

North China and Its Wasted Forests

Two years ago, writes Mr. S. R. Thompkins, of Lethbridge, to the Forestry Magazine, I had the opportunity of a journey through North China from Harbin, in Manchuria, as far south as the Hoang-Ho, and during that time the one thing that struck me most forcibly was the imminent peril in which humanity lives in this corner of the world as a result of destroying the original forest cover.

From Shanhaikwan, where the railway pierces the Great Wall, the traveller sees at varying distances to the west mountain ranges standing up gaunt and forbidding and grey against the sky, while at every stream he crosses there is abundant evidence of the destructive forces let loose over the land by these same mountains after every rain; in the intervals between the river beds are practically dry.



A great waste of sand at the mouth of one of China's dry rivers. In Manchuria great areas south of Mukden are covered with sand-dunes—the sand necessitates the employment of special gangs of coolies to keep the tracks clear. Around Pekin and Tien Tsin in spring before vegetation is advanced, the soil being dry and fine, responds to every breath of wind, and for days the air will be filled with dense clouds of dust—soil drifting far worse than anything in Western Canada.



Not China, but Canada. We have about 1,000,000 square miles on non-agricultural soil turned into a waste like this.