

and unsold stocks of silk. In compliance with the demands of the Imperial Agricultural Association, the government ordered rice price adjustments in January 1915 (Taishō 4), and bought up 300,000 *koku* of rice with ¥4,250,000 of official funds. Small industrialists were aided by special financing from the Industrial Bank of Japan and the Kangyō Bank.

However, from about the middle of 1915 (Taishō 4) the situation completely reversed itself. Beginning in the spring, military exports to Russia and Great Britain began to grow. Moreover, silk exports to the United States, which was entering a wartime economic boom, expanded dramatically, and Japanese goods began to replace the flow of European exports which had been halted by the war in the markets of China, India, Southeast Asia, and even as far as Australia and South America.

In the early stages of the war, when Japanese heavy industry was still not fully established, military exports were dominated by metal ores—especially copper—for use in weapons manufacture, foodstuffs such as beans and rice, and woolens, boots, and cotton cloth for use in uniforms; but by the middle of the war, heavy industrial products such as steamships came to be added to the list. Japanese foreign trade, which had shown an import surplus since the Russo-Japanese War, suddenly shifted to an export surplus. The amount of the export surplus, which stood at 175 million yen in 1915 (Taishō 4), reached 567 million yen only two years later in 1917. In addition, non-trade receipts added to the picture, and approximately 2.7 billion yen in hard currency flowed into the country. Japan, which had until this time suffered under the heavy burden of servicing its foreign debts, suddenly emerged as a lender nation.

In addition to this export boom, inflation served as another spur to the growth of domestic industry. As the war dragged on in Europe, new enterprises sprang up in every industrial sector, and with the backing of favorable government policies, achieved enormous profits. New industrial magnates, popularly referred to as *narikin* (nouveaux riches), appeared one after the other.

The word *narikin* is a term derived from Japanese chess, in which it refers to a piece called *ho* which can only move one square straight ahead until it reaches the opponent's home territory, at which point it becomes *kin* or "gold" and can move an unlimited number of

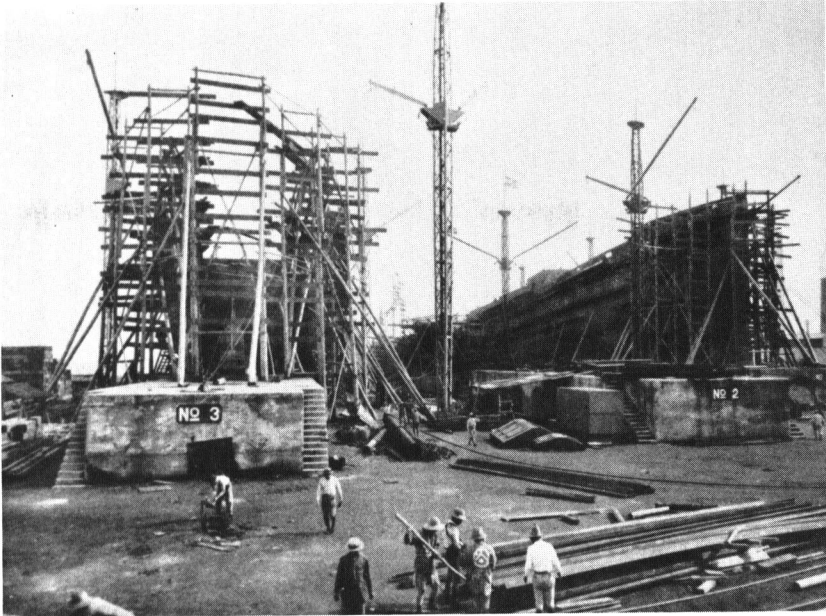
spaces in any direction. Among the *narikin* who succeeded in their dreams of becoming overnight millionaires, there were many whose economic base was weak precisely because of their rapid success, and who were ruined by the depression which followed World War I.

### **Shipping tycoons head the list of the nouveaux riches**

Such new wealth could be found in all the fields of industry which developed so rapidly during the war, but it was the shipping entrepreneurs who rose to the top of the list. These maritime *narikin* fell into two major categories: shipbuilders and freight transporters. Of the former, the Uraga Dock Co., which enjoyed a sudden leap into prosperity after having for some time been unable to pay dividends to stockholders, is a good example. This turnabout was triggered by a Navy order in the latter half of the 1914 (Taishō 3) fiscal year for a 665-ton second-class destroyer. At the time, the Japanese Navy did not have any destroyers capable of maneuvering far out across the Pacific, so ten new warships were ordered to be built at the Yokosuka Naval Arsenal, two at the Kawasaki Shipyards, two at the Mitsubishi Shipyards in Nagasaki, one at the Osaka Steelworks (now Hitachi Shipbuilding & Engineering) and two at the Uraga Dock Co., with the stipulation that they all be completed within six months.

