

Manchurian Railroad Key to Resources

Economic

The Chinese Eastern Railroad in Manchuria, over the control of which a war is threatening, is the key which can make available an enormous wealth of natural resources at present locked up beneath the soil and in the forests of Manchuria.

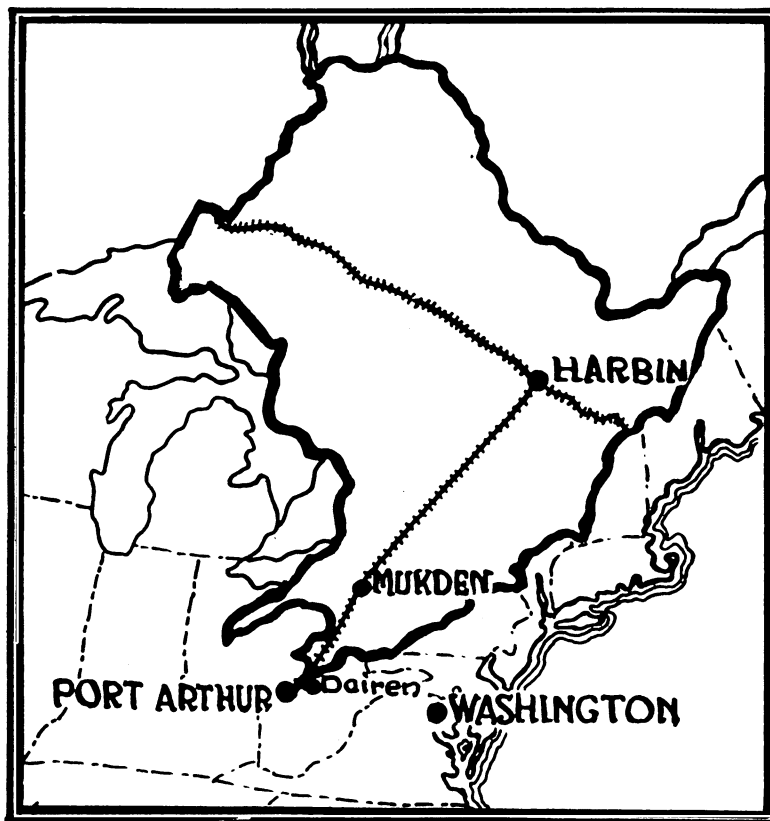
Iron and gold are said to be present in large quantities, although at present these resources remain practically untouched. There are two iron mines in southern Manchuria, one operated by the South Manchuria Railroad. In the northern region there are none. Gold is washed on the tributaries of the Amur River up near the boundary of Russia, but the gold washers take only the most accessible metal, and then go elsewhere. There are as yet no mines of any importance in the whole northern region which is reached by the Chinese Eastern Railroad.

Manchuria is rich in coal. In the northern section 70 mines are in operation, but only four of these are modern mines. The majority are very primitive workings with an annual output of only a few hundred tons. The four principal mines are operated by Russian, Japanese, and English capital. In southern Manchuria the principal coal mine is operated by the South Manchuria Railroad and has an output of 4,900,000 tons a year. Three other mines in this district have annual outputs of over a hundred thousand tons. The rest are all small workings that barely scratch the surface.

Another valuable natural resource of Manchuria is the large stand of timber. Northern Manchuria contains the great forests which were formerly reserved as hunting grounds for the Manchu princes. The largest forests are those along the Great Khingan Mountains in the northwestern part of the country. The Chinese Eastern Railway cuts right through these mountains.

It is estimated that there are about six billion trees in the Manchurian forests, containing about one hundred and twenty-six billion feet of timber or about one-third as much timber as there is in the whole United States. The trees are pine, oak, and willow and they grow to a very large size. Many are 13 to 14 feet in circumference and more than 100 feet high.

Manchuria, especially the northern part through which runs the disputed Chinese Eastern Railway, is the gold-



HOW MANCHURIA WOULD LOOK if it were slid along the same parallel of latitude and dropped on North America. Port Arthur, the gateway of this rich slice of territorial pie for which Russia, China and Japan have been struggling for decades, lies as far south as Washington; Mukden would be near Pittsburgh and Harbin not far from Montreal. The northern boundary would cut across the southern end of Hudson Bay

en land of opportunity for Asia. This area, once the hunting ground of the Manchu princes, is now the Promised Land for thousands of immigrants. They are hunting not merely the wild game which still abounds, but the fertile land for farms and homes.

Last year about 1,500,000 people flocked from the war-torn and famished parts of China to the part of Manchuria that is served by the Chinese Eastern Railway. It is estimated, however, that about two-thirds of this territory still remains uncultivated. About forty-five million acres of rich arable land in North Manchuria are yet untouched by the plow.

Like the early settlers of our West, the pioneer in Manchuria must face the perils of banditry from tribes not unlike the Indians in their habits. But like our own colonists, he has the advantage of virgin land and a healthful, temperate climate.

Dairen is the principal port of Manchuria and is located in the

southernmost tip of the country. This city is in about the same latitude as Washington, D. C. The northern extreme of the country is in the latitude of Hudson Bay. The greatest distance east and west across the country is about the same as the distance from New York to Chicago.

Altogether the area of Manchuria is equal to that of the New England States, the Middle Atlantic States, and also Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia. The population, however, is only half that of this section of the United States. The total length of the railways serving this land to which hordes are flocking is only 3,500 miles. In the equivalent area in the United States there are sixty thousand miles.

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A recent forest fire that swept across the Mexican border into Arizona was set down on the official rangers' record as "imported from Mexico".