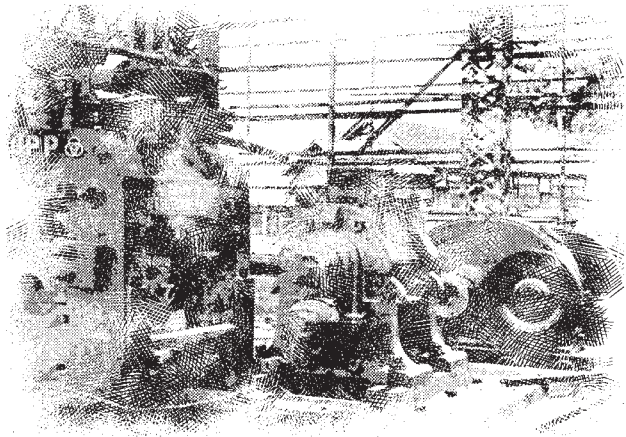


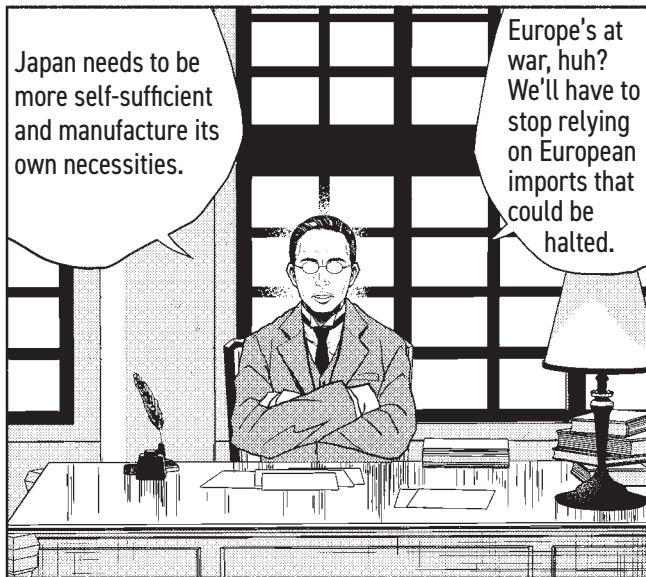
## Chapter 2

Iwai & Co.

Taking on the challenge of establishing an  
independently run celluloid factory

Entering the steel plate business





Japan needs to be more self-sufficient and manufacture its own necessities.

Europe's at war, huh? We'll have to stop relying on European imports that could be halted.



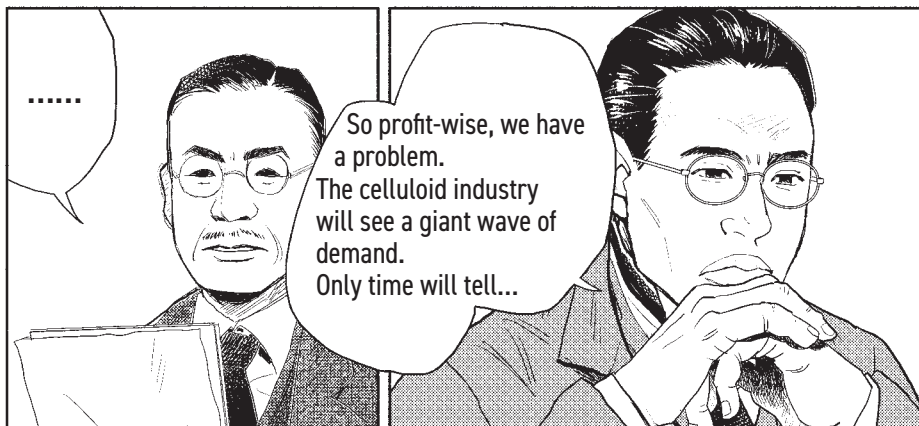
Iwai & Co. had also been impacted by the outbreak of WWI, and the company was looking to take on new business projects.