Having successfully completed the two destroyers, the Uraga Dock Co. took on new confidence, and the following year completed work on a 2,100-ton class warship, and in addition accepted an order for five 7,000-ton class freighters of similar design. In order to meet this demand, new slips and machinery were constructed, the yards enlarged, and the branch factory at Uraga also set to the task of building ships of over 1,000 tons. Despite the expansion of the facilities, the Uraga Dock Co. was swamped with orders for new ships, and in 1917 (Taishō 6) built seven vessels, totaling 32,000 tons. All of this activity naturally led to a rapid increase in profits, as was reflected in the dividends paid on shares, which went from seven percent in the first and second half of fiscal 1915 to sixty percent in the first half of 1917, while total capital was increased from ¥800,000 to ¥5,000,000, greatly strengthening the company's shipbuilding capacity.

The Yokohama Dock Co., which had specialized in ship repair,



Drydocks at the Uchida Shipyards.

now also built new slips and began to engage in shipbuilding as well. And yet, since other companies were quite occupied with new ship construction and did not have the time or resources for ship repair, the Yokohama Dock Co. was flooded with repair orders, which led to large profits and an increase in dividends to shareholders from nine to thirty-five percent. The fact that the company paid out such large dividends and was still able to increase its total capital from ¥3,750,000 to ¥10,000,000 during this period is an indication of the phenomenal profits it was able to achieve.

Two new enterprises created in the midst of this shipbuilding boom were Asano Sōichirō's Asano Shipyards and Uchida Shinya's Uchida Shipyards. Asano Sōichirō was a native of Toyama Prefecture who came to Yokohama as a trader in bamboo and coal coke. In the course of selling coke produced as a waste product at the Yokohama Glassworks to the government-managed Fukagawa Cement factory, he won the trust and support of Shibusawa Eiichi,

and succeeded in persuading the government to divest itself of the factory and sell it to him, resulting in the creation of the Asano Cement Company in 1899 (Meiji 31). In 1915 (Taishō 4) an additional factory was set up in Kawasaki, and the company came to occupy a monopolistic position within the cement industry. Asano had long before opened a warehouse and begun to engage in shipping, and in 1896 (Meiji 29) he founded the Tōyō Steamship Company, becoming its president. Routes were opened to North and South America, but both routes were eventually handed over to the Nippon Yūsen Company, and Asano concentrated on tramp freight runs rather than regularly scheduled lines. Asano felt it important to combine closely his role as a shipowner with that of shipbuilder, and served as the chairman of the board of the Uraga Dock Co., while at the same time placing orders for new ships to be built there. Eventually, he decided to operate his own shipyards in the vicinity of the port of Yokohama, and in 1916 (Taishō 5) he founded the Yokohama Shipyards, siting them on 13,000 square meters of reclaimed land at Tsurumi. The following year, six shipbuilding slips were constructed, and the name of the facility changed to the Asano Shipyards. The yards began operations with the construction of four vessels in 1917 (Taishō 6). At one point the yards experienced considerable difficulties because of an American freeze on steel exports, but soon enough materials to build six, and then seven vessels were allotted, and benefiting from the high prices for ships which prevailed at the time, the yards prospered. Learning from the hard experience of his difficulties in obtaining structural steel, Asano also constructed the Asano Steelworks on a site immediately next to his shipyards.

Uchida Shinya, the founder of the Uchida Shipyards, is seen as a classic example of the shipbuilding *narikin*. Originally from Tochigi Prefecture, he founded the Uchida Steamship Company in Kobe in 1914 (Taishō 3) and began a chartering business. With the outbreak of the war, fees for chartering vessels skyrocketed, bringing him enormous profits, and in 1918 (Taishō 7), he joined the management of the Yokohama Steelworks. This steelworks had its start as the Yokohama Engine Steelworks, founded by an Englishman in 1898 (Meiji 31), and among the 17 machine and shipbuilding factories in Yokohama, it was second in importance only to the Yokohama

Dock Co. The factory was bought up by the former chief engineer at the Ishikawajima Shipyards, Shin Tsuneta, with Uchida contributing capital for the purchase and jointly participating in the management. Aiming at an expansion of the company's enterprises, a shipyard was constructed in Chiwaka-chō in Tsurumi Ward of Yokohama. The new yards were named the Uchida Shipyards and Uchida himself took office as president. The Uchida Shipyards owned a machineworks in Yamashita-chō (Naka Ward), the yards in Chiwaka-chō, and a branch factory in Moriya-chō (Tsurumi Ward), employing over 3,000 workers. The shipbuilding capacity of the company soon surpassed that of the Yokohama Dock Co., which quickly grew into the largest shipyards in the Tokyo-Yokohama region. With additional profits from the Uchida Steamship Company, Uchida was able to pay his stockholders an unheard of dividend of sixty percent during the company's greatest period of prosperity.

