

Cramer in 1779, and Olivier in 1790, and other authors, figured and described it under the same name, and no one doubted that it was the famous wild Chinese silk-worm so well indicated by Father d'Incarville, but no person in Europe knew its caterpillar nor the plant on which it fed, nor its cocoon.

In 1804 the English botanist, Roxbury, in the Transactions of Linnaean Society of London, vol. vi., p. 42, pl. iii., designated another species, very similar to the preceding, which is domesticated in Hindostan, and feeds on the leaves of *Ricinus* (*Palma Christi*). In form and color it nearly resembles the *B. Cynthia*, and Roxbury confounded the two. He has given very interesting details of the *Bombyx* of the *Palma Christi*, its caterpillar, cocoon and silk, considering it as the true *Bombyx* of China, and all the entomologists adopted his opinion.

It was only in 1857 that M. Guerin De Meneville, the eminent French naturalist, showed the distinct specific character of the two, by a scientific comparison of numerous specimens. The name of Roxbury's insect is now known as *B. (Attacus) Arrindia*.

Europe owes the *B. (Attacus) Cynthia* to Father Fantoni, a Piedmontese missionary in the province of *Han-Tung*, who sent some living cocoons to his friends in Turin, in November, 1856.

These cocoons produced the butterfly in May, 1857. Fecundated eggs were laid in June, which were hatched some days afterwards. Father Fantoni had not, however, informed his friends on what the worms fed, but as portions of the leaves, which still covered some of the cocoons, had the greatest resemblance to the *Ailanthus*, they gave some to the caterpillars, which greedily devoured them. Here was a great point gained.

M. Guerin De Meneville was at Turin at this time, and obtained several of the cocoons, which he carefully conveyed to France, from which and other cocoons, subsequently received, he and his co-laborers have since procured hundreds of thousands of caterpillars which have spun their cocoons as in their native country, so that the insect is perfectly acclimated in France, and that distinguished gentleman has the honor of having first introduced it into that country, and thus has opened a new and fruitful source of wealth and comfort. He has demonstrated that this insect can be reared in France at little expense, and that those who devote a small portion of time to it will gain a rich remuneration.

At a time when silk, in consequence of the malady of the mulberry tree and of its silk-worm in Europe, is becoming more and more scarce and dear, when the production of cotton will most probably decline, when the prices of provisions are rapidly advancing, the discovery of a textile material, which can be produced on our soil in great quantities, and at a low price, should be considered a fortunate event.

It is demonstrated that the silk furnished by the *Bombyx Cynthia*, which lives in the open air on the *Ailanthus*, combines all these conditions.