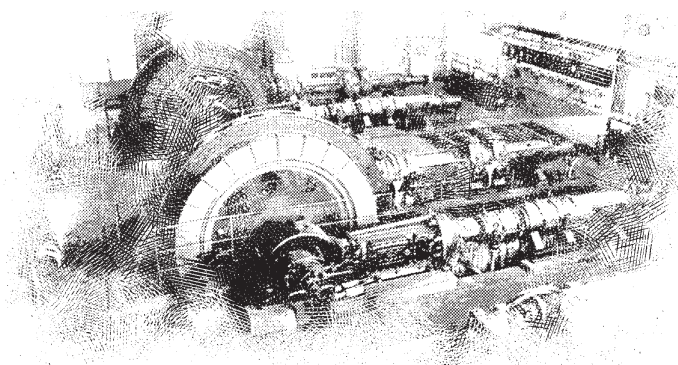


Chapter 1

Suzuki & Co.

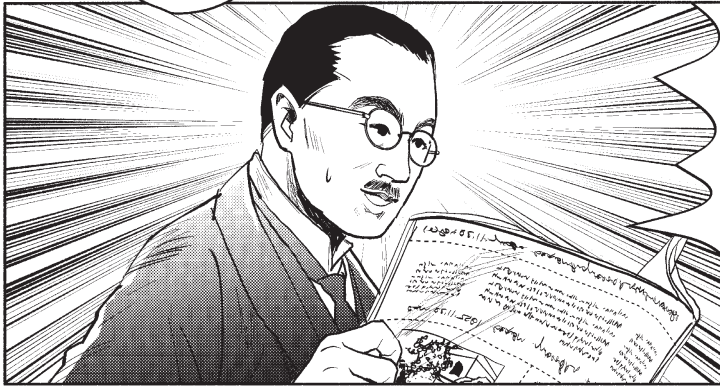
Dream technology for manufacturing synthetic ammonia



We expected a swift defeat, but the Germans developed technology for ammonia production using nitrogen from the atmosphere. The war thus dragged on...

Suzuki & Co.'s London Office

The Allies blockaded German ports, which suspended the import of potassium nitrate for making explosives.



Who could have dreamed that a technology could enable fertilizer production during peacetime and for making explosives in wartime...it's unbelievable!

Let's get our hands on this dream technology before anyone else. I'll send you the funding you need, Takahata!



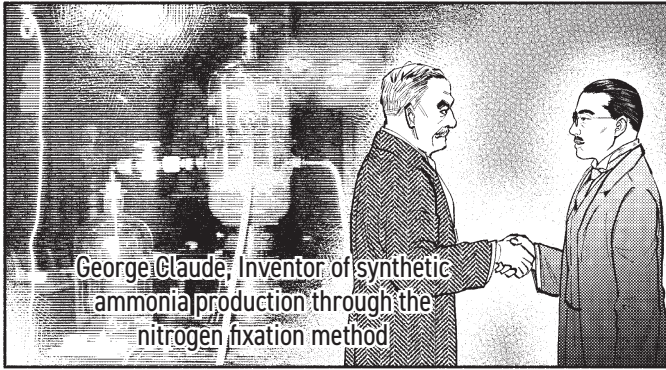
Suzuki & Co.'s Headquarter



Suzuki & Co. will have Honen Corporation (today's J-Oil Mills, Inc.) produce soybean oil and then sell the soybean meal nationwide as fertilizer.

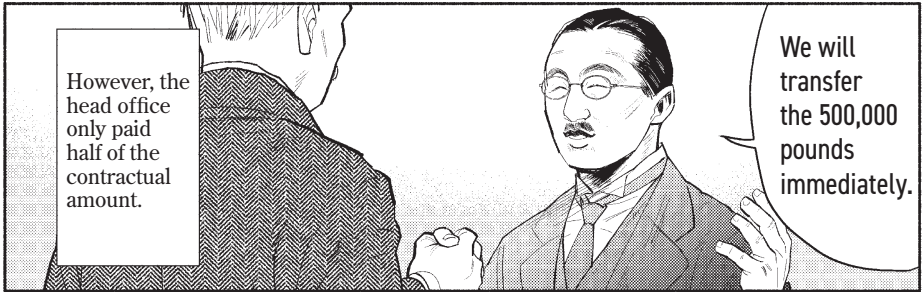
But over 80% of imported fertilizer are nitrogen fertilizers. We must domestically produce chemical fertilizers.