The flourishing of the shipbuilding industry was supported by a demand for ships resulting from the unprecedented boom in maritime transport. Freight charges for a ton of coal on the run between Wakamatsu in Kyūshū (a loading port for iron and coal) climbed from 63 *sen* (1 *sen*=1/100th of a yen) in 1914 (Taishō 3) to ¥1.50 the following year, ¥3 the year after that, and ¥10.95 in 1917 (Taishō 6), a seventeen-fold increase in the four-year period. Chartering rates also climbed dramatically, from ¥1.75 per ton for a medium-sized freighter before the war to ¥8 in 1915, ¥14 the following year, and ¥26 in 1917. The number of vessels owned by Japanese shippers grew rapidly: even excluding the three major shipping companies—Nippon Yusen, Osaka Shōsen, and Tōyō Steamship—by 1916 (Taishō 5) the others possessed 317 vessels totaling 830,000 tons. Japan's merchant marine, which prior to the war had ranked as the sixth largest in the world, ranked third behind Great Britain and the United States when the war ended. The reason that Uchida Shinya, the founder of the Uchida Shipyards, came to be known as a shipping *narikin* was precisely because he also headed the Uchida Steamship Company and made his mark in the world of maritime transport. However, in 1921 (Taishō 10), Uchida sold his shipyards to the Osaka Steelworks (now Hitachi Shipbuilding & Engineering) and embarked on a career in politics, eventually serving as Minister

of Railways in the Okada Cabinet and then as Minister of Agriculture and Commerce in the Tōjō Cabinet.

A figure frequently mentioned as a shipping magnate comparable to Uchida is Yamashita Kamesaburō, the founder of Yamashita Steamship Company. A native of Ehime Prefecture, Yamashita started a coal company in Yokohama in 1901 (Meiji 34), but he soon realized that freight costs made up a large part of the coal price, and that collection of freight charges was incomparably faster than receiving payment for commodities. Accordingly, he obtained financing from the Sōda Bank in Yokohama and bought a number of used foreign freighters. During the Russo-Japanese War he put his vessels at the service of the government, and, with the charter fees he collected, laid the foundations for his career as a shipping entrepreneur, creating the Yamashita Steamship Company in 1911 (Meiji 44). During World War I, he took advantage of the shipping boom, realized enormous profits, and became a shipping magnate of comparable stature to Uchida Shinya. In 1917 (Taishō 6) he took over from Shibusawa Eiichi as the largest stockholder in the Uruga Dock Co., and for five years served as its president. Afterwards, since he shifted the base of his operations to Tokyo and Kobe, he was no longer very active in the Yokohama area, but during World War II he served as an advisor to the Tōjō and Koiso cabinets, working for the strengthening of Japan's merchant marine.

The nouveaux riches of the Taishō period could be found not only in the shipping industry, but also in such venture industries as silk, steel, stocks, and foreign trade.

### **Industries in the hinterland also prosper**

World War I also brought unprecedented prosperity to silk and textile industries in the hinterland of Kanagawa Prefecture. The silk magnates joining the ranks of the nouveaux riches were born of this economic boom. The raw silk and silk textile industries in Kanagawa, stimulated by the location of the trade port of Yokohama and by Kanagawa's proximity to the great consumption center of Tokyo, had already flourished. But the wartime boom brought a sharp increase in both domestic and foreign demand. Total raw silk production in 1914 (Taishō 3), when the war broke out, stood at 40,491 *kan* (1 *kan*=3.7 kilograms), valued at ¥1,903,192; but two

years later it increased to 66,583 *kan*, valued at ¥4,767,264; and five years later, in 1918 (Taishō 7), it rose to 86,125 *kan* valued at ¥8,089,351. Silk textile production also showed a rapid increase during the same years, its value in yen climbing from ¥373,680 to ¥1,750,063, and finally to ¥4,344,198. In the hinterlands of the prefecture, such as the districts of Tsukui, Aikō, and Kōza, which lay within the marketing sphere of Hachiōji, the traditional mode of production based on handloom weaving as a form of agricultural by-employment still predominated, producing such silk textiles as Kai silk pongees and coarse silk cloths primarily for the domestic market. In contrast, in the coastal portions of the prefecture, such as the city of Yokohama and the districts of Tachibana, Kamakura, and Ashigarashimo, machine production predominated, making *habutae* and broad silk fabrics for the export market. In this way, Japan displaced France from the position it had enjoyed as the world's greatest producer of silk textiles.

