

## Chapter 3

Suzuki & Co.

Acquiring Mikado Hotel and opening a new  
head office

Acquiring South Manchuria Railway's soybean  
oil extraction business

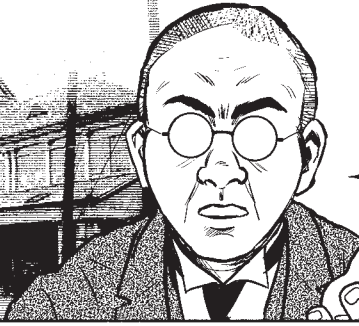


Naokichi Kaneko paid a visit to Katsuzo Goto at Goto Kaisoten Ltd.

Hahaha. You flatter me. Let's cut to the chase.

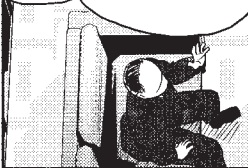


I strongly believe that Kobe opened up because of your connections with Taiwan and it's thanks to you that Western culture has spread in Kobe.

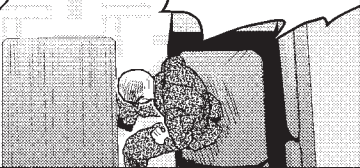


Actually, it's about your Mikado Hotel. Would you consider selling?

Not at all. To be honest, I'm not a relative of Mr. Shimpei Goto. But he's been very kind to me because we share the same family name. Have you been in contact with Mr. Goto recently?



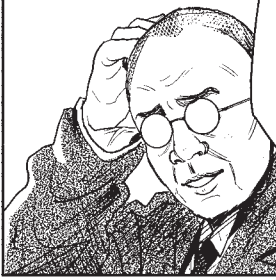
Thank you! Suzuki was able to expand its business thanks to your introduction of Mr. Shimpei Goto. We are indebted to you once more.

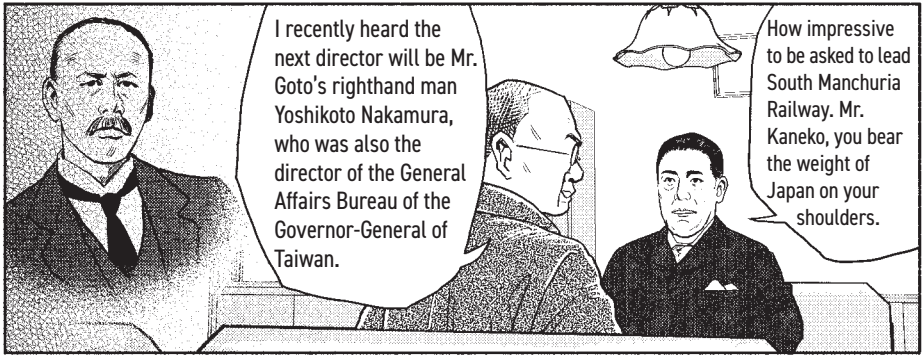


Suzuki is now known around the world. There's nothing I'd be happier about than to have our hotel as your new head office.



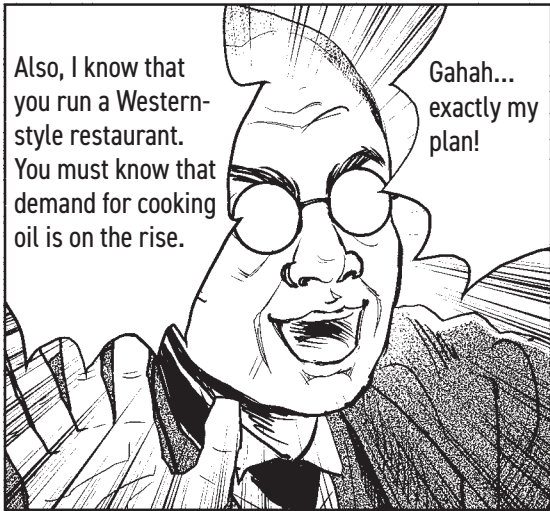
His lordship was appointed to be a Director of the South Manchuria Railway after serving as the head of civil affairs at the Government-General of Taiwan. Actually, I was recently asked to become the next director. But I'm content being a faithful old business clerk, so I refused.