Yes, we're on track with production. But Mitsui's Sakai Celluloid is also producing steadily. If we count our production volumes too, production will exceed the domestic demand.

All progressing smoothly?

President Katsujiro, I have a report for you on Nippon Celluloid's artificial silk.



.....

So profit-wise, we have a problem. The celluloid industry will see a giant wave of demand. Only time will tell...



Sometimes he would spend up to three full hours in meditation.

Katsujiro Iwai had his own management philosophy which included tenets of Zen Buddhism. Iwai practiced Zen meditation.



What happened? Is it news from Europe?



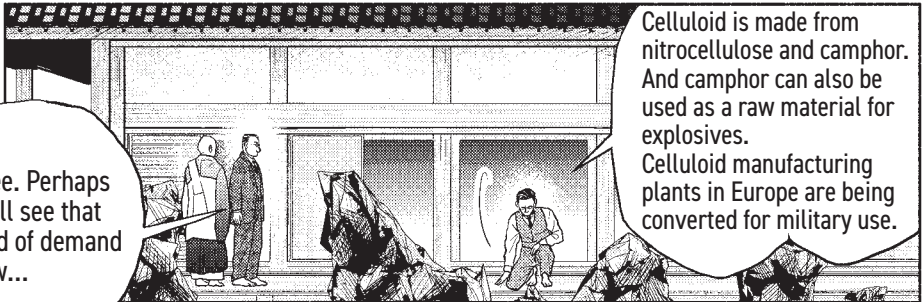
Quiet. Mr. Iwai is meditating now.

President!



Russia's Major Germonius is coming to visit the factory...

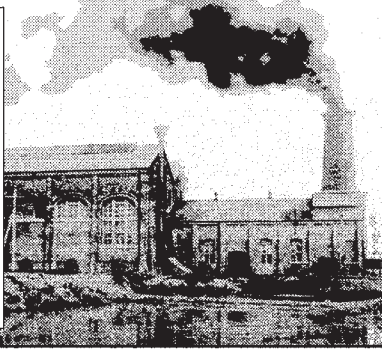
This news can't wait for three hours!



I see. Perhaps we'll see that kind of demand now...

Celluloid is made from nitrocellulose and camphor. And camphor can also be used as a raw material for explosives. Celluloid manufacturing plants in Europe are being converted for military use.

Nippon Celluloid and Artificial Silk Co., Ltd. in Hyogo Prefecture's Aboshi was thus converted into an explosives factory. A manager from the military was brought in.

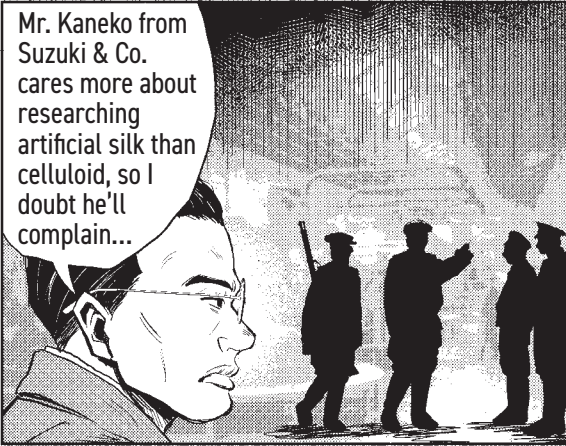


Russia has joined the Allies in the war. Unlike Britain, we haven't joined the treaty, but we'll have to cooperate. Comply with their requests and those from the government, but -

Yes, I am aware.



Mr. Kaneko from Suzuki & Co. cares more about researching artificial silk than celluloid, so I doubt he'll complain...



Listen up! I have an announcement.

Celluloid and plastic will continue to be important.