## 2. The Creation of the Heavy Industrial Belt

### **Factors in the emergence of the heavy industrial belt**

It has already been pointed out that with the rapid expansion of trade and influx of foreign nationals which followed the opening of the port of Yokohama, various industries catering to the export trade and the resident foreign population flourished in Yokohama and environs. Given these preconditions, in the period after the Sino-Japanese War there was a noticeable trend in the area toward the mechanization of traditional industries, the penetration of large-scale capital, and the diversification of the manufacturing sector. The mechanization of traditional industries has been discussed in the previous chapter, but the penetration of large-scale capital deserves mention here. In 1903 (Meiji 36) the Fuji Gas and Textile Company, which had its head office in Tokyo, built a large factory employing two thousand workers in Hodogaya. Then, in 1906 (Meiji 39) the Dai Nippon Beer Company, which had been formed by the merger of Sapporo Beer, Nippon Beer, and Osaka Beer, also constructed a brewery in Hodogaya. The following year, the Kirin Brewery, which was originally a foreign-owned beer company, was

set up in Yokohama, and the Yokohama refinery of the Takarada Petroleum Company was built in Hodogaya. Factories also began to invade the town of Kawasaki, which up until this time still contained wide expanses of open paddies and fields, beginning with a factory built by the Yokohama Sugar Company (now Meiji Sugar Manufacturing) in 1906 (Meiji 39), and followed by the Kawasaki plants of the Tokyo Electric Company (now the Toshiba Corporation) and the Nippon Gramophone Company (now the Kawasaki factory of Nippon Columbia). However, looking at the prefectural statistics for 1909 (Meiji 42), one finds that the majority of the 253 factories in Kanagawa were small enterprises employing between ten and thirty workers, primarily oriented toward the export trade which had grown up since the opening of the port of Yokohama. Most were concentrated in Yokohama and its environs, but the districts of Kōza, Naka, Ashigarakami, Ashigarashimo, Aikō, and Tsukui each had more than ten factories located within their boundaries.

The fact that the greatest number of factories, more than 120, were located in the Yokohama area (including the districts of Tachibana and Kamakura) was related to the convenience of having the port of Yokohama so close by, as well as to the favorable labor market created by the influx of both domestic and foreign workers into this urban center. These two factors also served to encourage the shift to rapid industrialization which took place during World War I.

### **The reclamation of land from the sea**

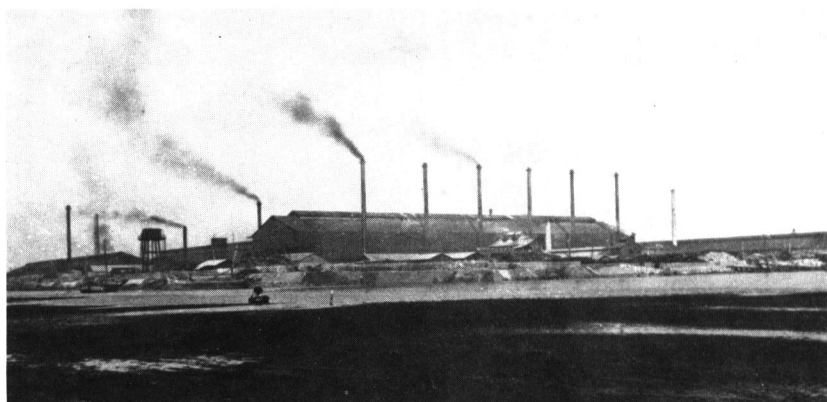
Today, Japan's heavy industrial belts are almost all located on land reclaimed from the sea. This concept had its origin with Asano Sōichirō. As a result of an inspection tour of Europe and the United States, Asano became acutely aware of the inadequacy of the harbor facilities in Tokyo Bay, and he devised a plan to fill in the bay, open a grand canal to connect Tokyo and Yokohama, and reclaim coastal land in the Tsurumi and Kawasaki area in order to create an industrial belt where the products of the factories could be loaded directly onto large freighters moored immediately next to the factory complexes. In 1908 (Meiji 41) he petitioned the Kanagawa prefectural government to accept a plan which called for the



creation of an industrial park 4.5 kilometers long, 1.4 kilometers in width, and about 490 hectares in total area on a site located between the mouth of the Tsurumi River and the village of Tajima (Kawasaki Ward). This plan also called for the construction of moorings for ships in the 10,000-ton class and the digging of a canal to connect Tokyo and Yokohama. When the prefectural administration hesitated to authorize his plan, Asano formed the Tsurumi Land Reclamation Association with Yasuda Zenjirō of the Yasuda Bank, Shibusawa Eiichi, director of the Dai-Ichi Bank, and the Yokohama traders Abe Kōbei and the Ōtani Kahei, and renewed his petition. The following year, his plan was authorized. The Tsurumi Land Reclamation Association reorganized itself as the Tsurumi Reclamation and Construction Company, and in 1916 (Taishō 5) it reclaimed about 33 hectares of land from the coastline at Ōshima near the village of Tajima. Riding the crest of the World War I economic boom, many large factories located themselves in this new industrial park. Nippon Kōkan, a steel manufacturer originally headquartered in the Kansai region, was looking for a factory site near Yokohama, since they had found a way to import their pig iron cheaply from a plant in Bengal. The company, which had been established with Asano Sōichirō's son-in-law Shiraishi Genjirō as its president, settled on a 49-hectare site in the reclaimed land called Wakao-Shinden in the village of Tajima, and began construction on the new factory. The headquarters of the company were also moved to Wakao-Shinden from Yokohama, and by 1914 (Taishō 3) the new factory had already begun production.

