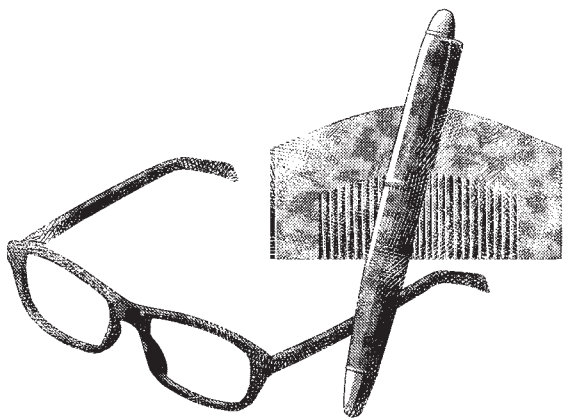


The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War,
entry to Taiwan, and Suzuki and Iwai's
domestic production of celluloid

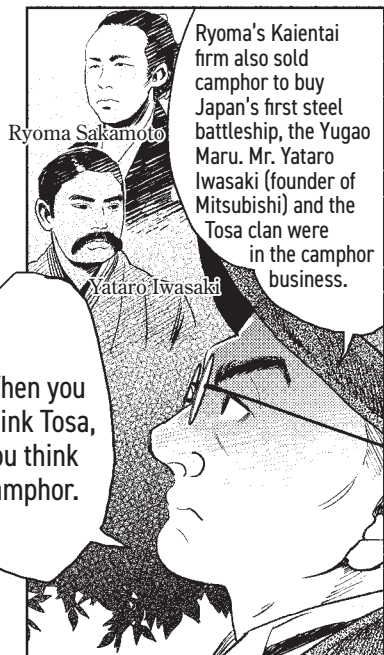
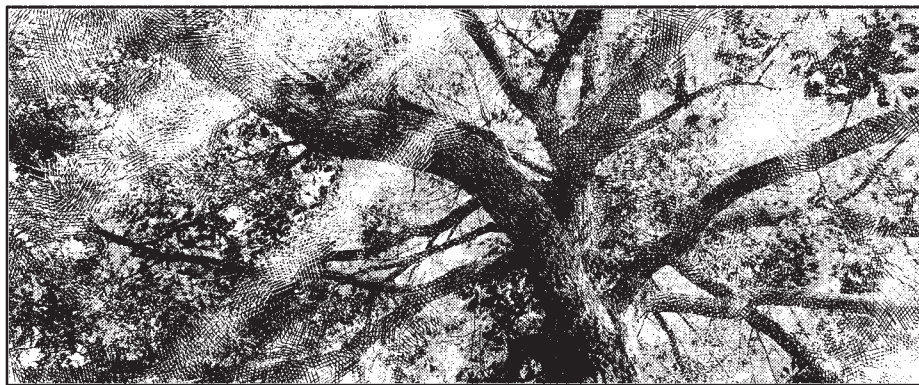


Hassojitz

*Sojitz - A General Trading Company
The Pioneers who Paved the Future
of Japan*



Shimpei Goto, celluloid, and menthol
—The key players in Japan's expansion to Taiwan and Japan's foray
into the manufacturing industry



Ryoma's Kaientai firm also sold camphor to buy Japan's first steel battleship, the Yugao Maru. Mr. Yataro Iwasaki (founder of Mitsubishi) and the Tosa clan were in the camphor business.

When you think Tosa, you think camphor.

He bought up camphor not only from his home prefecture of Kochi, but all across Japan. He then sold camphor to the foreign settlement in Kobe.

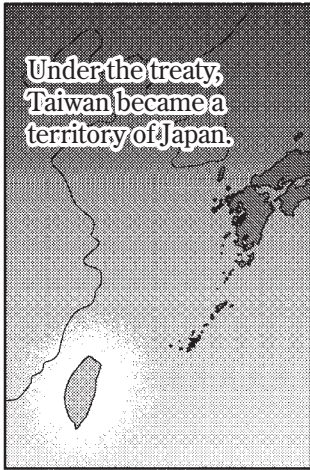


Since joining Suzuki, Kaneko had focused on camphor extracted from camphor trees.

Camphor trees are only found in parts of East Asia. Taiwan was known to have the largest plantations.



At the time camphor was used in insect repellent, medicines, and perfumes. Demand was also increasing for use in explosives and celluloid.

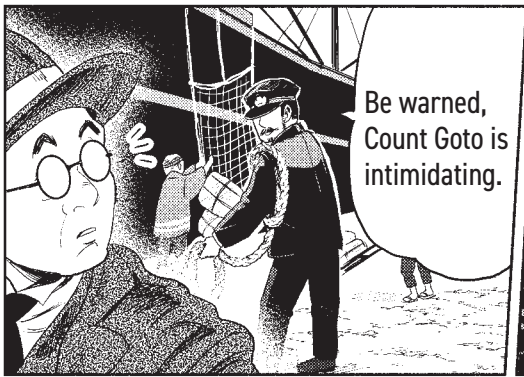
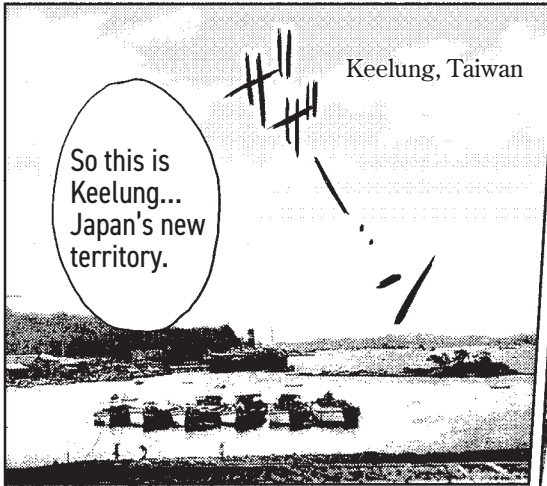
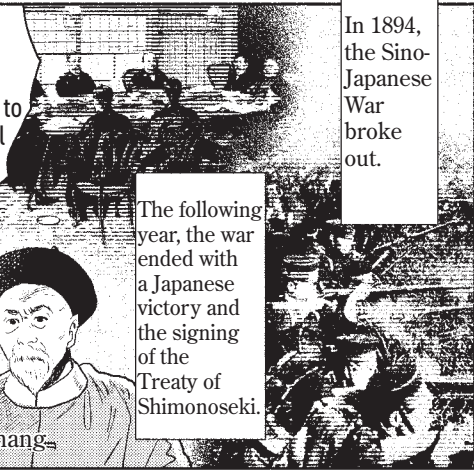


