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**THE BASIC INDUSTRIES AND SOCIAL
HISTORY OF JAPAN
1914-1918**

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY
OF THE WORLD WAR**

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JAPANESE SERIES

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**THE BASIC INDUSTRIES AND
SOCIAL HISTORY OF JAPAN
1914-1918**

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

IN the autumn of 1914, when the scientific study of the effects of war upon modern life passed suddenly from theory to history, the Division of Economics and History of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace proposed to adjust the program of its researches to the new and altered problems which the War presented. The existing program, which had been prepared as the result of a conference of economists held at Berne in 1911, and which dealt with the facts then at hand, had just begun to show the quality of its contributions; but for many reasons it could no longer be followed out. A plan was therefore drawn up at the request of the Director of the Division, in which it was proposed, by means of an historical survey, to attempt to measure the economic cost of the War and the displacement which it was causing in the processes of civilization. Such an "Economic and Social History of the World War," it was felt, if undertaken by men of judicial temper and adequate training, might ultimately, by reason of its scientific obligations to truth, furnish data for the forming of sound public opinion, and thus contribute fundamentally toward the aims of an institution dedicated to the cause of international peace.

The need for such an analysis, conceived and executed in the spirit of historical research, was increasingly obvious as the War developed, releasing complex forces of national life not only for the vast process of destruction, but also for the stimulation of new capacities for production. This new economic activity, which under normal conditions of peace might have been a gain to society, and the surprising capacity exhibited by the belligerent nations for enduring long and increasing loss—often while presenting the outward semblance of new prosperity—made necessary a reconsideration of the whole field of war economics. A double obligation was therefore placed upon the Division of Economics and History. It was obliged to concentrate its work upon the problem thus presented, and to study it as a whole; in other words, to apply to it the tests and disciplines of history. Just as the War itself was a single event, though penetrating by seemingly unconnected ways to the remotest parts of the world, so the analysis of it must be developed according to a plan at once all embracing and yet adjustable to the practical limits of the available data.

During the actual progress of the War, however, the execution of this plan for a scientific and objective study of war economics proved impossible in any large and authoritative way. Incidental studies and surveys of portions of the field could be made and were made under the direction of the Division, but it was impossible to undertake a general history for obvious reasons. In the first place, an authoritative statement of the resources of belligerents bore directly on the conduct of armies in the field. The result was to remove as far as possible from scrutiny those data of the economic life of the countries at war which would ordinarily, in time of peace, be readily available for investigation. In addition to this difficulty of consulting documents, collaborators competent to deal with them were for the most part called into national service in the belligerent countries and so were unavailable for research. The plan for a war history was therefore postponed until conditions should arise which would make possible not only access to essential documents, but also the coöperation of economists, historians, and men of affairs in the nations chiefly concerned, whose joint work would not be misunderstood either in purpose or in content.

Upon the termination of the War, the Endowment once more took up the original plan, and it was found with but slight modification to be applicable to the situation. Work was begun in the summer and autumn of 1918. In the first place a final conference of the Advisory Board of Economists of the Division of Economics and History was held in Paris, which limited itself to planning a series of short preliminary surveys of special fields. Since, however, the purely preliminary character of such studies was further emphasized by the fact that they were directed more especially toward those problems which were then fronting Europe as questions of urgency, it was considered best not to treat them as part of the general survey, but rather as of contemporary value in the period of war settlement. It was clear that not only could no general program be laid down *a priori* by this conference as a whole, but that a new and more highly specialized research organization than that already existing would be needed to undertake the Economic and Social History of the World War, one based more upon national grounds in the first instance, and less upon purely international coöperation. Until the facts of national history could be ascertained, it would be impossible to proceed with comparative analysis; and the different national histories were

themselves of almost baffling intricacy and variety. Consequently the former European Committee of Research was dissolved, and in its place it was decided to erect an Editorial Board in each of the larger countries and to nominate special editors in the smaller ones, who should concentrate, for the present at least, upon their own economic and social war history.

The nomination of these boards by the General Editor was the first step taken in every country where the work has begun. And if any justification were needed for the plan of the Endowment, it at once may be found in the lists of those, distinguished in scholarship or in public affairs, who have accepted the responsibility of editorship. This responsibility is by no means light, involving as it does the adaptation of the general editorial plan to the varying demands of national circumstances or methods of work; and the measure of success attained is due to the generous and earnest coöperation of those in charge in each country.