With the outbreak of World War I, imports of steel materials and pipe ceased, and taking advantage of the rapid rise in the prices of the goods it produced, the new factory began paying dividends only two years after it began operations.

Even before the land reclamation projects, major factories had located in the coastal areas of Kawasaki, attracted by the mayor's strong encouragement of industrial development in the town. In 1912 (Meiji 45) the Fuji Gas and Textile Company moved all its operations from Shizuoka to Kawasaki, where it was followed by the construction of factories by the Japan Cable Company (Nippon Densen) and the Ajinomoto Company. These facilities formed the core of the emerging heavy industrial belt between Tokyo and Yokohama.



Site of Nippon Kōkan's Kawasaki steelworks before the land was reclaimed (1912), and an early view of the steelworks (1917).

(Courtesy of Nippon Kōkan)

The Tsurumi Reclamation and Construction Company, founded in 1914 (Taishō 3) with Asano Sōichirō as its president, created landfills along the coast at Tsurumi (now Tsurumi Ward, Yokohama) which became the site for the Asano Shipyards, the Asano Cement Factory, and the Asahi Glassworks, which further contributed to the expansion of the industrial belt growing up in the Tsurumi and Kawasaki area.

### **Railways promote regional development**

The period from late Meiji to the end of World War II was the golden age of steam and electric railways as a mode of domestic transport. The rapid emergence of factories with the development of Japanese capitalism necessitated large-scale transport of raw materials and finished products, as well as a means for the masses of workers living in the vicinity of the newly developed industrial regions to commute to and from their jobs.

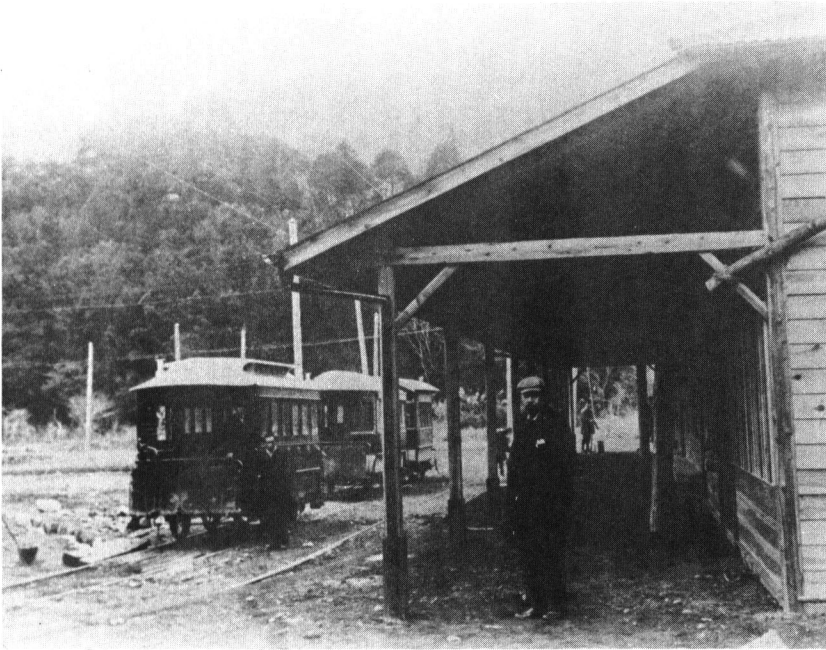
New construction was undertaken on the major trunk line stretching from Aomori to Hiroshima in order to increase its capacity to handle freight and passenger traffic. The line along the waterfront from Yokohama Station (present-day Sakuragi-chō Station) to the landfill on which the Yokohama Customs House was located opened in 1910 (Meiji 43) and was the major freight line for the goods passing through the port. The line between Kanagawa and Hodogaya, which had been laid by the military at the time of the Sino-Japanese War to speed the movement of military freight, was designated as the main Tōkaidō Line. Further, Yokohama Station was moved from Sakuragi-chō to its present site in 1915, thus establishing the path of the Tōkaidō Line as it exists today. These changes constituted a series of efforts to increase the transport capacity of the Tōkaidō Line as one of the nation's major trunk routes. In addition, express passenger service was begun in 1898 (Meiji 31) between Shimbashi in Tokyo and Sakuragi-chō in Yokohama, cutting the 55-minute one-way travel time required by ordinary trains to 30 minutes on the run to Yokohama and 39 minutes on the return to Tokyo, making the trip a much more convenient one for business travelers. Then, in 1914 (Taishō 3) an electric railway was opened, nearly parallel to the Tōkaidō Line, running direct service between Tamachi in Tokyo and Sakuragi-chō in Yokohama. A separate freight line was also opened, with special freight stations at Takashima and Yokohama, which helped deal with the rapidly expanding volume of freight traffic.

