

hills. The clouds that floated slowly over the valleys took a crimson tinge, and became more and more golden as the sun approached the horizon. Over the Hakone range, hiding the lake from view, rested billowy masses of pale vapour, that crimsoned into wondrous glory as the lances of the morning sun shot them through and through—fading again into fleecy mountains whiter than snow.

Gaining the summit, we hastened around the crater, a circuit of three miles, looked down into the vast cauldron, 500 feet deep, that erewhile had spouted cataracts of flame, now entirely silent and partly filled with snow. We stood two miles above the tides of ocean, and being favoured with fine weather the view afforded was indeed sublime. A panorama with a diameter of a hundred and fifty miles lay spread out beneath us—plains, mountain ranges, lakes, rivers, and the sea far as the eye could travel, until all faded into haze on the distant horizon. The ocean expanse in tranquil majesty contrasted strangely with the restless change that marked the surface of the earth and the system of the clouds. As we stood entranced above the scene, the land was all motion, the sea was all rest.

The pilgrims on the summit, waiting for the sunrise, claim a passing notice. They believe that those who witness the sunrise from the top of Fuji will, without doubt, gain the heights of *Gokuraku*, the heaven of Buddhist saints. We were not on the top of the mountain in time to behold their devotions; I must therefore describe the scene in the words of another, who testifies to what he saw and felt: "The pilgrims began to muster, and in a few minutes there must have been something like a hundred and fifty of them standing facing the east at the edge of the crater. The moment was at hand which with many had been the hope of years. And now ensued a deep and impressive silence throughout the whole assemblage. Hands were joined and extended in the attitude of prayer; many fell on their knees and lowly murmured words which, whether of more or less deep meaning, could hardly have been less than expressive of gratitude or supplication to the Supreme Being; and a priest, standing in front of all, pronounced in a more measured, reverent manner than is common with the Buddhists, some hymn or prayer appropriate to the occasion. I envy no man who could remain unimpressed by such a sight, which indeed moved me deeply.