

Culture the Product of Efficient Teaching.*To the Editor of the Educational Review.*

DEAR SIR,—A letter from Mr. P. J. Shaw, which appeared under the above title in your October number, seems to call for just a word or two of protest, if you will allow it. This letter claims, in the words of Mr. Bailey, whom the writer quotes, that "Culture is the product only of efficient teaching whatever the subject matter may be." The school of thieving, described by Dickens in "Oliver Twist," where theft was taught with great efficiency by Mr. Fagin, would satisfy all the requirements of this new definition of culture; for "Culture is the product only of efficient teaching, *whatever the subject matter may be.*" But perhaps Mr. Shaw does not wish us to take these words too literally. Even after the most charitable interpretation possible has been given to the words, the fact will remain that different subjects are related to different ideals and aspirations in the mind of the boy or girl who is to be educated, and a subject of instruction which makes an appeal to what is highest in human nature will be a more powerful instrument of culture, in the true sense of the word, than a subject which cannot make such an appeal. The definition of culture propounded by Mr. Bailey and approved of by Mr. Shaw, is therefore false. The apostles of the new "Nature Study" propaganda must be getting into dire extremities if they are compelled to put forward such arguments.

"The study of Greek," Mr. Shaw's quotation goes on to say, "is no more a proper means of education than is the study of indian corn. The mind may be developed by means of either one. Classics and calculus are no more divine than machines and potatoes are." With regard to that statement surely it would be wiser to speak with more discrimination, and to say that, while "indian corn and machines and potatoes" may suffice for some, there will always be many who will prefer Greek and mathematics, and for them at least these latter subjects will furnish the better mental training.

Mr. Bailey, Mr. Shaw tells us, if he "has any gifts intends to use them for the spiritualizing of Agriculture." Mr. Shaw, too, no doubt, in all his strenuousness, is seeking to promote the interests of that occupation, and in this endeavour we shall all wish

him every success. If he can eradicate the ragwort from the fields of our province and guard our orchards from the ravages of the brown-tail moth, he will be promoting to an enormous extent the material prosperity of his country. But when it comes to the question of education, our farmers, as well as every other class in the community, will endeavour to secure for their children the education best adapted to the tastes and capacities of each of them. We shall not belittle the farmers' intelligence and common sense by supposing that they will listen with patience to theories concerning the "spiritualizing of Agriculture," or the divinity in potatoes."

A FARMER'S SON.

Cocoons.

The children take much pleasure in bringing in caterpillars of various kinds in the fall months and "raising cocoons." If these are not given the proper diet, or if for any other reason they do not seem inclined to spin their cocoon they may be released and others obtained. Late in the fall bright eyes may find cocoons on vines and bushes. Good specimens of another kind may be found covered by the earth under tomato vines. We have been most successful with the cecropia and polyphemus moths. This makes an excellent beginning for nature study in any grade, and one which holds the pupils' interest from fall until the moth or butterfly emerges in the spring. Much may be learned of its habits, manner of drying wings, eating, and of its construction before releasing the developed moth.

Nature Study and Language.

Write a sentence for each word in this list stating what animal makes the noise indicated. Then select any dozen or more of the words, and write a story in which they shall all be properly used:

Baa, bay, bark, bellow, bleat, bray, buzz, cackle, caw, chatter, chirp, coo, croak, crow, cry, drone, drum, gobble, growl, grunt, hiss, hoot, howl, hum, low, mew, moe, neigh, pipe, purr, quack, roar, scream, screech, sing, snarl, squeal, twitter, whine, whinney, whistle, yell, yelp.—Sel.