



PLANTS PEOPLE  
POSSIBILITIES

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Tengah Bark

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## DXLIV.—TENGAH BARK.

The species of the small natural group of Mangroves form one of the most characteristic features of the muddy tidal estuaries of the tropics. *Rhizophora*, the typical genus, is found in both the old and the new world; the others are confined to the former.

The *Kew Bulletin* for 1892 (pp. 227-232) contained a full account of an attempt to introduce West Indian Mangrove bark into European commerce as a tanning material.

The present correspondence gives the available information respecting one of the East Indian Mangroves, *Ceriops candolleana*, which appear to be attracting some attention.

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DIRECTOR, GARDENS AND FOREST DEPARTMENT, STRAITS  
SETTLEMENTS, to ROYAL GARDENS, KEW.

Singapore,

DEAR MR. THISELTON-DYER,

November 8, 1892.

I AM sending you a small box of extract of Tengah bark (*Ceriops candolleana*). This bark is used here for tanning, and also for dyeing, especially in conjunction with Indigo. The bark was cut up in bits and boiled for two hours in a copper pan, and the liquid eventually dried by heat.

In dyeing, it is used to give a brownish red colour to cloth, but especially to get good black and purple. The cloth is first dyed in Tengah, dried, and then dipped in Indigo, and comes out purple or black according to the strength used.

The tree is very common here and used as firewood, and the bark mostly wasted. So it could be prepared at no great cost. I should be glad if you would get an opinion on it either as either a dye or a tan.

Mangrove extracts have, I believe, been tried before, but have not been successful, because there has not been any attempt to discriminate between the species, but all kinds of barks have been stewed up together and the result tried. Now, I am going to work through all the Mangrove tan barks one by one, and try if we cannot make some use of them.

Yours, &c.

(Signed) HENRY N. RIDLEY.

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NOTE by the PROFESSOR OF DYEING, YORKSHIRE COLLEGE, LEEDS.

“Tengah” bark extract behaves, as regards its dyeing properties, in a similar manner to a good quality of Catechu.

When used along with Indigo, as is apparently the practice, the latter is probably applied in a “copperas” (ferrous sulphate) vat; in which case the “Tengah” will combine with the iron and produce, as indicated above, a grey colour, which in conjunction with the Indigo blue gives the black.

Tengah extract would certainly be of value to dyers.

(Signed) J. J. HUMMEL.

February 8, 1893.

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MESSRS. WALLACE BROTHERS to ROYAL GARDENS, KEW.

8, Austin Friars, London, E.C.,

February 11, 1897.

SIR,

WE are sending you by parcel post a sample of Mangrove bark from British North Borneo, which we understand is known there as Kulit Tengah Mangrove. From this bark a substance is produced which is used largely in dyeing, and we shall feel much obliged if you will inform us whether the particular description of Mangrove tree from which this bark is produced is found in British Burma. There are, we know, large quantities of Mangrove trees in Burma, but we are not sure if they consist of the particular description represented by the sample we are sending you.

We understand that the common Mangrove, generically known in Borneo as Bakau, also produces a dye, but of a darker colour than the Tengah.

Perhaps you can oblige us with the botanical names of the Tengah and of the common Mangrove.

We are, &c.

(Signed) WALLACE BROTHERS.

W. T. Thiselton-Dyer, Esq., C.M.G., F.R.S.,  
Director, Royal Gardens, Kew.

ROYAL GARDENS, KEW, to MESSRS. WALLACE BROTHERS.

Royal Gardens, Kew,

February 12, 1897.

SIRS,

I AM in receipt of your letter of yesterday's date.

Tengah bark is an article known to us only from the Straits Settlements. Its botanical name is *Ceriops candolleana*. It belongs to the mangrove family, and no doubt occurs both in Borneo and in all the tidal rivers of British India. It has been studied in the Leeds Dyeing School, and was regarded as "of value to dyers."

2. I should be disposed to regard the article known as "Bakau Cutch" as possibly derived from the same plant as the "Tengah extract."

3. The two species of mangrove which are widely dispersed throughout the eastern tropics are *Rhizophora mucronata* and *Rhizophora conjugata*.

I am, &c.

(Signed) W. T. THISELTON-DYER.

Messrs. Wallace Brothers,  
8, Austin Friars, London, E.C.

## DXLV.—WEST INDIA SUGAR TRADE.

The following article is reproduced from the *Times* of November 30th last. It gives an extremely clear account of the state at that date of the problem of sugar cultivation in British Colonies and the cause of its decay. And it is the more valuable as it does this from an impartial and independent point of view:—

"The position of the West Indian sugar trade, which has led to the appointment of an Imperial Commission to proceed to the West Indies