Once the editorial organization was established, there could be little doubt as to the first step which should be taken in each instance toward the actual preparation of the history. Without documents there can be no history. The essential records of the War, local as well as central, have therefore to be preserved and to be made available for research in so far as is compatible with public interest. But this archival task is a very great one, belonging of right to the Governments and other owners of historical sources and not to the historian or economist who proposes to use them. It is an obligation of ownership; for all such documents are public trust. The collaborators on this section of the War History, therefore, working within their own field as researchers, could only survey the situation as they found it and report their findings in the forms of guides or manuals; and perhaps, by stimulating a comparison of methods, help to further the adoption of those found to be most practical. In every country, therefore, this was the point of departure for actual work; although special monographs have not been written in every instance.

The first stage of the work upon the War History, dealing with little more than the externals of archives, seemed for a while to exhaust the possibilities of research, and had the plan of the history been limited to research based upon official documents, little more could have been done, for once documents have been labeled "secret" few government officials can be found with sufficient courage or ini-

tiative to break open the seal. Thus vast masses of source material essential for the historian were effectively placed beyond his reach, although much of it was quite harmless from any point of view. While war conditions thus continued to hamper research, and were likely to do so for many years to come, some alternative had to be found.

Fortunately such an alternative was at hand in the narrative, amply supported by documentary evidence, of those who had played some part in the conduct of affairs during the War, or who, as close observers in privileged positions, were able to record from first- or at least secondhand knowledge the economic history of different phases of the Great War, and of its effect upon society. Thus a series of monographs was planned consisting for the most part of unofficial yet authoritative statements, descriptive or historical, which may best be described as about halfway between memoirs and bluebooks. These monographs make up the main body of the work assigned so far. They are not limited to contemporary war-time studies; for the economic history of the War must deal with a longer period than that of the actual fighting. It must cover the years of "deflation" as well, at least sufficiently to secure some fairer measure of the economic displacement than is possible in purely contemporary judgments.

With this phase of the work, the editorial problems assumed a new aspect. The series of monographs had to be planned primarily with regard to the availability of contributors, rather than of source material as in the case of most histories; for the contributors themselves controlled the sources. This in turn involved a new attitude toward those two ideals which historians have sought to emphasize, consistency and objectivity. In order to bring out the chief contribution of each writer it was impossible to keep within narrowly logical outlines; facts would have to be repeated in different settings and seen from different angles, and sections included which do not lie within the strict limits of history; and absolute objectivity could not be obtained in every part. Under the stress of controversy or apology, partial views would here and there find their expression. But these views are in some instances an intrinsic part of the history itself, contemporary measurements of facts as significant as the facts with which they deal. Moreover, the work as a whole is planned to furnish its own corrective; and where it does not, others will.

In addition to the monographic treatment of source material, a number of studies by specialists are already in preparation, dealing

with technical or limited subjects, historical or statistical. These monographs also partake to some extent of the nature of first-hand material, registering as they do the data of history close enough to the source to permit verification in ways impossible later. But they also belong to that constructive process by which history passes from analysis to synthesis. The process is a long and difficult one, however, and work upon it has only just begun. To quote an apt characterization; in the first stages of a history like this, one is only "picking cotton." The tangled threads of events have still to be woven into the pattern of history; and for this creative and constructive work different plans and organizations may be needed.

In a work which is the product of so complex and varied coöperation as this, it is impossible to indicate in any but a most general way the apportionment of responsibility of editors and authors for the contents of the different monographs. For the plan of the History as a whole and its effective execution the General Editor is responsible; but the arrangement of the detailed programs of study has been largely the work of the different Editorial Boards and divisional Editors, who have also read the manuscripts prepared under their direction. The acceptance of a monograph in this series, however, does not commit the editors to the opinions or conclusions of the authors. Like other editors, they are asked to vouch for the scientific merit, the appropriateness and usefulness of the volumes admitted to the series; but the authors are naturally free to make their individual contributions in their own way. In like manner the publication of the monographs does not commit the Endowment to agreement with any specific conclusions which may be expressed therein. The responsibility of the Endowment is to History itself—an obligation not to avoid but to secure and preserve variant narratives and points of view, in so far as they are essential for the understanding of the War as a whole.