The government and conglomerates are researching nitrogen fixation methods for harnessing atmospheric nitrogen for ammonia production, but there's still a long way to go.



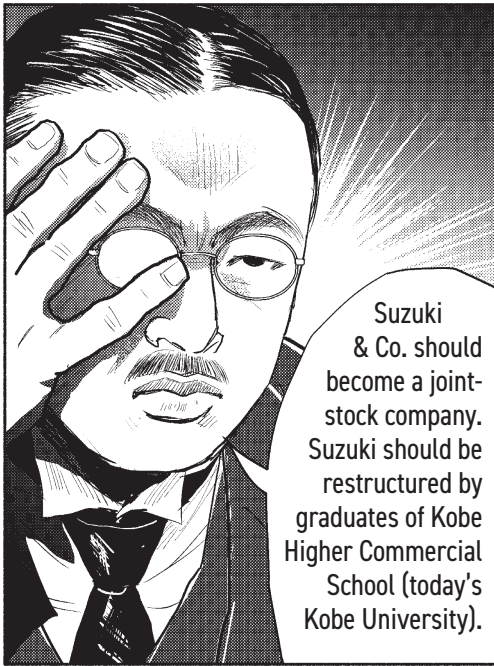
George Claude, inventor of synthetic ammonia production through the nitrogen fixation method

Suzuki & Co. reached an agreement with the French company, Air Liquide, to acquire patents for nitrogen fixation technology.

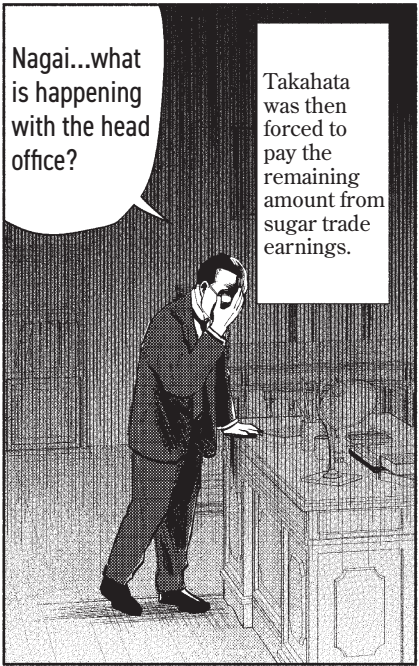


However, the head office only paid half of the contractual amount.

We will transfer the 500,000 pounds immediately.



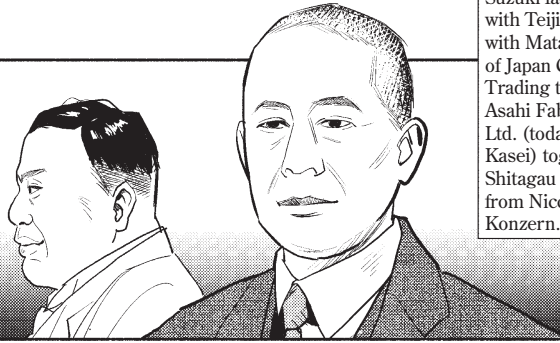
Suzuki & Co. should become a joint-stock company. Suzuki should be restructured by graduates of Kobe Higher Commercial School (today's Kobe University).



Nagai...what is happening with the head office?