Hmph. How could our great Qing empire lose to such a small country...



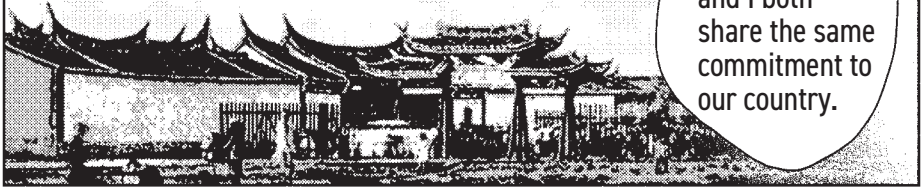
The following year, the war ended with a Japanese victory and the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

In 1894, the Sino-Japanese War broke out.

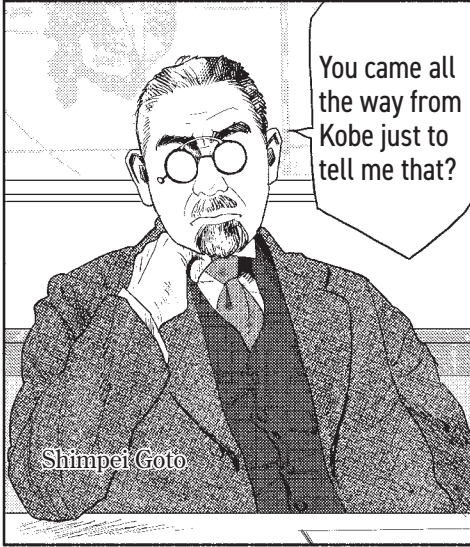


Kaneko partnered with Kobe's Goto Kaisoten Ltd. and camphor traders to embark on an expedition to Taiwan.

The Government-General of Taiwan

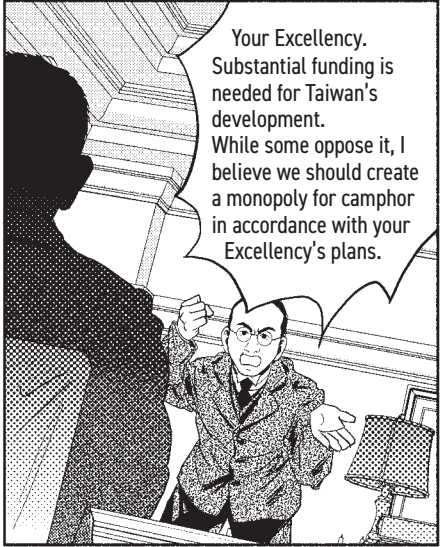


Leave it to me. Count Goto and I both share the same commitment to our country.

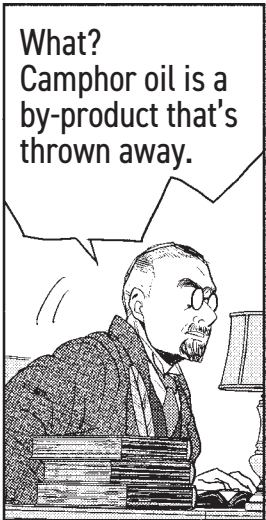


You came all the way from Kobe just to tell me that?

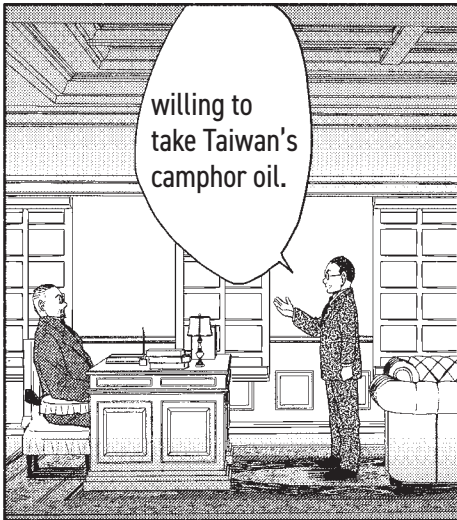
Shimppei Goto



Your Excellency. Substantial funding is needed for Taiwan's development. While some oppose it, I believe we should create a monopoly for camphor in accordance with your Excellency's plans.



