



## **George Smith** ***Ten weeks in Japan*** **London, 1861**

The author, George Smith (1815-1871), was the first Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria in Hong Kong from 1849 to 1865, which served as a base for the missionary work of the Anglican Church in the Far East. He was born in Wellington in England, and, following his studies at Oxford University, he was sent to China by the Church Missionary Society in 1844. This was the beginning of his evangelism in Asia.

He came to Japan in 1860 in order to investigate the possibilities of missionary work in Japan. It was a year after Japan opened three of its ports, Kanagawa, Nagasaki, and Hakodate, for trade with the U.K., the Netherlands, Russia, France, and the United States. It was also a period of public unrest, as Japanese Chief Minister (Tairo) Naosuke Ii (1815-1860) was assassinated by samurai of the Mito Domain outside the Sakurada Gate of Edo Castle, known as the Sakuradamon Incident. These samurai advocated reverence for the Emperor and the expulsion of foreigners.

This book records the actual conditions in Japan, including Japan's social system, the way people lived, and the state of religion in Japanese people's lives, and is a report of his observations on the prospects of missionary work in Japan. During his 10-week stay, Smith held services for foreign residents in Nagasaki. He recorded his many interactions with other foreign visitors, such as sightseeing in Edo with Sir John Rutherford Alcock (1809-1897; the first British diplomatic representative to live in Japan). The document gives a feel of the atmosphere of Japan at the end of the Edo Period (1603-1868), as the country continued to open itself to the outside world.

After he left Japan and returned to England via America, this book was published in London in 1861, It includes one map of Japan and eight illustrations.