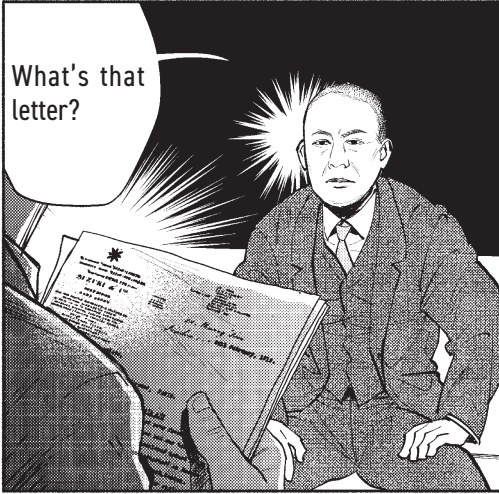
Takahata was then forced to pay the remaining amount from sugar trade earnings.

Noguchi was also interested in this dream technology.

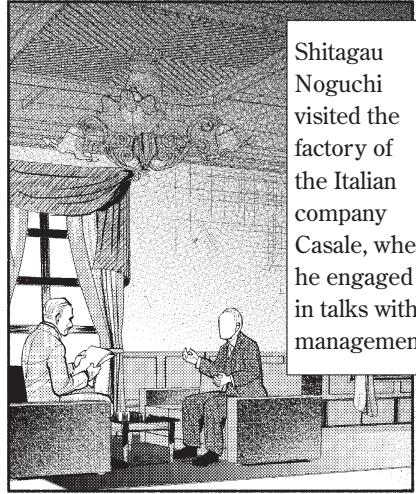


Suzuki faced off with Teijin, working with Matazo Kita of Japan Cotton Trading to establish Asahi Fabric Co., Ltd. (today's Asahi Kasei) together with Shitagau Noguchi from Nichitsu Konzern.

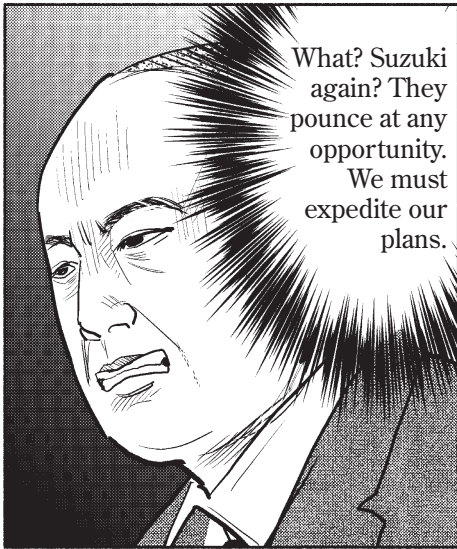
What's that letter?



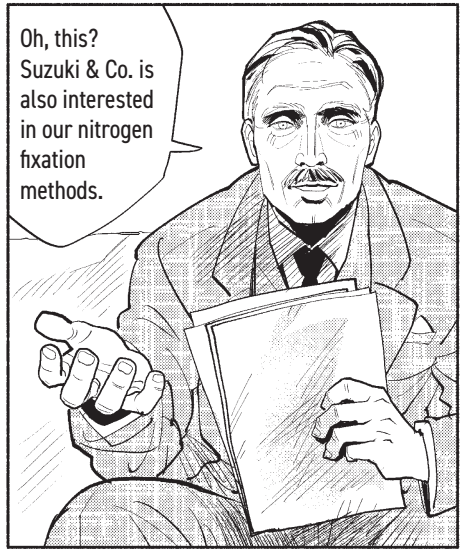
Shitagau Noguchi visited the factory of the Italian company Casale, where he engaged in talks with management.

