

sericulture, as a means of promoting its establishment among the people, by affording them practical instruction in the process and by distribution of silkworms and mulberry trees, and that the General Government also offer in each Province a handsome reward for the best white mulberry plantation established within the next fifteen months; and a similar reward to the most successful cultivator of silk within a given time, say the next four years, so as to allow time for the growth and maturity of the mulberry trees.

Mr. R. W. Fereday, (member of your Committee) has recently received a letter from his friend Dr. Wallace, of Colchester, England, who has been engaged for some years in practically testing sericulture in England, and has written several valuable essays and works upon the subject. Dr. Wallace in this letter, after strongly urging the establishment of sericulture (especially as regards the mulberry worm *Bombyx mori*) in this country, says:—"Mr. Henry Smith, United Club, Yokohama, Japan, is my agent, and from him you can procure anything in the silk line you require; he would even send over to New Zealand for you a Japanese silk farmer to instruct you in the process and superintend operations."

Your Committee would suggest that the General Government communicate at once with Mr. Smith for the purpose of ascertaining the terms upon which the services of a Japanese silk farmer could be engaged, with a view to his being employed by the Government in affording instruction throughout the Colony, and visiting from time to time such silk establishments as may be formed—your Committee being of opinion, that the services of such a person in the Colony would be invaluable in promoting the welfare and success of its silk culture.

Your Committee have before them a great deal of other valuable information on silk culture generally; but as it is such as the Government are most probably already in possession of, your Committee think its introduction would unnecessarily encumber this report.

The above report is confined to the subject of culture of the mulberry silkworms (*Bombyx mori*) the most valuable of the silkworm species. Of the other species, except the alioth, we do not find that there have been any experiments made in the Province.

Eggs of the alioth silkworm, *Bombyx cynthia*, were obtained by this Society and distributed in 1868, but the experiments as to its culture were not very successful; but further experiments may lead to better results.

The food plant *Ailanthus glandulosa* grows here with the greatest possible luxuriance, yielding an abundance of food for the caterpillar; but so far as our experience goes, the silk is not to be compared with that of the *Bombyx mori*, and the tree is liable to suffer from the contingency of late spring and early autumn frost.

In conclusion, your Committee desire to urge the importance of vigorous exertions in extensively planting and cultivating the white mulberry, so that advantage may be taken as soon as possible of the high price of silk arising from disease in the silkworm in the countries contributing the greater portion of raw silk for European manufacture.

15th June, 1870.

W. WILSON,
RICH. WM. FEREDAY,
S. C. FARR, Hon. Sec.

Sub-Enclosure 1 to Enclosure in No. 14.

Mr. W. WILSON to the CHAIRMAN, Canterbury Acclimatization Society.

SIR,—

I have much pleasure in yielding to the Acclimatization Society's wish that I should furnish a brief detail of my own experience in the culture of the silkworm, and of the means I adopted for conducting the experiment through its various stages, from the acquirement of the eggs of the silkworm to the production of a considerable quantity of fine glossy silk, a sample of which I herewith enclose.

INTRODUCTION.

In the month of July, 1869, I planted in my orchard two well-grown black mulberry trees, with the view of practically testing their value for the rearing of the mulberry silkworm. I found the tree perfectly hardy,—as easy of cultivation as any hardy fruit tree, and producing an abundance of thick succulent leaves from the middle of October to about the same period in the month of April, the two trees yielding an abundance of leaves for 130 silkworms, without impairing in the least degree the health of the trees, although under the disadvantage of having been recently transplanted. It is reasonable to suppose that when they are one year established, their growth will be much greater, and they will then yield a full half more leaves, and so on progressively during at least the first ten years of their growth, besides abundant crops of a very agreeable fruit, provided the stripping of the leaves be not overdone.

Eggs.

Resolving to carry on my silkworm-rearing experiment, towards the end of August I succeeded in obtaining a piece of absorbent paper, dotted over with about 150 of the eggs of the silkworm. I at once put these on an ordinary earthenware plate, which I placed in the window of a cool drawing-room, the windows of which having a warm northerly aspect, appeared to be all that was necessary to insure the eggs being successfully hatched; for by the 10th of September the first of the worms began to appear, and within fourteen days the full number of 130 worms had been hatched. The remaining twenty eggs, showing no symptoms of life, appeared to have lost their vitality, and were soon afterwards removed.

TREATMENT OF THE WORMS.

Upon the first appearance of the worms I felt that they had been at least four weeks too soon brought into existence, for at this date the mulberry trees were, by their swelling buds, only just showing symptoms of vitality, with no likelihood of their leaves being expanded before the middle of October. In the midst of my concern lest my experiment might be brought to a sudden collapse for the want of food for the worms, I suddenly recollected that I had somewhere read that the worms in the earlier