

position twenty feet away. These insects afforded him opportunities for witnessing the progress of sloughing. After the head was freed, the skin was worked backward. First one segment of the body was expanded and contracted alternately, till quite free, then the next, and so on, till the change of dress was completed. The skin even of the small spines on the warts of the creature came away. The whole process occupied 20 minutes.

The cocoon of *Attacus Cecropia* is a marvel of comfortable security. The creature, when spinning it, has the power of assimilating it, in color, to surrounding objects. I have before me a cocoon which was spun by a larva confined in a white box, and is itself perfectly white, and another, which is of the warm brown of the bark and dried leaves of the red cherry tree to a twig of which it was attached.

I saw, when a boy, a case of these insects and their cocoons, in the Crystal Palace Exhibition, in Hyde Park, where attention was drawn to them with a view to a possible silk-manufacture. So long ago as 1759, the Rev. S. Pullett made silk stockings from *Cecropia* silk, and published his observations in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society. The obstacle in the way of utilizing the silk seems to be the difficulty of unwinding the cocoons. It has been suggested that they should be soaked in weak lye, to which slaked lime has been added; and that the silk should be heckled and spun. The cocoons of a near relative of *Cecropia*, the Ailanthus moth (*Attacus ricini*), of Farther India, which feeds on the Palma Christi (*Ricinus communis*), are carded and spun like cotton, and the stuff formed from them is of incredible durability.

*Attacus Cecropia*, in its perfect state, is a beautiful and stately object. Its prevailing colors are black, white, and Indian red, and these are presented both in broad contrasts and harmonious blendings, in a variety of cloudings, wavelets, lunes and spots. But owing to its nocturnal habits, the creature is seldom seen. The nearest approach that many a one has made to an acquaintance with the *Cecropia* moth, has been the noticing of a bat-like object flitting through the gloom of a summer night.