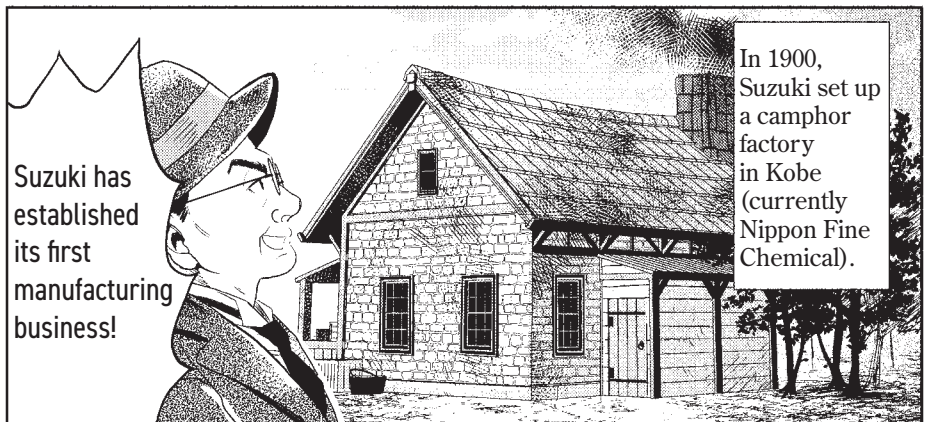
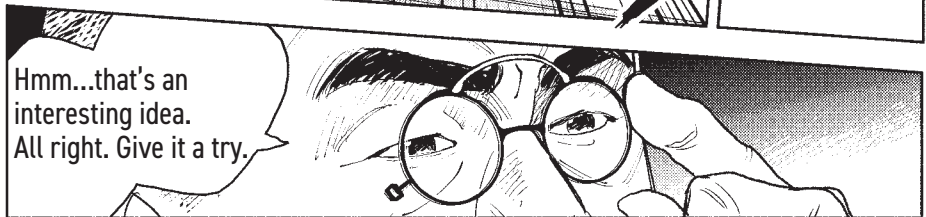
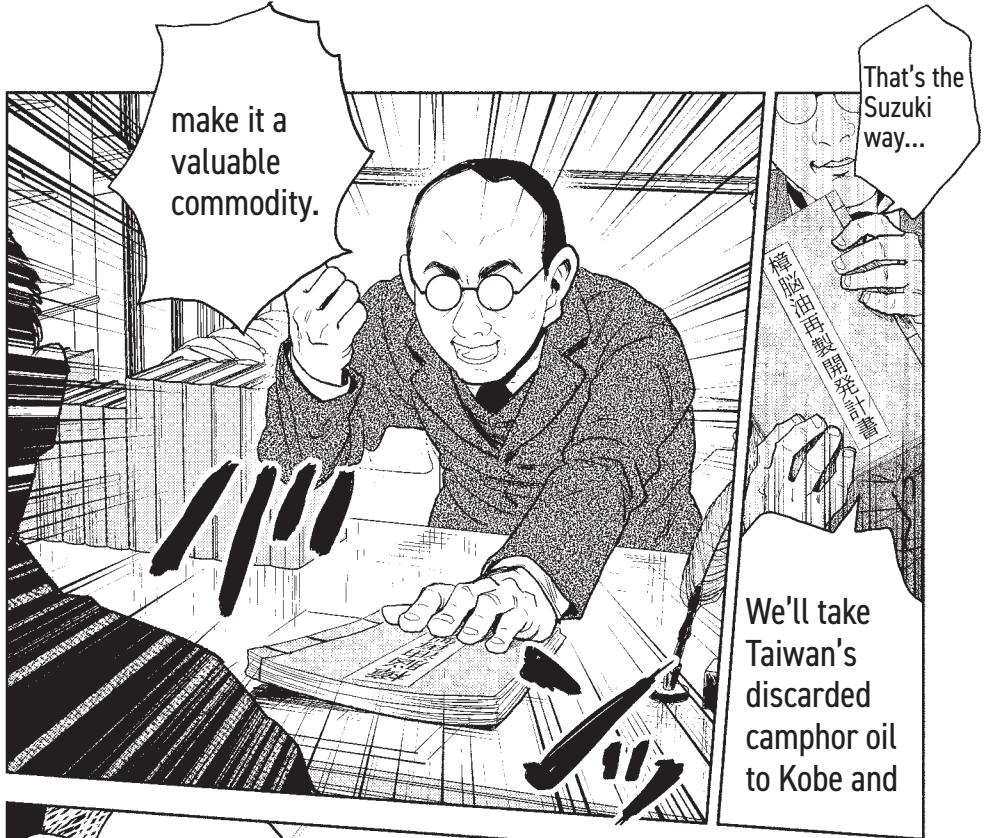
What? Camphor oil is a by-product that's thrown away.



willing to take Taiwan's camphor oil.



We at Suzuki are



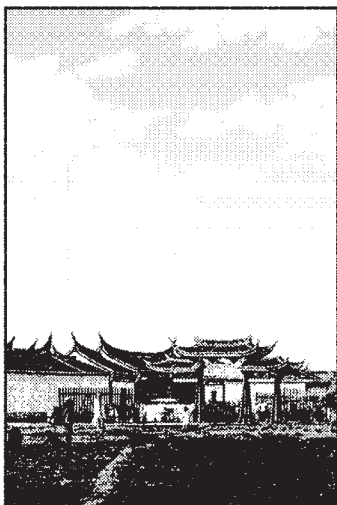
Camphor went on to become one of Kobe's leading exports.

I'll elevate Suzuki's name and change the nation. .

By manufacturing products ourselves, we'll bring prosperity to Japan.

Again? What has he come up with now?

Your Excellency, Mr. Kaneko from Suzuki & Co. is here to see you.

