

# Establishment of Biochemistry in Japan

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Biochemical studies in Japan started after the Meiji Restoration (1868) and grew up with a rapid transplantation from Europe. About twenty years later, i.e. in 1880s, the original studies of applied biochemistry full of local colour began to appear; thirty years later, i.e. 1900s, some of them were internationally recognized of their academic value in their own fields, and accordingly the more theoretical researches were brought up; and fifty years after the Meiji Restoration, i.e. in 1920s, it developed to a degree that Japanese students could attain in their Japanese institutions so excellent result that stands on the international level even in the field of pure theory. In 1922 two technical magazines on biochemistry, *the Journal of Biochemistry* and *the Acta Phytochimica* issued their initial numbers. In 1925 the Japanese Biochemical Society was established and acquired 513 members of Japanese scholars. To all appearance it seemed that thereafter Japanese biochemistry should make a rapid progress in quality as well as in quantity, and shortly should come into full blossom. But it did not. On the contrary it slowly came to a stop as the aggressive policy of Japanese imperialism proceeded, and finally fell down far behind the international progress. Since the end of the World War II it nevertheless recovered swiftly and is now running its way at full speed though facing with new difficulties one after another.

In Europe around 1868 when the Meiji Restoration broke out, a new field of biochemistry was brewing in Germany. Incidentally we may notice that in 1840 J. Liebig published a paper entitled *die organische Chemie in ihrer Anwendung auf Agrikultur und Physiologie*, in 1842 *die Tierchemie, oder die organische Chemie in ihres Anwendung auf Physiologie und Pathologie*, and in 1871 *Jahres-Berichte*

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