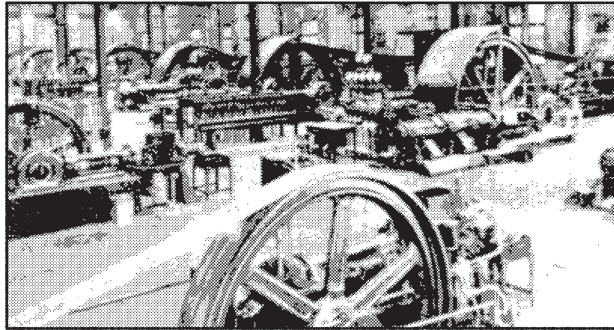
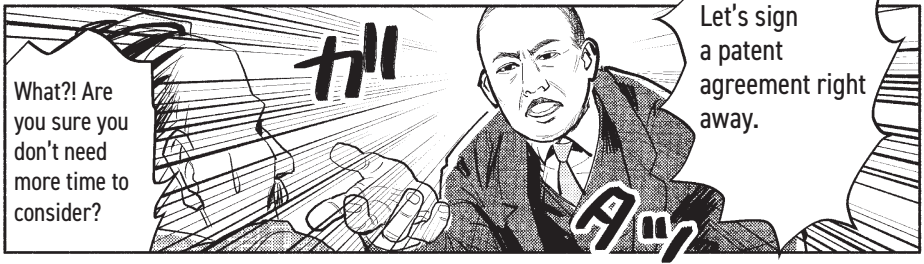


What? Suzuki again? They pounce at any opportunity. We must expedite our plans.



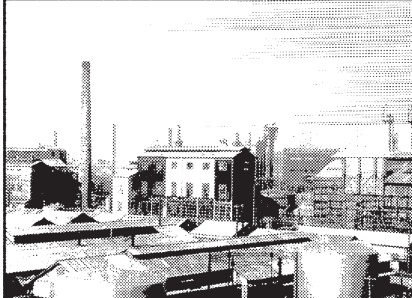
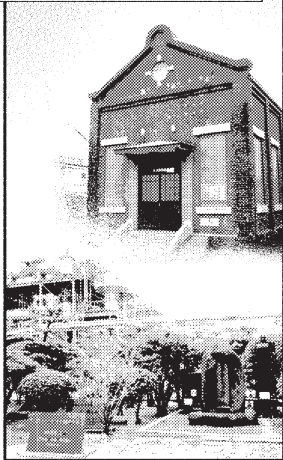
Oh, this? Suzuki & Co. is also interested in our nitrogen fixation methods.



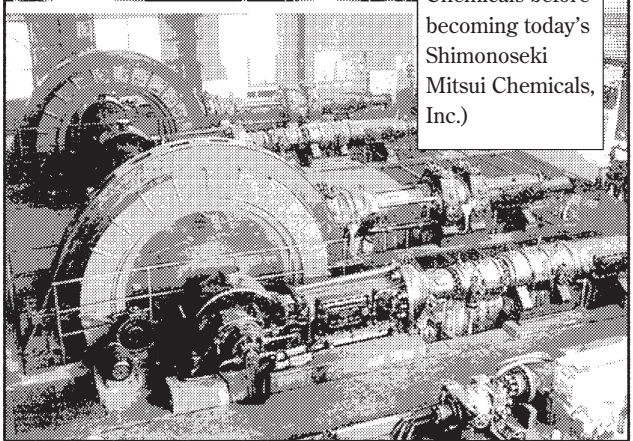


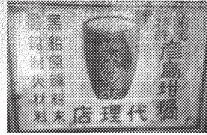
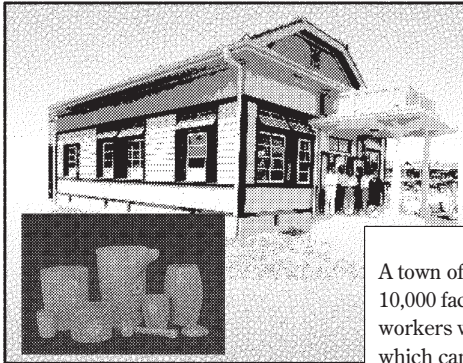
In 1923, Shitagau Noguchi built a factory in Nobeoka, Miyazaki Prefecture. Synthetic ammonia production began the following year.