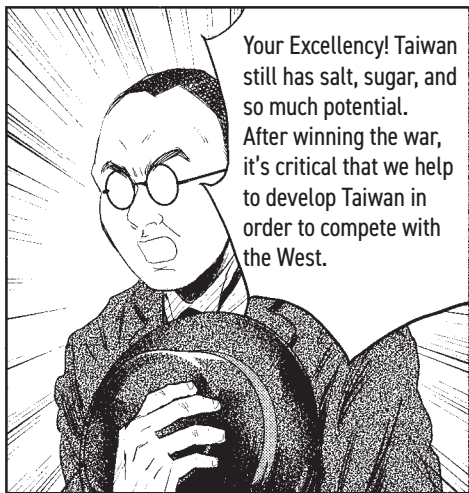


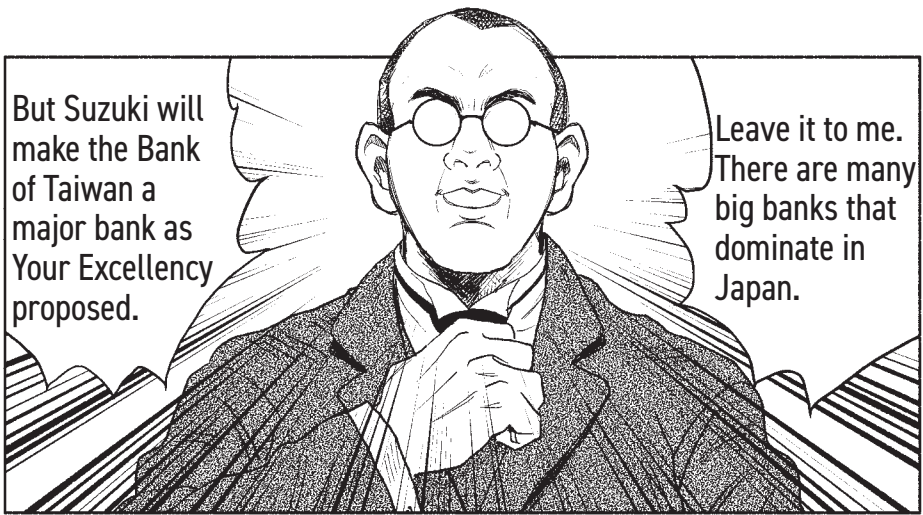
Actually, there's a matter with the Bank of Taiwan I want to ask Suzuki...

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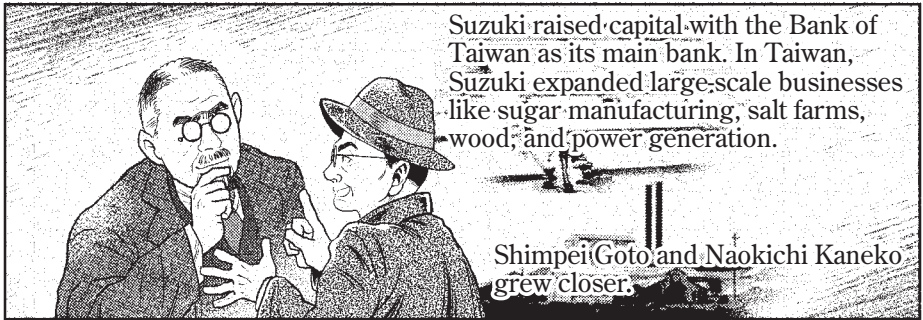
Your Excellency! Taiwan still has salt, sugar, and so much potential. After winning the war, it's critical that we help to develop Taiwan in order to compete with the West.





But Suzuki will make the Bank of Taiwan a major bank as Your Excellency proposed.

Leave it to me. There are many big banks that dominate in Japan.

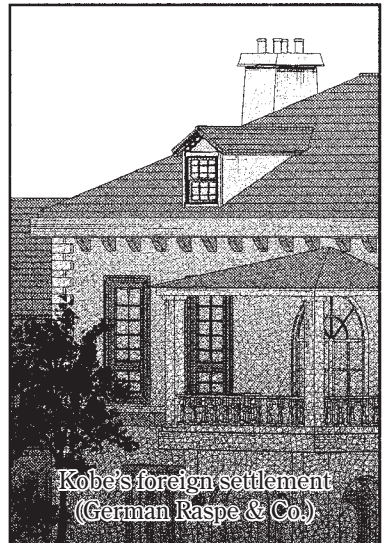


Suzuki raised capital with the Bank of Taiwan as its main bank. In Taiwan, Suzuki expanded large-scale businesses like sugar manufacturing, salt farms, wood, and power generation.