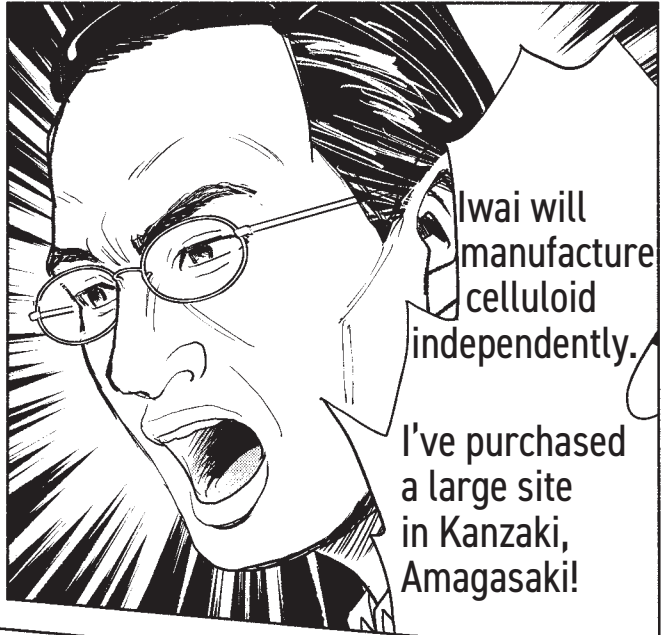
At this time, celluloid factories in Europe were rapidly converted for military use, and Japan received a large number of orders for celluloid fabrics to be made for civilians.

But I am resigning from my role as director of Dainippon Celluloid Co. Ltd.





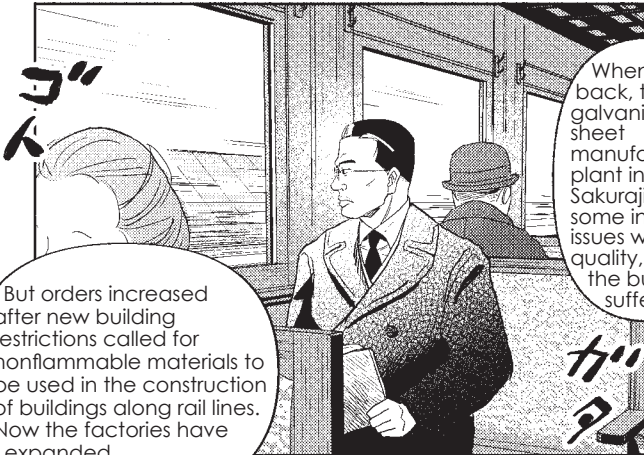
Ohhhh!



Iwai will manufacture celluloid independently.

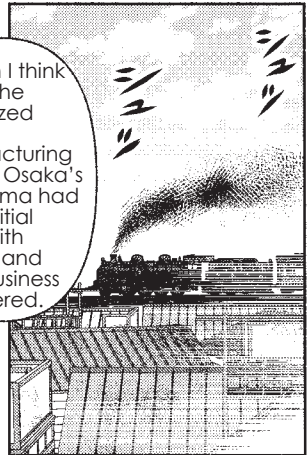
I've purchased a large site in Kanzaki, Amagasaki!

In 1916, the Osaka Sen'i Kogyo Co., Ltd. (currently Daicel's Kanzaki Plant) was established to manufacture celluloid.



But orders increased after new building restrictions called for nonflammable materials to be used in the construction of buildings along rail lines. Now the factories have expanded.

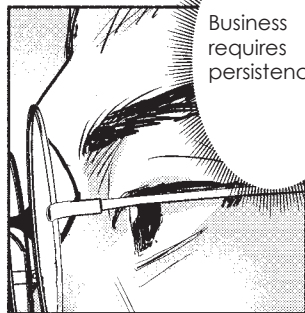
When I think back, the galvanized sheet manufacturing plant in Osaka's Sakurajima had some initial issues with quality, and the business suffered.



Business requires persistence...



President Katsujiro!  
Bad news!

