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No. VI.

**Christianity in Japan.\***

ARISE, SHINE, FOR THY LIGHT IS COME, AND THE GLORY  
 OF THE LORD IS RISEN UPON THEE.—Isaiah LX: 1.

THE EMPIRE of JAPAN consists of four large Islands—Nippon, Kiu-siu, Sikohu, and Yesso. Nippon, the largest, 900 miles long, with an average breadth of one hundred miles, is about one fifth larger than Great Britain. Besides these there are an innumerable number of small islands. The total population at the time of the last census, in 1876, was 33,338,504. The scenery in many parts is very beautiful, and the climate, except in the rainy season, is delightful. The soil is fertile and well cultivated. Minerals are abundant. It is well watered. In short, it is a pleasant land, abounding in productions suitable for the support of man and beast. The name, Japan, is said to be derived from the Chinese word *Jih-un-quo*, or *Zi-pan-gu*, meaning the kingdom of the rising sun. The people love to call it "The Sunrise Kingdom." "O-hay-o" is the universal salutation with which the natives greet each other at the peep of day. Early in the morning the children sing out "O-hay-o." "O-hay-o" say the servants to their employers. "O-hay-o" politely say the men and women who meet on

the hillside, or on the busy mart—"The top of the morning to you," as we would say. It is a popular mistake to imagine that Japan was originally colonized by the Chinese. The Japanese resent the imputation, deeming it a disgrace to be compared with the Chinese—so long have they been accustomed to regard their nation as the fountain head of eastern civilization. The people are divided into classes, somewhat resembling the castes of India, though the line is perhaps not quite so sharply drawn. The highest dignity is the *Mikado*, or emperor, who traces his royal descent in an unbroken genealogy of 2400 years. Until within a very few years this potentate was regarded with superstitious reverence; indeed he was held to be invested with divine honours exceeding even those attributed to the Pope of Rome. He was too sacred a personage to be seen of men. No one was permitted to look upon him except the very highest nobles. His bodily presence was confined within the limits of a small principality beyond which he never went. Shrouded in mystery, he had to sit, motionless as a statue, on his throne for hours at a time wearing a heavy crown. He was not supposed to die. He only *disappeared* occasionally. It could not be expected that a monarch like that should for any great length of time exercise much control over a Kingdom divided into sixty or seventy provinces, each independent of the other, governed by local chiefs whose rule was absolute and uncontested as that of the chieftains of the

\* THE SUNRISE KINGDOM, by Mrs. Julia D. Carrothers; Free. Board of Publication, Phila. 1879. JAPAN AS A MISSION FIELD, by Rev. J. R. Worcester, the A. B. C. F. M., Boston, 1879. PROTESTANT FOREIGN MISSIONS, by Dr. Christlieb, Bonn. 1880. THE GOSPEL IN ALL LANDS, New York. 1880.