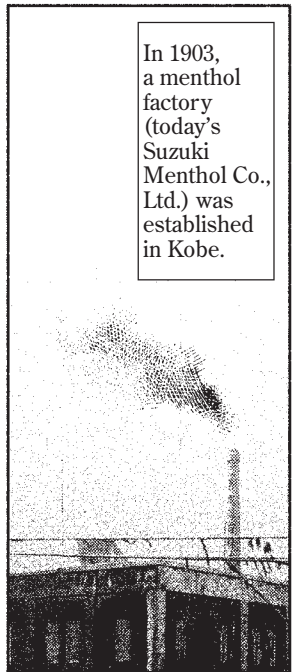
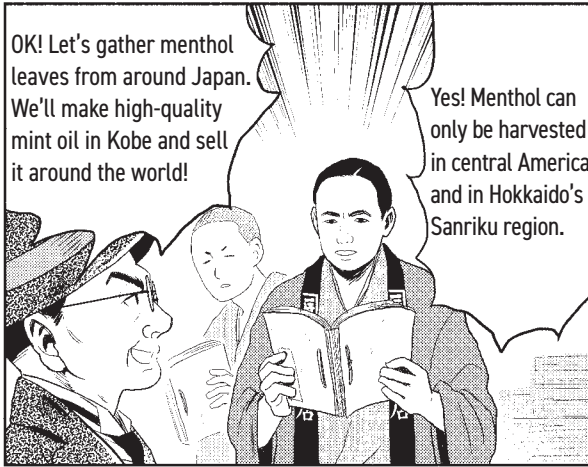
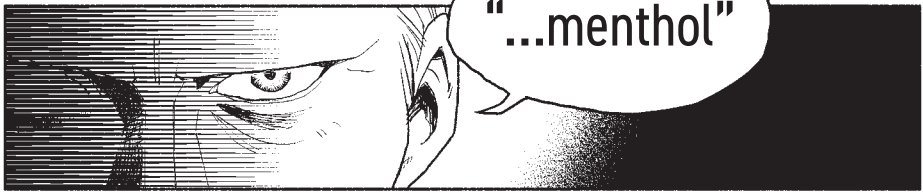
Shimpei Goto and Naokichi Kaneko grew closer.

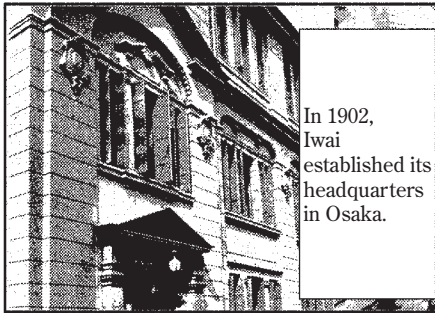


I beg you—tell me something you want.

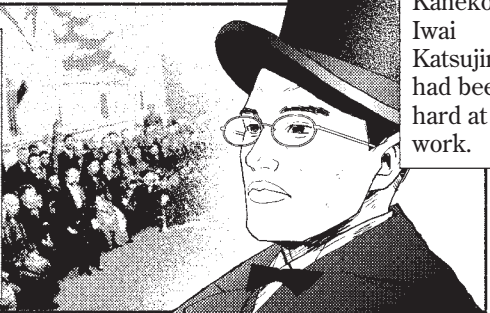


Kobe's foreign settlement (German Raspe & Co.)

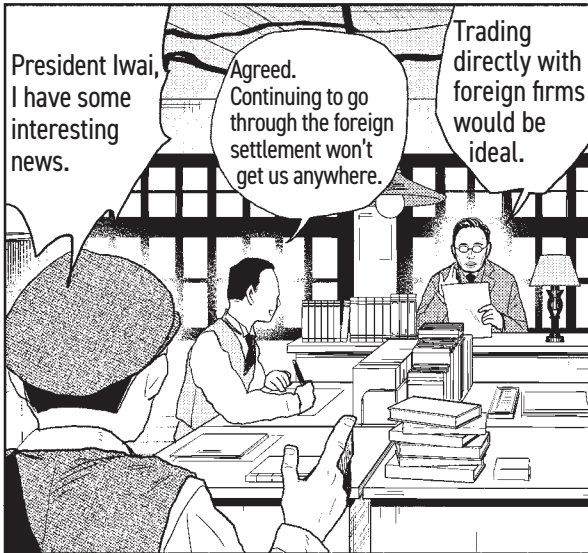




In 1902, Iwai established its headquarters in Osaka.



Just like Kaneko, Iwai Katsujiro had been hard at work.



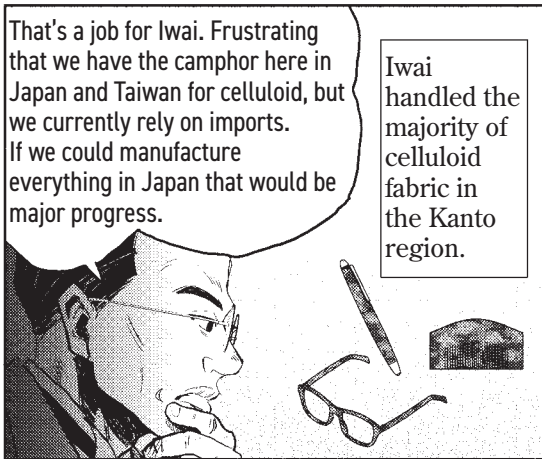
President Iwai, I have some interesting news.

Agreed. Continuing to go through the foreign settlement won't get us anywhere.

Trading directly with foreign firms would be ideal.

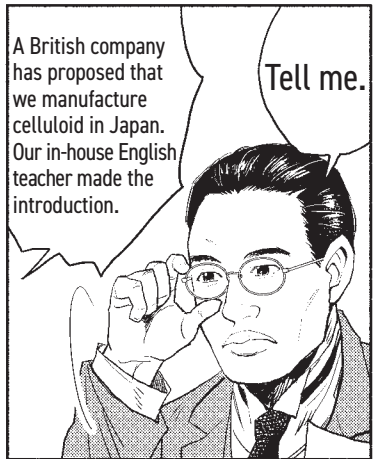


Iwai was the first to import and make commercial use of bicycles.



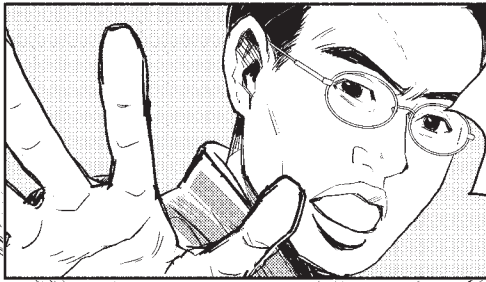
That's a job for Iwai. Frustrating that we have the camphor here in Japan and Taiwan for celluloid, but we currently rely on imports. If we could manufacture everything in Japan that would be major progress.