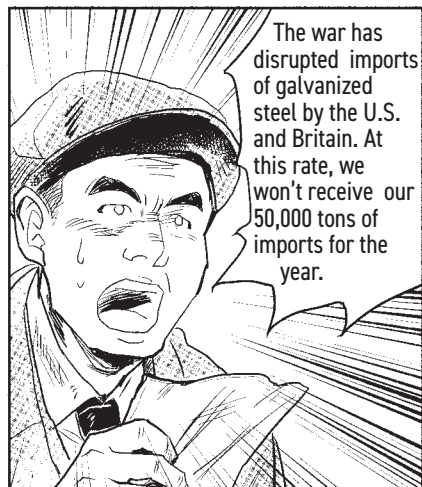


This is a good opportunity.

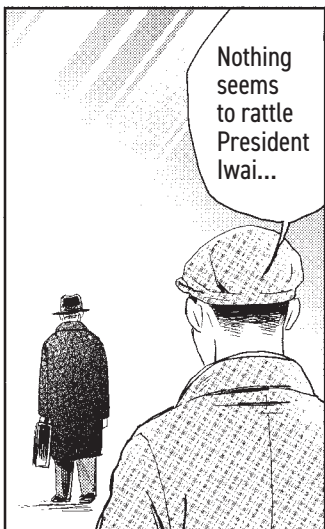
But we can't meet demand if imports stall.

Don't panic. Demand exists.

Huh?!



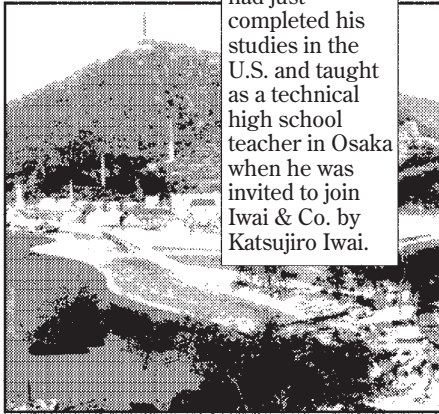
The war has disrupted imports of galvanized steel by the U.S. and Britain. At this rate, we won't receive our 50,000 tons of imports for the year.



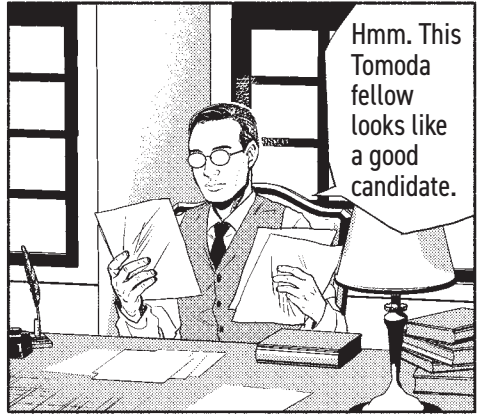
Nothing seems to rattle President Iwai...



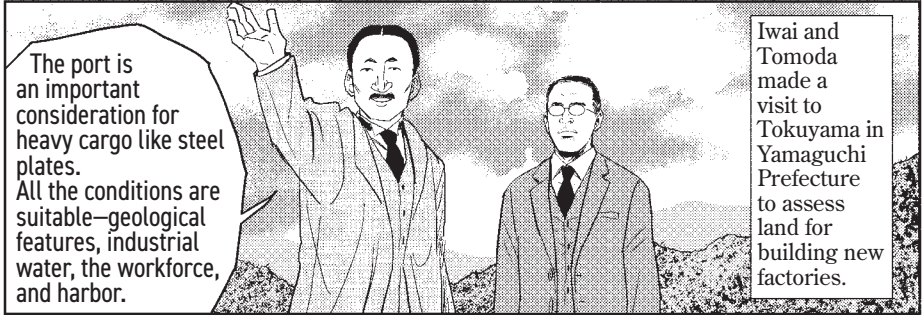
We will free ourselves from a dependence on foreign imports. Let's look for skilled engineers to build a new factory.



Ichita Tomoda had just completed his studies in the U.S. and taught as a technical high school teacher in Osaka when he was invited to join Iwai & Co. by Katsujiro Iwai.

