

THE Journal of the Society of Arts prints an interesting letter from Mr. T. F. Peppe, on the cultivation of the so-called wild silks of India. Mr. Peppe points out that in many parts of India the jungle consists of the plants on which the tussur worm feeds, and that the supply of labour is practically unlimited. At present the work is carried on only by a few tribes who have been accustomed to it from time immemorial ; but nearly all the aboriginal tribes of India might be available, if their services were in demand. The chief obstacle to the rapid development of the industry is the difficulty of procuring seed-cocoons, which have to be sought for in the wild state in the jungles. This difficulty, however, Mr. Peppe thinks, will be gradually overcome, since in every cultivated tract there are always a few cocoons which escape detection and collection, and which add to the number of wild cocoons found in the next brood. The industry is precarious, but there are several crops in the season, and if one fails the others may succeed. Mr. Peppe has cultivated tussur for three years, yet he is not prepared to say how many broods are possible in a year. Each brood so overlaps the succeeding one, that it is very difficult to distinguish one brood from another.