

JAPANESE TRADE AND INDUSTRY

PRESENT AND FUTURE

by

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CHAPTER XXXIV

CONCLUSION

The foregoing survey of the economic situation in Japan shows that 1930 and 1931 were the worst years of depression, while uneasiness continued to prevail in the following year, due to the aggravation of international relations consequent on the outbreak of the Manchurian incident and the growing distress in rural districts. Conditions, however, changed entirely after 1932, and industrial development in the following years was extremely rapid, the progress achieved in 1934 and 1935 being perhaps the most remarkable in the history of the country. This industrial development and the consequent advance of foreign trade still continues though at a slower rate of progress. The astounding expansion of Japanese trade at a time when other countries have not yet fully recovered from the world-wide depression, has not unnaturally attracted the attention of foreign observers.

Essential factors which have contributed to this development of Japanese industries are, according to general opinion, currency depreciation, a vast increase in Government expenditure, and a scale of wages which, in spite of a mild type of inflation, has hardly risen. As regards currency depreciation, it should be borne in mind that the yen was

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probably substantially overvalued, as expressed in purchasing power, during the years prior to the reimposition of the gold embargo, hence part of the subsequent depreciation should be considered as a correction of the previously existing exaggerated price structure. The decline of the yen, therefore, occasioned only a slight reactionary advance in prices of domestic commodities, and, though an important contributing factor, does not fully explain the expansion in competitive power of Japanese industries since 1933, by which time the decline had been brought to a standstill.

The Government emergency relief measures and financial inflation served to furnish an outlet for idle funds, and at the same time stimulated the national purchasing power. Whilst this development was not confined to Japan, it is noteworthy that the cost of production has been very much lowered in Japanese industry, partly on account of increased labour efficiency, in contrast with the tendency in similarly situated industrial countries which have witnessed a sharp advance in production costs. The general assumption that the cheapness of Japanese goods is entirely due to low wages cannot be maintained in view of the well-known fact that low wages and a low standard of living do not, by themselves, constitute a factor making for the low cost of production. "The important point is the relationship between standard of life and standard of efficiency, and available evidence points to this relationship being affected rather by technical improvements (rationalization) than by inability of the Japanese standard to change."*

* Prof. T. E. Gregory, "Memorandum on Japanese Competition," London 1935, p. 15

The economic progress recently achieved would not have been possible but for the greatly strengthened position of Japanese industry since the World War, and the technical and administrative rationalization measures adopted during the years of depression. In this sense, the industrial advance is not a temporary phenomenon based entirely on currency depreciation and financial inflation, but is due to deep-rooted changes in industrial organization.

There are, however, many problems confronting Japanese economy in the future. One of the most urgent is the necessity of supporting the increasing population, which is expanding at a rate of nearly one million per year. Two methods may be suggested for meeting this situation, that is emigration and absorption in new industries. As to the former, the tendency in many parts of the world to restrict or prohibit Japanese immigration renders this outlet hopeless. It is true that emigration to Manchoukuo offers some possibilities, but not on a scale adequate to solve the population problem. Accordingly, the industrialization of the country and the expansion of overseas trade present themselves as the only solution.

Of the total national production, agriculture now accounts for only about one-fourth, but affords employment for about 47% of the population. The density ratio of the population to cultivated land in Japan is the highest in the world, and agricultural production capacity has almost reached the maximum; therefore it is evident that agriculture cannot be depended upon to absorb the expanding population and to support a future advance in the standard of living. On the

contrary, owing to the distress prevailing in the agricultural areas, which unhappily continues, there has been for many years a steady exodus of people to the cities. The degree of self-sufficiency in agricultural products is steadily declining due to the advance of industrialization, and about one-fourth of the country's requirements has to be imported. In staple foodstuffs, Japan has managed so far to be self-supporting, but it is probable that increased importation will be necessary in order to support the growing population. In the face of this situation, it is apparent that the promotion of agriculture, and if possible, the augmentation of agricultural products should be one of the first considerations in the formulation of a national policy.

Japan is poorly provided with raw materials and is compelled to import them on an increasing scale. Mineral resources are equally limited in volume if not in variety.

Consumption of raw materials by industries in Japan corresponds to more than 60% of the domestic industrial output, and about 27% of them is supplied from abroad. The total imports of raw materials and semi-finished products increased from about 70% in 1929-31 to almost 80% of total imports in recent years, and it is essential that this increment be balanced by a corresponding augmentation in the exports of finished articles made from those raw materials. On the average, Japan exports about 15% of her total domestic production, and about 21% of her industrial output of finished articles. Consequently, the future development of industries must be paralleled by an increasing importation of raw materials and an advance in the export of finished products.