One of the major reasons that Kawasaki played a leading role in the development of the Tokyo–Yokohama industrial belt was the existence of the Daishi Electric Railway, which opened in 1899 (Meiji 32). It originated as a line for pilgrims to the Kawasaki Daishi Temple, and while performing that function even today, the role this

railway played in the formation of the Kawasaki coastal industrial region was immense, a role inherited later by the Tsurumi Harbor Railroad and the Coastal Electric Tramway, all private rail lines.

Private railways also made their appearance on the Tokyo–Yokohama route. The Daishi Railway Company had been a success, paying an 11.2 percent dividend to stockholders, and made plans to extend its tracks on to Shinagawa and Yokohama, while at the same time forming the Keihin Electric Express Railway Company through cooperation and mergers with other electric railway promoters under the provisions of the Railway Ordinance and the Ordinance Concerning Private Railways. In 1905 (Meiji 38) full service started between Shinagawa and Yokohama. This line concentrated on passenger travel between Tokyo and Yokohama, was faster than the nationally-owned Tōkaidō Line which it paralleled, and ran a larger number of trains. Moreover, because this private line had laid special tracks rather than running its trams along existing roads as most electric lines had done up to that time, it was both faster and safer, and eventually came to pose a threat as a competitor to the national railways. In 1930 (Shōwa 5) the Shōnan Electric Railway began service, with a route running from Koganechō to Uraga and from Kanagawa Hakkei to Zushi, later extended to Kurihama. This railway played an important role in the development of the parts of Kanagawa Prefecture fronting on Tokyo Bay.

The nationally-operated Yokosuka Line began service to the Miura Peninsula even earlier than the Keihin Electric Railway. Since the Naval Arsenal and Naval Station were both located in Yokosuka, it was strategically very important, but at first it was linked to Yokohama and Tokyo only by ship. Responding to strong appeals by the military, a rail line branching off from the Tōkaidō Line at Ōfuna and running to Yokosuka was completed in 1899 (Meiji 22). Stations were established on this line at Kamakura and Zushi, both near Hayama, which had already been developed into a luxury resort area, contributing to the further development of the coastal region along the shores of Sagami Bay. Many literary figures who had previously gone to Odawara via the Tōkaidō Line now began to live and write in Kamakura, and they formed a group which came to be popularly known as the “Kamakura literati.” Akutagawa Ryūnosuke lived in Kamakura from 1916 to 1919



Yumoto Station in 1900. (Courtesy of the Hakone Tozan Railway Co.)

(Taishō 5 to Taishō 8), and Satomi Ton, Osaragi Jirō, Nagata Hideo, Hayashi Fusao, Shimagi Kensaku, Nakayama Gishū, Takami Jun, Kobayashi Hideo, Kume Masao, and Kawabata Yasunari all lived in Kamakura during the late Taishō and early Shōwa eras. In addition, the Enoshima Electric Railway, which was opened between Fujisawa and Katase in 1902 (Meiji 35) to accommodate the increasing number of travelers to Enoshima which had come with the opening of the Tōkaidō Line, was extended to Komachi in Kamakura in 1910 (Meiji 43), and played an important role as a tourist train to both Enoshima and Kamakura.

From late Meiji into early Taishō, a series of railways were also established in the inland parts of Kanagawa Prefecture. In the interior of the prefecture, as along the coast, there were railways primarily serving industrial areas and those which were principally tourist lines. Of the former, which connected the interior with Yoko-

hama and Kawasaki, there were the Nambu Line running between Tachikawa and Kawasaki, the Yokohama Line linking Hachiōji with Yokohama, the Sagami Railway connecting Ebina with Yokohama, and the nationally-operated Sagami Line running between Chigasaki and Hashimoto (Sagamihara City). The tourist lines included Odakyū's Odawara Line linking Shinjuku in Tokyo with Hakone Yumoto, and the Atami Railway Line running between Kōzu and Atami.

Arranging the new rail lines in order of their construction, the Yokohama Railway was built first, in 1908 (Meiji 41), followed by the Atami Railway in 1920 (Taishō 9), the Sagami Railway in 1921, the Tōyoko Electric Railway running between Maruko Tamagawa and Kanagawa in 1926 (Shōwa 1), and the Nambu Line and the Odakyū Line between Shinjuku and Odawara in the following year. None of these lines was immediately opened for service along the entire length of its eventual route; instead, they grew gradually, opening new sections of the line as they went along. For instance, the Nambu Line began with service between Shinagawa and Noborito for the purpose of transporting sand and limestone for cement manufacture from the banks of the Tama River. From 1935 onward, however, with the growth of military-related industry in the region, it also became a commuter line for factory workers. In 1940 (Shōwa 15) it was merged with the Itsukaichi Railway, which had been operating in the Tokyo suburban area, and continued to develop as both a freight and passenger line, becoming a part of the National Railways in 1944 (Shōwa 19).