Iwai handled the majority of celluloid fabric in the Kanto region.



A British company has proposed that we manufacture celluloid in Japan. Our in-house English teacher made the introduction.

Tell me.



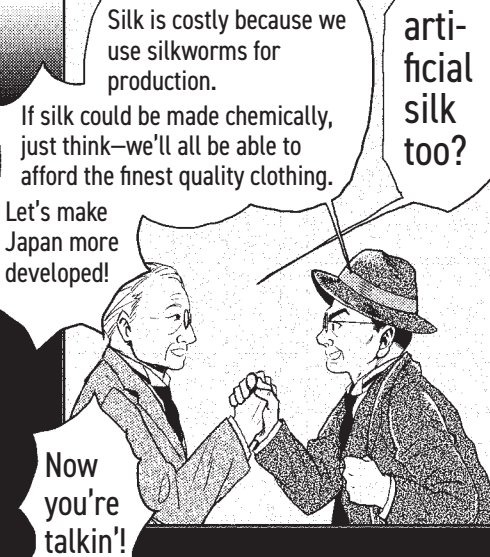
The celluloid industry will pave the way for Japan's future prosperity. We can't miss this chance! Sound out Taiwan's monopoly bureau in order to secure raw materials.

At this time, Kaneko and Iwai's paths would cross.



What do you mean?!

President Iwai! Suzuki got Taiwan's camphor...!



Silk is costly because we use silkworms for production.

If silk could be made chemically, just think—we'll all be able to afford the finest quality clothing.

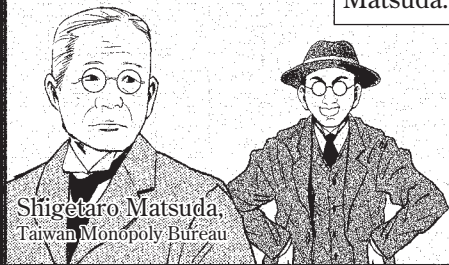
Let's make Japan more developed!

artificial silk too?

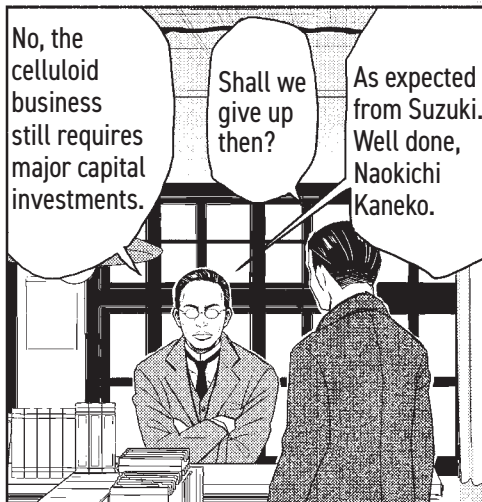
Now you're talkin'!

How about Suzuki pays for you to go to the West to research celluloid and artificial silk.

Several years earlier, Kaneko met with camphor expert Shigetaro Matsuda.



Shigetaro Matsuda, Taiwan Monopoly Bureau



No, the celluloid business still requires major capital investments.

Shall we give up then?

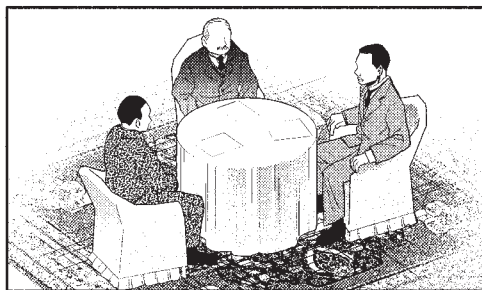
As expected from Suzuki. Well done, Naokichi Kaneko.



Mr. Kaneko you're a formidable character that never misses a business opportunity

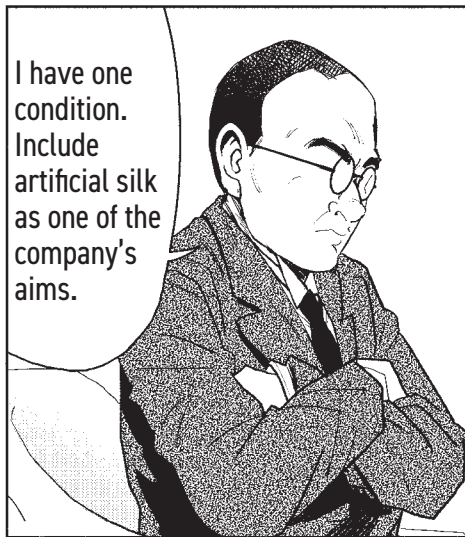
OK. If the research succeeds, I'll tell Mr. Goto that Suzuki should be given priority over camphor.

...and apparently that's the story.



Negotiations thus began.

