patterns and colours peculiar to that people. They established the trade in the thriving towns of Asia Minor, and they planted it as far west as Sicily, as Sicilian silks of the 12th century with Saracenic patterns still testify. Ordericus Vitalis, who died in the first half of the 12th century, mentions that the bishop of St Evroul, in Normandy, brought with him from Apulia in southern Italy several large pieces of silk, out of the finest of which four copes were made for his cathedral chanters. The cultivation and manufacture spread northwards to Florence, Milan, Genoa, and Venice—all towns which became famous for silken textures in mediæval times. In 1480 silk weaving was begun under Louis XI. at Tours, and in 1520 Francis I. brought from Milan silkworm eggs, which were reared in the Rhone valley. About the beginning of the 17th century Olivier de Serres and Laffémas, somewhat against the will of Sully, obtained royal edicts favouring the growth of mulberry plantations and the cultivation of silk; but it cannot be said that these industries were firmly established till Colbert encouraged the planting of the mulberry by premiums, and otherwise stimulated local efforts.

Into England silk manufacture was introduced during the reign of Henry VI.; but the first serious impulse to manufactures of that class was due to the immigration in 1585 of a large body of skilled Flemish weavers who fled from the Low Countries in consequence of the struggle with Spain then devastating their land. Precisely one hundred years later religious troubles again gave the second and most effective impetus to the silk-trade of England, when the revocation of the edict of Nantes sent simultaneously to Switzerland, Germany, and England a vast body of the most skilled artisans of France, who planted in these countries silk-weaving colonies which are to this day the principal rivals of the French manufac­turers. The bulk of the French Protestant weavers settled at Spitalfields, London,—an incorporation of silk throwsters having been there formed in 1629. James I. used many efforts to encourage the planting of the mulberry and the rearing of silkworms both at home and in the colonies. In 1825 a public company was formed and incorporated under the name of the British, Irish, and Colonial Silk Company, with a capital of £1,000,000, principally with the view of introducing sericulture into Ireland, but it was a complete failure, and the rearing of the silkworm cannot be said ever to have become a branch of British industry.

In 1522 Cortes appointed officials to introduce sericul­ture into New Spain (Mexico), and mulberry trees were then planted and eggs were brought from Spain. The Mexican adventure is mentioned by Acosta, but all trace of the culture had died out before the end of the century. In 1609 James I. attempted to reinstate the silkworm on the American continent, but his first effort failed through shipwreck. An effort made in 1619 obtained greater success, and, the materials being present, the Virginian settlers were strongly urged to devote attention to the profitable industry of silk cultivation. Sericulture was enjoined under penalties by statute; it was encouraged by bounties and rewards; and its prosecution was stimulated by learned essays and rhapsodical rhymes, of which this is a sample:—

Where Wormes and Food doe naturally abound A gallant Silken Trade must there be found.

Virginia excels the World in both—

Envie nor malice can gaine say this troth!

In the prospectus of Law’s great *Compagnie des Indes Occidentales* the cultivation of silk occupies a place among the glowing attractions which allured so many to disaster. Onward till the period of the War of Independence

bounties and other rewards for the rearing of worms and silk filature continued to be offered; and just when the war broke out Benjamin Franklin and others were engaged in nursing a filature into healthy life at Philadelphia. With the resumption of peaceful enterprise, the stimulus of bounties was again applied—first by Connecticut in 1783; and such efforts have been continued sporadically down almost to the present day. Bounties were last offered by the State of California in 1865-66, but the State law was soon repealed, and an attempt to obtain State encourage­ment again in 1872 was defeated. About 1838 a specu­lative mania for the cultivation of silk developed itself with remarkable severity in the United States. It was caused principally through the representations of Samuel Whitmarsh as to the capabilities of the South Sea Islands mulberry (*Morus multicaulis*) for feeding silkworms; and so intense was the excitement that plants and crops of all kinds were displaced to make room for plantations of *multicaulis.* In Pennsylvania as much as $300,000 changed hands for plants in one week, and frequently the young trees were sold two and three times over within a few days at ever-advancing prices. Plants of a single year’s growth reached the ridiculous price of $1 each at the height of the fever, which, however, did not last long, for in 1839 the speculation collapsed; the famous *Morus multicaulis* was found to be no golden tree, and the costly plantations were uprooted.

The most singular feature in connexion with the history of silk is the persistent efforts which have been made by monarchs and other potentates to stimulate sericulture within their dominions, efforts which continue to this day in British colonies, India, and America. These endeavours to stimulate by artificial means have in scarcely any instance resulted in permanent success. In truth raw silk can only be profitably brought to the market where there is abundant and very cheap labour,—the fact that China, Japan, Bengal, Piedmont, and the Levant are the principal producing localities making that plain.

*The Silkworm.*

The mulberry-feeding moth, *Bombyx mori,* which is the principal source of silk, belongs to the *Bombycidæ,* a family of *Lepidoptera* in which

are embraced some of the

largest and most hand­

some moths (see vol. iv.

p 596). *B. mori* is itself

an inconspicuous moth

(figs. 1 and 2) of an ashy

white colour, with a body

in the case of the male

not half an inch in length,

the female being a little

longer and stouter. Its wings are short and weak; the fore pair are falcate, and the hind pair do not reach to the end of the body. The

larva (fig. 3) is hair­

less, of an ashy grey or

cream colour, attains

to a length of from 3

to 31/2 inches, and is

slender in comparison

with many of its allies.

The second thoracic

ring is humped, and

there is a spine-like

horn or protuberance

at the tail. The

common silkworm produces as a rule only one generation during the year; but there are races in cultivation which