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THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

The new mission study book, "The Light of the World," is now published and can be obtained from The United Study of Missions Committee, Medford, Mass., at 30c. and 50c. The name of the writer speaks for the quality of the book—Robert E. Speer, of New York.

It is written with a view of being suitable for class work, either in Mission Circles or Young Peoples' Societies, and is well arranged for such study. But that by no means affects it for general reading. It is most interesting and most informing, and the women in our Circles will lose a very great deal if they do not take advantage of this opportunity to gain the information therein contained. The same may be said of our Circles themselves. It would be hard to conceive of a more profitable way to spend part of the afternoon during the winter meetings of the Circle, which are devoted to Foreign Missions, than by studying carefully and thoughtfully these chapters. It may excite some interest to know just how the book is made up and to have a glimpse at its contents. There are six chapters, four dealing with the great religions which Christianity is meeting in the heathen world,—Hinduism, Buddhism, Animism, Confucianism, Taoism and Mohammedanism, and the last two dealing with "What the Christians of Asia Think of the Non-Christian Religions," and "Christ, the Only Light of the World." At the end of each chapter is given a list of questions for review purposes and a list of references to the most noted writers on the subject under discussion.

Hinduism, that religion with which we are chiefly concerned in India, is shown to be so old as to date from the dawn of history and yet to be able to "shift its view and modify its character to incorporate the forces that beat upon it." The Indian people are given full justice, for while we in the West are always behind our relig-

ion in goodness, the people of India are really better than theirs. They are usually simple, temperate, kindly and religious. There is also good in the Hindu religion, though buried in much that is worthless. The sacred books of Hinduism are of two classes,—the *Sruti*, "that which is heard or revealed," and the *Smriti*, "that which is remembered and handed down by tradition." These two divisions are very much sub-divided, but the favorites are the Vedic hymns, the Upanishads, the Vedanta philosophy, and the Bhagavad-gita. The Vedas are considered the only infallible revelation. The Upanishads introduce the note of pessimism, now so generally found in Indian thought. Though there are so many sacred books, "Hindu literature is an endless succession of fruitless attempts to reach a satisfying sacred book." One of the enlightened Hindu writers himself says: "Half an hour's study of the Bible will do more to remodel a man than a whole day spent in repeating the slokas of the Puranas." The three forms of Hinduism with which the missionary comes in contact to-day are philosophic Hinduism, popular Hinduism and reformed Hinduism. The first is essentially the old pantheistic philosophy, and with its recent revival are connected the names of Swami Viva-Kanada, and Mrs. Annie Besant. "The theology of popular Hinduism is polytheism, and its worship is idolatry." And here we find names which have been made familiar to us by our missionaries,—Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Rama and Krishna with many others. In the development of popular Hinduism the religion reaches its lowest and worst stage. As in other religions, many reformers have arisen to recall the people to simpler forms. Ram Mohun Ray is a famous name among these, and it was he who established the Brahma Samaj movement, which has become so well-known. In Northern India the reform movement took quite another line, was known as Arya Samaj, and has been intimately connected with the sedition