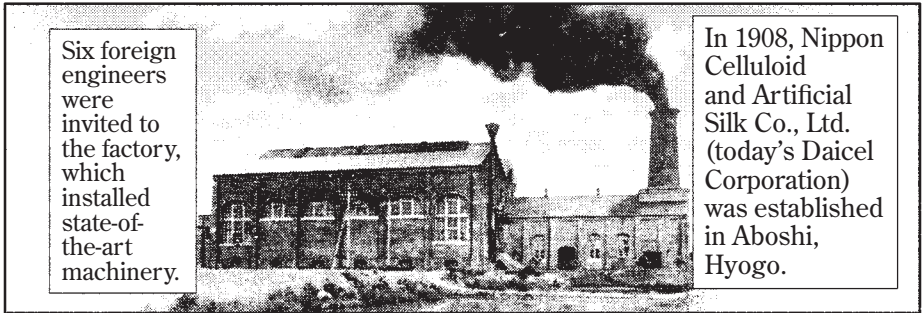
Even Suzuki can't tackle it alone. Better yet, let's involve Mitsubishi too. This project requires everyone's collaboration.

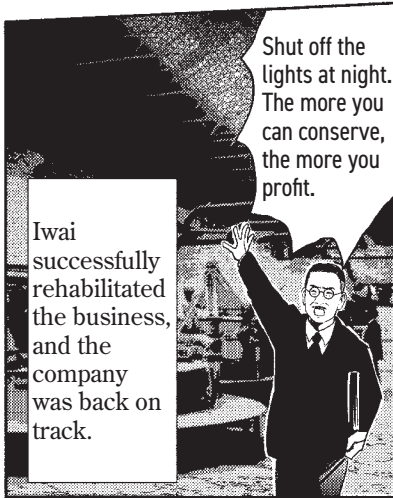
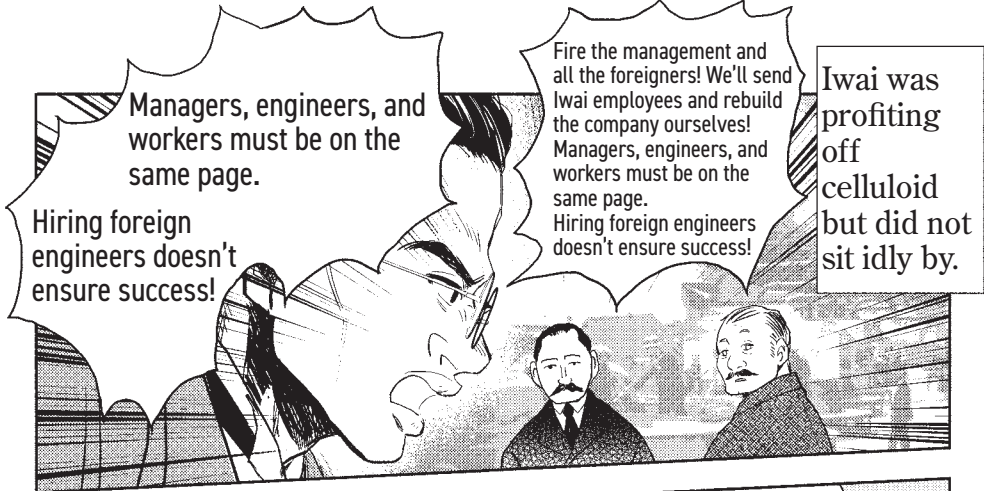


I have one condition. Include artificial silk as one of the company's aims.



To make this business a success, all three of our companies must join forces.





"In 1908, Nippon Celluloid Artificial Silk Co., Ltd. was established by Mitsubishi, Iwai & Co., and Suzuki & Co. The company was a forerunner in Japan's industrialization process for celluloid products and the chemical industry. Japan Celluloid can be considered the birthplace of Japan's *monozukuri*."

In honor of its 90th anniversary, Daicel erected a monument at its Aboshi factory.

Iwai exported Japan Celluloid's products. Products with the KB mark (Kagaya Bunsuke= Iwai Bunsuke's trade name) were sold around the world as a major export of Japan.

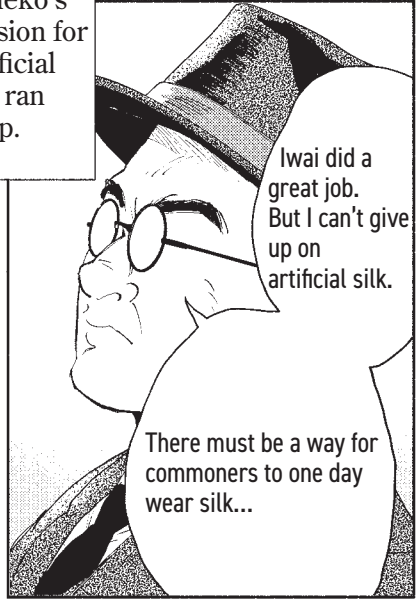


Nippon Celluloid Artificial Silk Co., Ltd. (now Daicel)
Hirotarō Nishida,
Engineering Manager



Mr. Nishida?
I don't want to
say this too loudly
in front of Mr.
Kondo, but can you
begin the rayon
research?

Kaneko's
passion for
artificial
silk ran
deep.



Iwai did a
great job.
But I can't give
up on
artificial silk.

There must be a way for
commoners to one day
wear silk...

Kobe's Monopoly Bureau



Uh...
Yes!
Understood.

You there—
we'll fund your
trip to Europe
if you research
artificial silk.

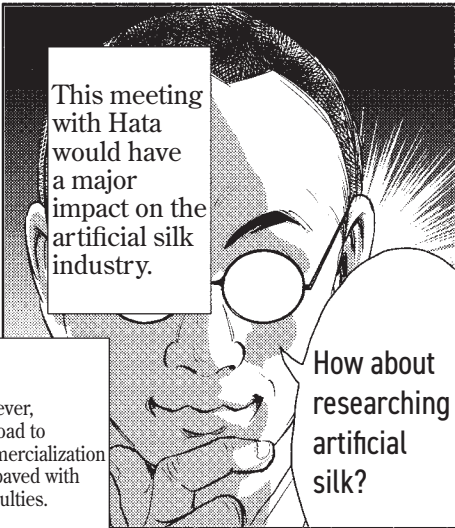


Kaneko was
said to meet
with anyone
who visited.