Shimonoseki Mitsui Chemicals, Inc. still has a stone monument to commemorate the first production of synthetic ammonia in Japan and Suzuki-era buildings are still standing today.



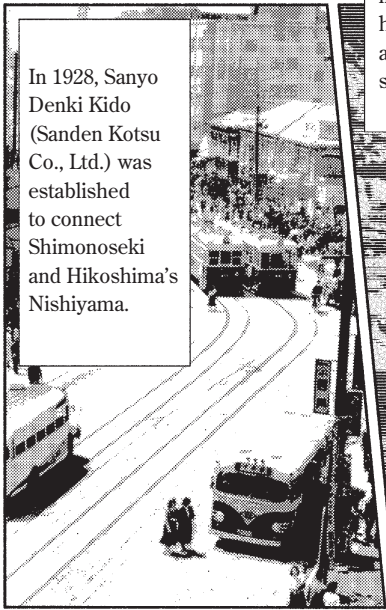
At the same time, Suzuki & Co. established Claude's Nitrogen Industry Co. 1922. (The company was later renamed Toyo Koatsu Chemicals before becoming today's Shimonoseki Mitsui Chemicals, Inc.)



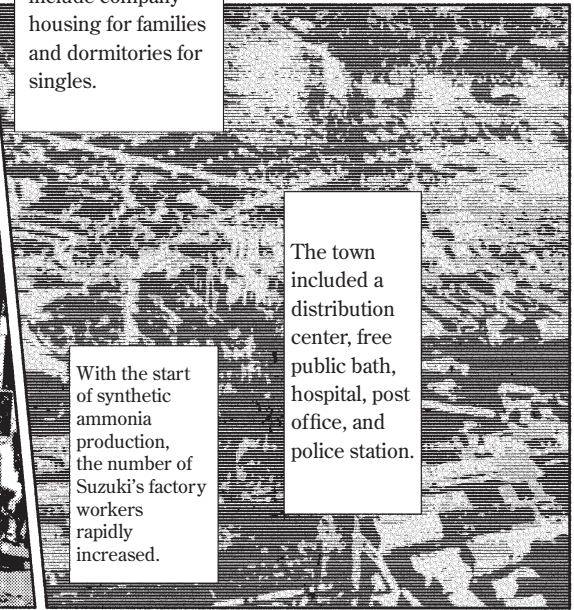


At the time, Hikoshima was already home to Hikoshima Zinc Smelting Plant (today's Hikoshima Smelting Co., Ltd.) and Hikoshima Rutsubo Co., Ltd.. (today's Nissin Refratch Co., Ltd.)

A town of over 10,000 factory workers was born, which came to include company housing for families and dormitories for singles.

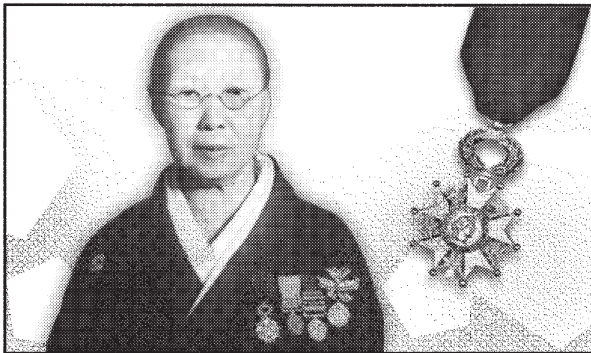


In 1928, Sanyo Denki Kido (Sanden Kotsu Co., Ltd.) was established to connect Shimonoseki and Hikoshima's Nishiyama.



The town included a distribution center, free public bath, hospital, post office, and police station.

With the start of synthetic ammonia production, the number of Suzuki's factory workers rapidly increased.



In 1926, Yone Suzuki was awarded the Legion of Honor, the highest merit honor by the French government, for Claude's Nitrogen Industry's (today's Shimonoseki Mitsui Chemicals) achievement in implementing nitrogen technology.