2,600	1 1,500	1 1,900
Mean	·00150	·00385	·00267	·000390	·000680	·000535

COPY, together with copy of the enclosure, forwarded to the Government of Madras for information, with reference to the correspondence ending with its letter, No. 1,142, dated the 31st of July 1872.

(By order,)

(Signed) J. E. O'CONNOR,
For Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

No. 120. ORDER THEREON, 13th September 1875, No. 1,362.

Miscellaneous.

ORDERED to be communicated to the
Board of Revenue, Commissioner of the
Nilgiris, and the Superintendent, Madras
Museum.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. MACGREGOR,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

„ the Commissioner of the Nilgiris.

„ the Superintendent of the Government Central Museum.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

No. 71.

3

India Office,
London, 22^d July, 1875.

To His Excellency
The Right Honourable
The Governor General of India
in Council.

Statistics & Commerce My Lord,

With reference to your
letters noted in the margin, asking
for reports on the Neilgherry nettle
fibre, I forward a copy of a ---
Memorandum on the subject by
D^r. Watson, the Reporter on Products
in this Office.

I have &c.
Wm. Salisbury.

Fibre Silk No. 5 of 26th Aug. 1872
" " No. 3 of 8th May 1873
" " No. 13 of 5th Decr 1873

~~24~~ 20th May 1875.

Obdt. of 1875, 30th India

REVENUE.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Secy. Secy. Secy.

Dated September, 1875.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O., 13th September 1875, No. 1362.

SEPTEMBER.
Nos. 119-120.

Nilgiri Nettle Fibre.—Communicated to the
Board of Revenue, Commissioner of the Nilgiris
and the Superintendent of the Madras Museum
endorsement of the Government of India forward
ing copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State
regarding the —.

Nilagiri Nettle Fibre.

Copy Report by Dr. Watson, dated 20th May 1875.

The samples of this fibre have been submitted to a number of competent persons in this country. The fibre is considered unsaleable for textile purposes. It is far inferior to Rhea, and as the process of separating it from the plant is much more difficult, than even in the case of Rhea, there is no prospect of there being any demand for it in this market at prices which could possibly be remunerative, the best China Grass at the present time selling with difficulty at £35 per Ton. — Some remarks on the nature of the fibre, and the character of the Plant will be found in the accompanying sheet marked A from the Appendix to my Report on Rhea.

Ex. L^o 2

Nilagiri nettle (*Urtica heterophylla*)

VI. Nilagiri nettle.

A short notice of a fibre similar in character to the Rhea may find a place here.

It is the *Urtica heterophylla* of Roxburgh, commonly known by the name of "keilgherry nettle,"* although one of the most widely diffused of the tribe to which it belongs. It is not only found in Southern India, but it also flourishes in Burma, Assam, and many other places along the foot of the hills. In Assam it is known by the name of Hor "Surot," according to Colonel Hannay, being the general term employed by the Assamese to designate all the larger nettles.

It is described by Dr. Roxburgh as a "most ferocious-looking plant," and the accompanying cut (fig. 3), showing a portion of it, sufficiently indicates its formidable character. It is an annual, has upright angular stems, covered with small prickles, and is marked with small white specks. The leaves are similarly protected by bristles; they are irregularly serrate, long, variously lobed, petioled, and almost caudate at the base. The seed

*From Wight's 'Icones Plantarum Indiae Orientalis.' Vol. II.

14 To the Board of Dec. 23rd 1871
4. The Commissioner of the Nilgiris
2. The Superintendent of the Nilgiris

Strong, with white flowers
for information, copy of a report from the
Nilgiris, with its enclosure, regarding the
nettle.

order to the

Commissioner of the

Nilgiris

Commissioner of the

Nilgiris

13 Sept 75

From

The Nilgiris, Nilgiris

Sept 107

Aug 28: Aug 3 1875

Aug: 1875: 24/1

At 3467.

are of quick growth, and the cultivation of the plant could be rapidly extended if necessary. From the injuries consequent upon its sting, as also from the character of its stem, there are, however, greater difficulties in manipulating it, so as to obtain its fibre, than in the case of the Rhea or Poah; and as, in addition, its fibre has hitherto been always valued at a considerably lower figure than that of the Rhea or China grass, the prospects of its becoming a commercial article of any importance are very small, unless some special use were discovered for it. Its fibre is well known and appreciated by the Todawers and Burghers of the Acheilgherry Hills, as well as the Bhateas to the north of Assam, who are said to use it extensively for the manufacture of cloth. By the former the plant is boiled before the separation of the fibre is attempted. The necessity for machinery in this case, is even more obvious than in that of the two former, although for all some readier method of separating the fibre is absolutely essential. The remarks made with respect to the rough character of the fibres of the Rhea are still more applicable to those of the Acheilgherry nettle. Indeed, so similar to wool is the fibre now under consideration, that, when cut short

and crumpled up or "scribbled" like that substance, I have known it valued by an experienced broker as wool, and its price stated accordingly. The term "vegetable wool," which it has already received, is therefore very suitable.

The diameters of the fibres of the *Urtica heterophylla* are exhibited in the following table:

Acheilgherry Nettle (*Urtica heterophylla*)

Name and Place of growth	Diameter of Fibres.					
	Ordinary			Ultimate		
	Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean
	Inch	Inch	Inch	Inch	Inch	Inch
<i>Urtica heterophylla</i> from the Acheilgherry Hills.	.00160	.00420	.00290	.00040	.00070	.00055
	.00140	.00380	.00245	.00035	.00066	.00052
	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mean —	.00150	.00385	.00267	.000390	.000680	.000535
	$\frac{1}{660}$	$\frac{1}{260}$	$\frac{1}{370}$	$\frac{1}{2600}$	$\frac{1}{1500}$	$\frac{1}{1900}$

No. 107 (Tileres and Sick)

Department of Revenue, Agriculture & Commerce,

Simla, the 28th August 1875.

Copy, together with copy of the enclosure
forwarded to the Government of Madras for
information, with reference to the correspondence
ending with its letter No. 1142 dated the 31st of July
1872.

By order,

R. O'Connor

for Under Secretary to the Govt. of India.