Good of you
to come.
Sit.

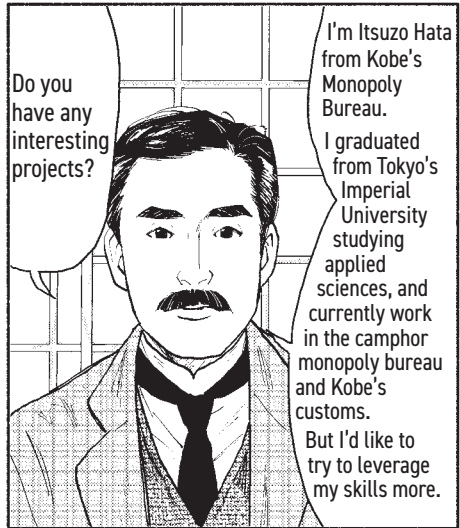
At that time,
Kaneko
received a
fateful visitor.

This meeting
with Hata
would have
a major
impact on the
artificial silk
industry.



How about
researching
artificial
silk?

Do you
have any
interesting
projects?

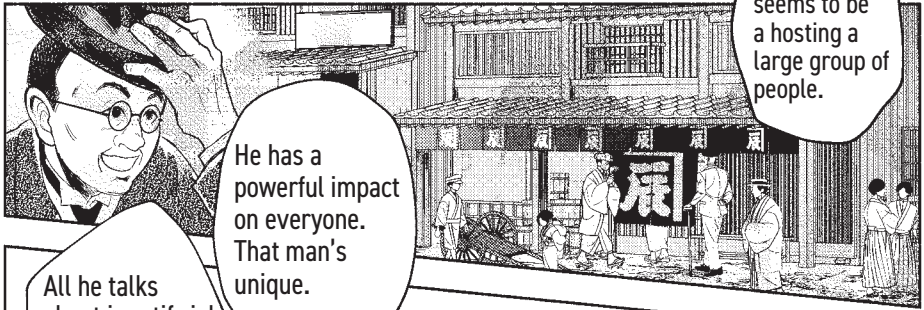


I'm Itsuzo Hata
from Kobe's
Monopoly
Bureau.

I graduated
from Tokyo's
Imperial
University
studying
applied
sciences, and
currently work
in the camphor
monopoly bureau
and Kobe's
customs.

But I'd like to
try to leverage
my skills more.

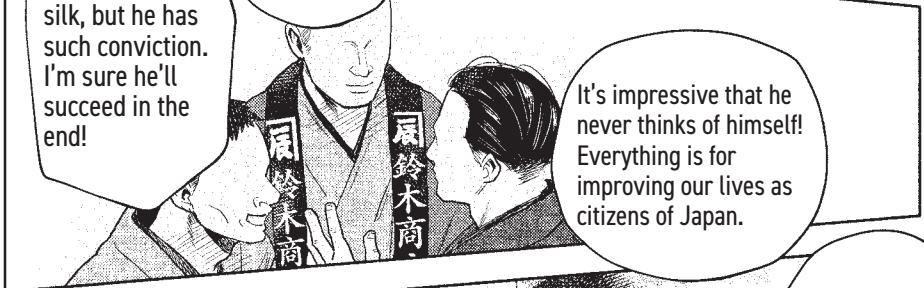
However,
the road to
commercialization
was paved with
difficulties.



Mr. Kaneko seems to be a hosting a large group of people.

He has a powerful impact on everyone. That man's unique.

All he talks about is artificial silk, but he has such conviction. I'm sure he'll succeed in the end!

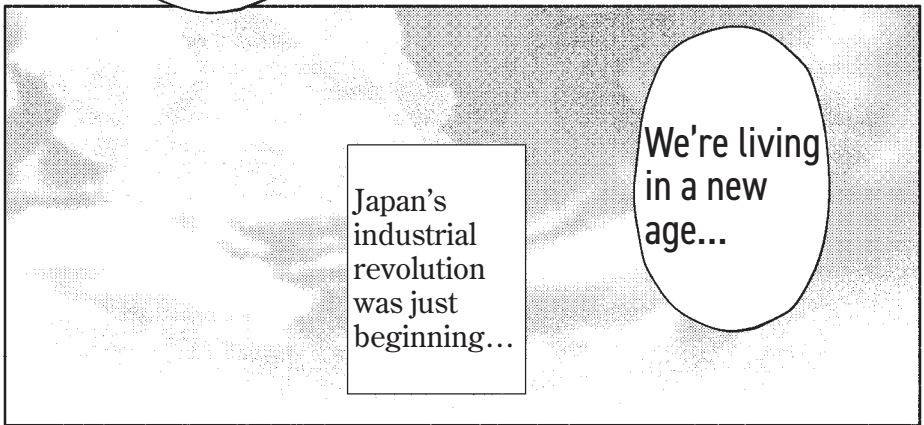


It's impressive that he never thinks of himself! Everything is for improving our lives as citizens of Japan.



Kajimaya set up Japan Cotton Trading in Osaka. That's the Japanese merchant spirit for you.

You know the Aboshi factory? Iwai was the one who saved it. He listens to young researchers. He's humble and driven too. As merchants, they both have the same high aspirations.



Japan's industrial revolution was just beginning...

We're living in a new age...