A classic example of a rail line that developed along with the region itself was Odakyū (the Odawara Express Electric Railway), which had its origin as the Odawara Horse-Drawn Tramway. In premodern times, Mt. Hakone was known throughout the country as a strategic point on the Tōkaidō highway, but with the opening of railways in the modern era, it more or less dropped from the consciousness of the public, and in the song "Hakone Hachiri," composed by Taki Rentarō in 1901 (Meiji 34), it was celebrated only for the steep and difficult mountain roads which guarded its approaches. On the other hand, the hot springs scattered around the vicinity of Hakone became well known as a recreation area and tourist attraction for foreign visitors to Japan. However, since the

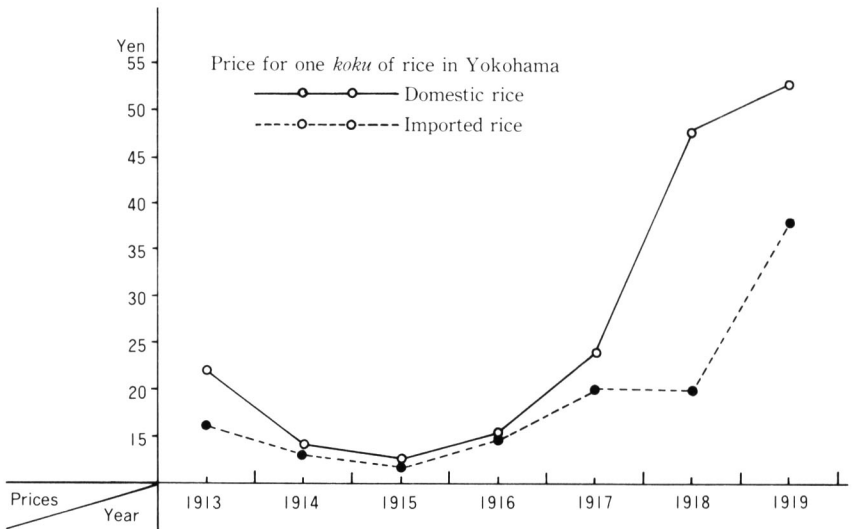
Tōkaidō railway cut north at Kōzu before reaching Hakone, the resort area had to be reached by rickshaws hired at Kōzu. At first even the rickshaw road did not reach all the way to the hot springs around Hakone, and the last and most mountainous leg of the journey had to be negotiated on foot or in sedan chairs. In fact, special sedan chairs were designed to carry foreign visitors. Before the opening of the Tōkaidō Railway line, a regular stagecoach ran between Yokohama and Odawara, but with its opening a horse-drawn tramway was constructed between Kōzu and Hakone Yumoto, starting service in 1888 (Meiji 21). In 1890 (Meiji 23) Japan's first electric train was demonstrated at the Exhibition for the Promotion of Domestic Industry held in Tokyo's Ueno Park, and it was decided that the horse-drawn tramway should be converted into an electric rail line. The name of the company was also changed to the Odawara Electric Railway Company, Ltd. (Odakyū), which began operations in 1900 (Meiji 33). It was the second electric railway in Kanagawa Prefecture, and the fourth in Japan as a whole, which attests to the promising prospects for the development of Hakone as a recreation area and tourist site. Odakyū went on to lay plans for a rail line going up Mt. Hakone, and after many difficulties, succeeded in opening a line between Yumoto and Gōra in 1919 (Taishō 8). Furthermore, in 1921 (Taishō 10) a cable car line was set up between Shimogōra and Kamigōra, and in 1960 (Shōwa 35), an aerial tramway was completed between Sōunzan and Tōgendai (at the northern end of Lake Ashinoko), which now carries more than a million passengers a year. The prosperity of the resort area of Hakone was given an even greater boost by the opening of the Odakyū Line between Shinjuku in Tokyo and Odawara in 1929 (Shōwa 4). The same year, Odakyū also opened an Enoshima Line linking Sagami Ōno with Katase and Enoshima, with the intention of attracting bathers going to the seashore at Katase. In order to attract passengers, Odakyū began to offer a variety of special rates almost as soon as it opened service, including round-trip coupons to Hakone, round-trip discount tickets between Shinjuku and Hakone Yumoto and Gōra, tickets with attached discount coupons for use on the cable cars and buses, as well as at the inns and gift shops of the resort area, and seasonal discount rates for travelers to Enoshima, Tanzawa, Ōyama, and the Tama River area. In this way, Odakyū

worked to develop the areas along its routes as spots for tourism and recreation.