* * * * *

The Japanese Series in this War History constitutes one of the most important sections of the entire survey, for it contains the only record that has been attempted of the entire effect of the War upon the social and economic life of Japan. Years of careful study and of research have gone into the making of these volumes to which scholars of Japan of the highest competence have devoted their best energies.

x INDUSTRIES AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF JAPAN

From its inception the Division of Economics and History of the Carnegie Endowment has had as the head of its Japanese Research Committee, His Excellency, Baron Sakatani, who has gathered around him a group of experts for the study of the causes and effects of war in modern society. When the Economic and Social History of the World War was planned, this Research Committee became a part of the directing organization of the History and had already its material for the Japanese volumes well in hand when the Japanese earthquake occurred in 1923 and not only destroyed much of the documentation but so dislocated the economic life of Japan as to make more difficult than ever the measurement of economic forces concerning the World War. The material had largely to be written anew or rewritten, and then the difficulties of translation and adaptation to the Western reader added new delays, so that the Japanese Series, although begun early in the post-war years, appears only after the passage of a decade.

For the student of world economy there is a wealth of suggestion in the data of these volumes showing how far-reaching is the disturbance of modern war in industrialized countries with their interdependent interests and how temporary are the advantages of the speculative industries dependent upon the forced markets of war. But while the effects of the War upon Japan furnish another chapter to the universal argument for peace which lies in this whole history, the Japanese authors have enriched the survey by including much more than the direct effects of war itself. It is an era in the general economic history of Japan which is here depicted, and so the material should prove a mine of reference data to American or British readers not only for the problem of war history but for its setting in history as a whole. Thus in conception these volumes are part of a lasting national record, as they are in execution a notable scientific achievement.

J. T. S.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

It is the purpose of this volume to deal with the economic and other changes which the War brought about in Japan, and the policies which, in consequence, were adopted by its Government. Parts I, II, and III treat of such changes as were most largely economic and the effects they had. Part IV treats, first, of the measures taken to meet them and of the results of such measures; and, second, of changes in the world of Japanese thought.

It was a war which, for Japan, had results far more important than those that followed upon any other event in her history, either past or present. The extent and complexity of the measures, both political and economic, which, under its tremendous pressure she resorted to, and the significance of the social movements and social changes which also followed upon the War, are such that to deal adequately with any of them would alone call for an entire volume. The present monograph is meant to serve only as a summary. Care has been taken alike to avoid the use of material covered by other volumes in this series, to omit matters of minor importance, and to handle all topics plainly and simply.

In preparing my work I have had recourse to a very large number of books and periodicals. But, in the matter of one sort of source material, there is something which, in justice to those who engage in economic and historical research in Japan, must be said at once. They are all but baffled by the lack of the original texts of European diplomatic documents, *communiqués*, official correspondence, and the like. When such things do reach this country they are translated into Japanese, given out to the public, and that is an end of the matter. If a text is needed by the people, it is needed in translation; so the original is forgotten forever. All my efforts, for example, to obtain the original texts of some of the documents required in this monograph were of no avail, though painstaking search was made at the Imperial Library, and the assistance of the Foreign Office was enlisted. All I could do was to retranslate the Japanese translation of the text. That was the next best thing, though retranlations are never accurate and, at times, may be misleading.

U. K.

TABLE OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

1 <i>cho</i>	= 2.45 acres
1 <i>tan</i>	= .245 acres
1 <i>se</i>	= 176.45 square feet
1 <i>tsubo</i>	= <i>c</i> 6 square feet
1 <i>picul</i>	= 133.3 pounds
1 <i>kwan</i>	= 8.27 pounds
1 <i>ryo</i>	= 9 <i>kwan</i>
1 <i>kin</i>	= 1.32 pounds
1 <i>momme</i>	= 1/1000 of a <i>kwan</i>
1 <i>koku</i>	= 4.96 bushels
1 <i>to</i>	= 3.99 gallons
1 <i>sho</i>	= .0496 bushels
1 <i>yen</i>	= 49.8 cents
1 <i>sen</i>	= 1-100 of a <i>yen</i>
1 <i>rin</i>	= 1/1000 of a <i>yen</i>

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