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日本貿易^(と産)の現在^と将来

一九三六年(昭和十一年)
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第三四章 結論

日本に於ける経済情勢に關する前述の調査が示す如くは、一九三〇年及一九三一年(昭和五年、六年)は不景気のどん底の年であり、不安の状態は、翌年の續りたる^此は滿洲事變の勃発による国際關係の重大化、並に地方農村に於ける^或窮乏の深刻化に基くのである。併し此から情勢は一九三二年(昭和七年)以後、全く變化し、^{に於ける(産)}其の後^の發展は極度に迅速であつた。一九三四年、一九三五年(昭和九年、十年)に於ける進歩は恐らく我國歴史上最も顯著なものであらう。此の^(産)發展の進歩に^(以前より)伴ふ外國貿易の進展は依然^(速)その速度は^(以前より)速^(い)か^(に)繼續してゐる。他の諸國が未だ世界的不況から脱しなかつた際、日本^(觀察)の貿易が驚異的膨脹をなすは当然、外國の^(觀察)者^(の)の注目を惹いたのである。

此の日本^(産)業の發展の^(主要)要素は、^(其)技術的^(進歩)と^(通貨)貨^(の)の

價値の下落、^(其)政府歳出の莫大な増加、並に緩慢なインフレーションに拘らるが

借入^(の)の^(増)加^(が)、^(其)昂^(貴)する^(に)伴^(つ)て^(は)、^(其)貨^(の)の^(基)準^(の)の^(一)般^(的)の

の^(一)般^(的)の^(見)て^(る)である。

技術的改善(●合理化)による影響を受け^{こころ}る
は^{合理的}に^{徹し}て^{おこな}う
證據^にあ^らる[。]*

*一九三五年、ロンドンに刊行の
「The Big Game」著者日本の競争に
関する資料四十五頁を参照
手記

(R3)

近年達成された経済的進歩は世界大戦以来、非常に
強化された日本^産業の地位、並に不景気の数年間に採択された
技術上及び^{経営}管理上の合理化対策がなされたならば可能
ではなかつたであらう。此の意味に於て、^{右産}業の進展は^會通貨
の下落及財政的^の不^の基^の所^の一時的現象では
なくして、産業組織に於ける^{深い}根^を下^ると^を変化に^基く
ものである。

^年々^{から}日本^の経済が^直面する多くの問題が存在
する。最も緊要なるものの一つは^約年^の百^の割合に^膨脹^{して}ある

増加人口を支持する^{必要}のある事である。此の事態に對
處する為めに、二つの方法が^{海外}移民と^{国内}移住と

新産業に吸収する事とある。^{前者}に付て言へば、^{世界}の^各國
の^各國^に對^して

傾向は此の捌け口は^絶對^的と^する[。]滿洲への移民
が^不能^性を^提供^して^ゐる[。]は^實際^的に^人口^問題^を解^決す^る
程^の規^模に^持た^する[。]従^て我^國の^工業^化及^び海^外貿^易の

3)

拡張のみが唯一の解決策となるべくするものである。

全国の生産の内、農業は現在約四分の一を占めてゐるに過ぎないが

約四十七パーセントの人口に対し仕事をしてゐる。日本に於ける人口の

耕作面積に対する密度は世界最高である、而して農業生産力は

殆ど頂点に達してゐる、其れ故に膨脹してゐる人口を吸収し、

将来の生活基準の向上のため、農業に依拠することは出来な

いといふ事は明かである。反対に農村地方に於ける窮乏は此

今の不幸の端々であるが、長年の間、農村の都市への移

動が續いてゐる。農産物の自給の度合は工業化の進捗によ

確實に低下してゐる。而して我國の必需品の約四分の一は輸入しなけれ

ばならぬ。主として食糧は日本は従来何か自給して来たが、この増加し

てゐる人口を支へるためには恐らく輸入を増加することが必要となる

あらう。此の事態に直面して、農業の振興及び生産をならは、農業

物の増産は国策樹立の際に於て第一に考慮すべきものの一つ

である。主として食糧は日本は従来何か自給して来たが、この増加し

日本は原料に専ら従事してゐる。已むを得ず一層大規模に

之を輸入しなければならぬ。鑛産資源も同様に種々に於ては

制限されたとの量に於て制限を受けらるゝものがある。

日本の工業が消費する原料は国内産物の二十パーセント以上

に當る、その二十パーセントは海外から供給されてゐる。原料及

半製品の全輸入高は一九二九年より一九三一年までは約七十パーセントに

4) したが、近年は約八十パーセントまで増加した、而して最も必要

なことは、此の輸入の増加は、此等の原料の作つた製品の輸出がそれと
対応して増加することによつて、^{を得たけ}均衡が保たれるからである。
ある。平均と日本は、その国内生産の約十五パーセントを輸出
し、而して其の製品の工業生産高の約二十パーセントを輸出してゐる。
従つて將來の産業の発展は、原料^{の増大}・輸入の増加と製品輸出の進展
とが相平行し、~~維持~~することが必要である。