### Labor disputes and rice riots

World War I, which had brought an unprecedented economic boom to Japan, ended in 1918 (Taishō 7) with the German surrender. The other side of the economic boom was rising inflation, and from the closing days of World War I onward, a series of labor disputes unfolded in Japan as workers demanded higher wages to offset the loss in purchasing power resulting from inflation. Already in 1916 (Taishō 5), with the war still in progress, there were 108 incidents recorded nationwide, but the number of disputes jumped the following year to 398, with 57,309 people involved, and the labor movement in Japan reached a new peak. The main force behind this upsurge of labor activism were workers in the heavy industrial sector, in such fields as shipbuilding and machine manufacture.

Events in Kanagawa Prefecture reflected this national trend. In



Fluctuations in rice prices in the period leading up to the Rice Riots of 1918.



1917 (Taishō 6), there was a strike by more than 700 workers at the Armstrong Company's explosives factory in Hiratsuka, a strike by 6,000 workers at the Asano Shipyards which ended in violence, and a strike by 800 workers at the Yokohama Docks, although the total number of strikes for the year in Kanagawa was only seven. However, the following year the number of strikes in the prefecture doubled to fourteen, including a strike by 5,000 workers at the Uraga Docks and a strike by more than 700 workers at Nippon Kōkan, the steel manufacturer. The aspect of the inflation that hit the workers the hardest was rising rice prices. This affected the residents of smaller cities and fishermen as well as workers in major urban centers. The rice riots of 1918, which started in a small fishing village in Toyama Prefecture, soon spread throughout the entire country. In Kanagawa Prefecture, various measures such as selling rice at a discount in cities, towns, and villages were taken to prevent the outbreak of rioting, but they proved to be inadequate. On the evening of August 16, a crowd of some five or six hundred people gathered in a park in Yokohama, developing into a riot in which stones were thrown at rice shops and police stations. The rice riots in Kanagawa were not as violent as in other parts of the country, but their influence made itself felt in the labor disputes which continued to occur. The following year, 1919 (Taishō 8), there were strikes by 3,000 workers at the Yokohama Docks and by more than 1,300 workers at the Uchida Shipyards. The total number of labor disputes for the year leapt to forty-seven, as workers outside heavy industry, in freight, transportation, and other service industries, as well as manual laborers, became involved in strikes and protests.

### **The first Japanese May Day**

One of the reasons for the dramatic jump in the number of labor disputes in 1919 (Taishō 8) was the international labor agreement stipulated in the Versailles Treaty, which established the International Labor Organization (ILO). The ILO was intended as an international body dedicated to the improvement of working conditions worldwide, including limitations on the length of the working day and the elimination of child labor. It was only natural that the formation of this organization should attract the attention and interest of Japanese workers, who were forced to labor under

working conditions that by international standards were quite poor indeed. However, when the first plenary session of the ILO was held in Washington in 1919, the labor delegation sent from Japan was chosen by the government in a manner which completely ignored the Japanese labor unions. The unions were opposed to the delegation and the manner in which it had been selected, and the Yūaikai and other groups held a mock-funeral demonstration in Yokohama to protest the selection. These events provided an impetus for the formation of many new labor groups and unions, which soon reached a total of more than 200 nationwide. In Kanagawa Prefecture, foreign-language printers formed the Yokohama European-Language Printers' Union, and newspaper deliverymen organized the Yokohama News Labor Association in 1919. Four Seamen's Associations, based largely in Yokohama, were established in 1919, and six more were created the following year. In 1920 (Taishō 9) the Yokohama Longshoremen's League, the Yokohama Shipyard Workers' Union, and the Tsurumi Steelworkers' Union were founded, and in 1921 the Japan Seamen's Union and other organizations were formed. As soon as these new unions were organized, they immediately entered into protests for higher wages and better treatment of workers, and in many cases succeeded in attaining their demands. In 1921, the Yūaikai changed its name to Sōdōmei (the Japanese Federation of Labor), strengthening its role as the nation's largest labor organization.

Class B longshoremen who had been excluded from the Longshoremen's Mutual Aid Association formed the Yokohama Longshoremen's League mentioned above, under the support and guidance of the Rikken Rōdōtō (Constitutional Labor Party), a nationalistic political group. The inaugural meeting of this league was held on May 1, 1920, marked by a mass march to Yokohama Park, where a labor rally was held. At the rally a declaration was issued proclaiming that the liberation of the worker would be achieved through "a movement of workers of all nations," and resolutions were passed calling for an eight-hour working day, Sunday as an officially recognized holiday, and the elimination of Article 17 of the Public Order and Police Law. The Rikken Rōdōtō had been founded at the end of the previous year with Yamaguchi Masanori as its president. It is interesting that the first May Day celebration in