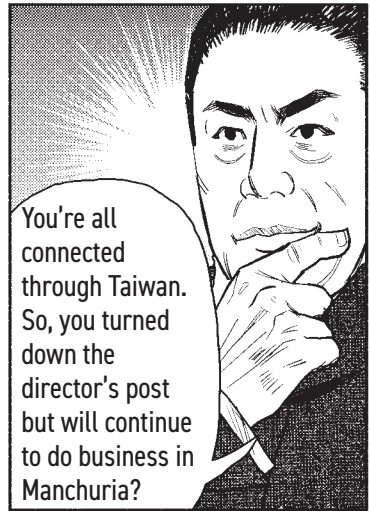
I recently heard the next director will be Mr. Goto's righthand man Yoshikoto Nakamura, who was also the director of the General Affairs Bureau of the Governor-General of Taiwan.

How impressive to be asked to lead South Manchuria Railway. Mr. Kaneko, you bear the weight of Japan on your shoulders.

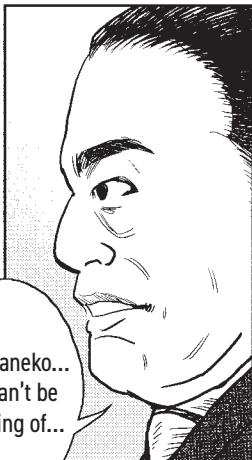


Also, I know that you run a Western-style restaurant. You must know that demand for cooking oil is on the rise.

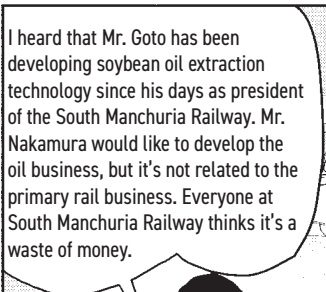
Gahah... exactly my plan!



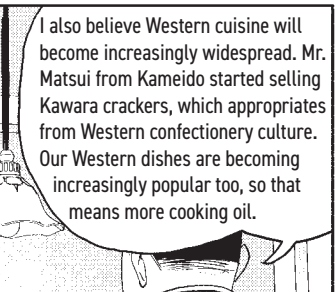
You're all connected through Taiwan. So, you turned down the director's post but will continue to do business in Manchuria?



Mr. Kaneko... you can't be thinking of...



I heard that Mr. Goto has been developing soybean oil extraction technology since his days as president of the South Manchuria Railway. Mr. Nakamura would like to develop the oil business, but it's not related to the primary rail business. Everyone at South Manchuria Railway thinks it's a waste of money.



I also believe Western cuisine will become increasingly widespread. Mr. Matsui from Kameido started selling Kawara crackers, which appropriates from Western confectionery culture. Our Western dishes are becoming increasingly popular too, so that means more cooking oil.

The conditions are that Suzuki must buy South Manchuria Rail's oil extraction factory in Dalian and that we must build three of the world's largest oil factories in Japan.

That does make sense. What does Yoshikoto Nakamura have to say about it?

My goodness... You've accepted these conditions?

Yes, I'm planning to ask them to sell the business to us. Suzuki has experience with oil through our fish oil business. Japan currently imports high volumes of fertilizer (soybean meal), and cooking oil is limited to rapeseed oil. What if we import the soybeans from Manchuria and then extract the oil in Japan? We'll export some of the extracted oil and the rest can be used as fertilizer...

One of the world's largest factories at the time was built at the Port of Shimizu, which was consequently the first large-scale factory of its kind built at the Port of Shimizu.

Suzuki's Oil Refining Dept.'s factory would eventually become Honen Ajinomoto Oil Mills, Inc. (today's J-OIL MILLS, Inc.)

Of course. First, we'll build in Naruo close to Kobe, then Yokohama, then Shimizu in Shizuoka.

Before long, a variety of major industries were flourishing in Shimizu.

Suzuki & Co.'s project was the turning point for city's industrial development. Before Suzuki arrived to resurrect business in the region, Shimizu's trade consisted primarily of exports of tea, and the city's reclaimed land was in ruins. Suzuki demonstrated extraordinary powers in building a large-scale factory for soybean oil extraction and the manufacture of soybean meal. Dozens of clerks and several hundred workmen were employed. The towering factory inspired a strong entrepreneurial spirit for local citizens.

Shimizu's city history attributes