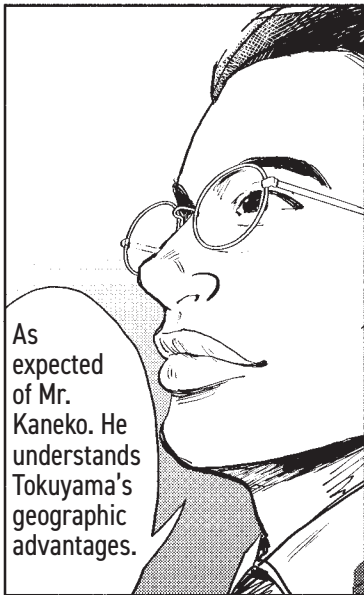


Hmm. This Tomoda fellow looks like a good candidate.



The port is an important consideration for heavy cargo like steel plates. All the conditions are suitable—geological features, industrial water, the workforce, and harbor.

Iwai and Tomoda made a visit to Tokuyama in Yamaguchi Prefecture to assess land for building new factories.



As expected of Mr. Kaneko. He understands Tokuyama's geographic advantages.



Oh, what's that chimney?

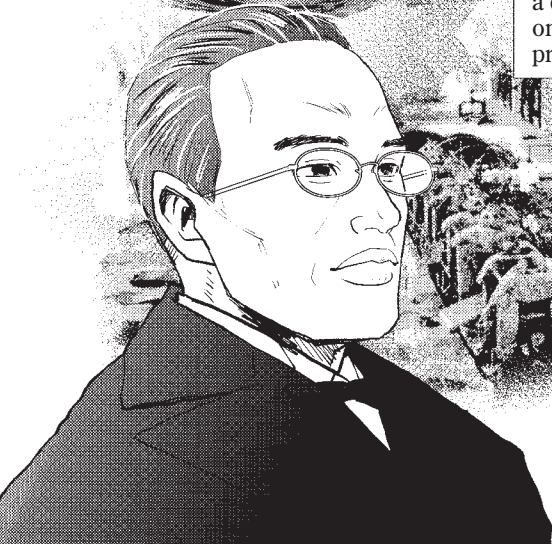
Suzuki & Co. is planning something. It's rumored they're aiming to build the tallest chimney in the East.



Alright,  
let's  
build a  
factory in  
Tokuyama!

In 1916, Iwai & Co. made the decision to build a Tokuyama branch factory for manufacturing rolled steel sheets. The factory became Tanaka Galvanizing Works (today's Nisshin Steel Co., Ltd.)

The following year, the company changed its trade name to Osaka Steel Manufacturing Co., Ltd. Katsujiro Iwai, who had been a director, took on the role of president.





Katsujiro Iwai is an independent and self-reliant merchant who does not cater to power and influence. Compared to the political merchants of Tokyo, Katsujiro Iwai has demonstrated himself to be an honest merchant of Kansai: a great man who has made a substantial contribution to the development of our country's industry. As a merchant that recognized Japan's future industrial potential, Iwai established companies in industrial fields such as steel, chemicals, and textiles. In 1910, Iwai established Osaka Steel Manufacturing Co., Ltd. to manufacture galvanized sheet iron, which was only available as an import. In 1918, a branch factory was built on this site to produce iron plates, which are the raw material required for galvanized sheet iron production. At the time, sheet iron was only produced in small test batches by the the government owned Yawata Iron & Steel Co., Ltd. Beginning a large-scale sheet iron business in Japan was an unprecedented feat, and Japan's sheet iron business originates here.

In 1955, a monument with the following engraving was built at the Tokuyama factory.



That sounds like Mr. Katsujiro. He's humble, so he's trying to learn as much about the latest technology from Europe and the U.S. from Tanaka to utilize for manufacturing here in Japan.

I've heard that President Katsujiro has recently been meeting with Professor Tanaka from the Imperial University of Tokyo.

Apparently, Tanaka is only 30 years old. Can he be knowledgeable?

Katsujiro Iwai also deeply respected scholars and experts and valued his connections to employees.

