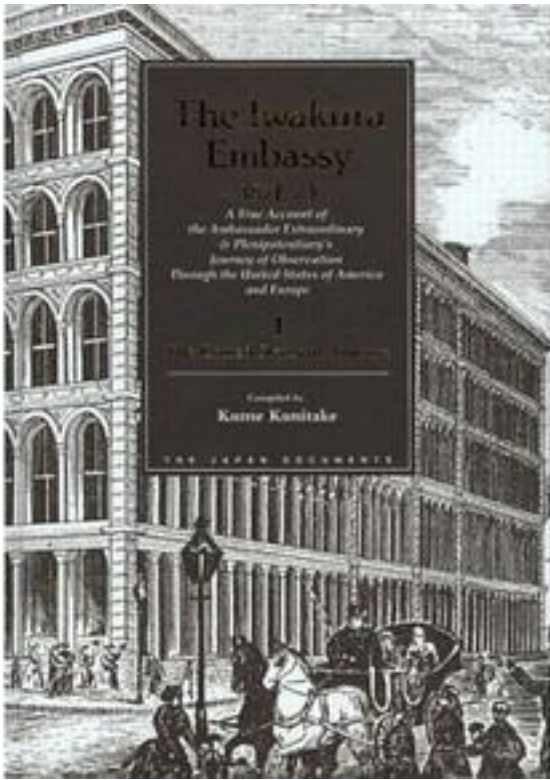


# The Iwakura Embassy, 1871-1873



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This is the first English translation of the official report submitted by the Iwakura Embassy to the Meiji government. The five volume report was first published in Japanese in 1878. Between 1977 and 1982, Iwanami Shoten published a Japanese language library edition which enabled academics worldwide to evaluate how this mission changed the course of Japanese history during, and after, the Meiji era. The 50-member Embassy, led by Iwakura Tomomi, visited the United States and 12 major European countries in search of ways in which Japan could modernize her social and

economic infrastructure. In each country the Embassy visited, it investigated that nation's political and military situation as well as the state of the economy, industry, education, culture and religion. After a total of 22 months abroad, the Embassy returned home in September 1873. This new English-language edition of the Embassy's report will undoubtedly open up avenues for further research and study by scholars throughout the world. The publication of this monumental piece of work will not only attract Western scholars of Japan, but will also be of wider importance for its remarkable first-hand demonstration and explanation of the emergence of a modern industrial nation, as well as its detailed and acute observations on the social and economic infrastructure of the countries visited.

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