



## Aimé Humbert *Le Japon illustré* Paris, 1870

Leading a group of delegates, Aimé Humbert (1819-1900), President of Union Horlogère (Switzerland), arrived in Japan in 1863 on a mission to conclude a treaty of amity and trade with Japan, in order to promote Swiss exports, including watches and clocks.

It took nearly ten months for the treaty to be concluded. While engaged in this challenging mission, Humbert diligently made observations of Japanese society and people. As much as possible he saw firsthand the lifestyle of Japanese people, and with sincere curiosity, attempted to understand the culture of this foreign country that he witnessed. To help deepen his knowledge of Japan, he sought to purchase a range of books, paintings, prints, and other materials.

This book is comprised of his accounts of Edo and other places, Humbert's observations of Japanese society, as well as more than 450 illustrations depicting Japanese landscapes, traditional annual events and festivals, and the lives of people from various classes including samurai, craftsmen, and merchants. As its title *illustré* (illustrated) implies, Humbert used illustrations to vividly present to the Western world, Japanese culture in the final years of the Edo Period.

On display is the book's French original edition published in Paris in 1870. It consists of two volumes. The collection at JFIC Library includes this book as well as its English translated edition, *Japan and the Japanese: illustrated* (1874, published by Richard Bentley).