A new Species of Stictis from India

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During a visit to Darjeeling, West Bengal, a Discomycetous fungus was found most prevalent on dead stems of *Eupatorium* sp. in the surrounding area. Moist and shady places especially appeared to favor profuse development of the fungus. Minute snuff brown, button-like to discoid fruiting bodies appeared closely scattered on the stem surface. Examination of a v. s. through the fructification revealed it an undescribed species of *Stictis*. The genus *Stictis* was established by Persoon in 1796 with *S. radiata* (Linn.) Persoon at its type (2). Since then numerous species of this genus have been described from various regions of the world. But no representative of the same has so far been reported from India and the present report constitutes the first record of its occurrence in the country. A formal description of the fungus is given below:

Stictis bengalensis sp. nov.

Apothecia 0.5 mm rarely upto 1 mm in diameter, partially immersed in the stem cortex, usually formed in close groups, sessile, open with a minute snuff brown disc surrounded by a snowwhite border. Asci hyaline, mostly cylindrical, smooth, thin-walled, octosporous, rounded at apex with a narrow central pore and measuring 275 to 355 μ × 7.5 to 12.5 μ. Ascospores hyaline, long, narrowly cylindrical to filiform, lying parallel in the ascus, arranged spirally, multiseptate, smooth, thinwalled, much vacuolate and measuring 240 to 345 μ × 2.5 μ. Paraphyses hyaline, slender, simple and multiseptate. Hymenium stained blue with iodine.

On dead stems of *Eupatorium* sp. at Darjeeling, West Bengal on 23 November, 1964. Leg. U. P. Singh. TYPE (MSP no. 332). (Figs. 1 to 4).

Apothecia irregulariter dispersa, plerumque solitaria, raro bina complurave subaggregata, tunc greges irregulares laxos vel subdensos formantia, cortici immersa, ambitu orbicularia vel late elliptica, e globoso late depresso-urceolata, usque ad 1 mm diam., margine distincte involuto albido tantum erumpentia, osculo subrotundo late aperta; excipulo crassiusculo, pseudoparenchymatico, e cellulis rotundato-angulosis composito; disco brunneo; asci dense parallele stipati, cylindracei, antice late rotundati, poro minuto pertusi, tenuiter tunicati, postice abruptiuscule sed parum attenuati, sessiles, 8-spori, 275—355 × 7.5—12.5 μ; sporae

crassiuscule filiformes, utrinque vix vel parum attenuatae, obtusiusculae, in asco parallele vel raro etiam spiraliter ordinatae, hyalinae, leves, tenuiter tunicatae, multiseptatae, vacuolis numerosis praeditae, rectae vel parum curvulae, 240—245 × 2.5 μ; paraphyses subnumerosae, tenuiter filiformes, simplices, ascos aequantes vel parum superantes; hymenio jodo ope caerulescens.

The well isolated hymenium develops singly through the stem cortex. Accumulation of a crystalline substance is found embedded in the hyaline hyphae forming the snowwhite border around the apothecium. Comparative observations indicate that the species differs from *S. stellata* Wallr. reported to occur on this and several other hosts in color of the apothecium and morphology of the asci and ascospores. The hymenium is not stained blue in *S. stellata*, while staining with dilute iodine sol. imparts blue color to the hymenium of this fungus. The paraphyses are simple and straight unlike those in the former. It is also distinct from *S. radiata* which is closely similar to *S. stellata* except in the morphology of the ascospores (1). Portions of the type material are being deposited at the Herbarium Crypt. Indiae Orient., Indian Agricul-

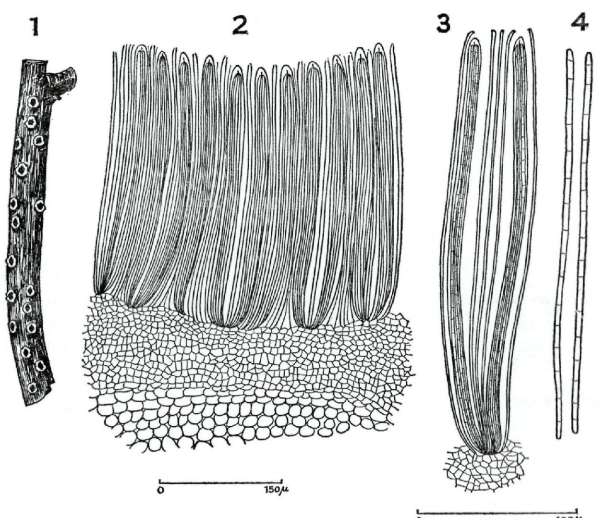

Fig. I. 1. Apothecia on the dead twig of *Eupatorium* sp. Nat. size. — 2. Portion of v. s. through an apothecium. — 3. Typical asci and paraphyses. — 4. Spores.

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